

WEDNESDAY'S WISDOM

The Truth Hurts

The wounds of a friend are trustworthy, but the kisses of an enemy are excessive. ~ Proverbs 27:6

Discover the Context
Proverbs 27:1-6

 What hard truths have you learned about yourself so far this summer? How did you first respond to them? What benefit did you receive from listening to the truth?

 “Animals are such agreeable friends. They ask no questions; they make no criticisms.”
~ Anonymous

 By now your director or supervisor should have a pretty good grasp of your character and abilities. Have you sought input from him or her? The evaluation of others is an essential means for growing spiritually as well as for improving your performance at camp. It's not easy to ask someone for input, but it's a sign of a willing and humble heart.

 In 2 Samuel 12 how did David first respond (vv 5-6)? What was his later response (vv 13,16)?

Experience is the best teacher. Of course this can be a devastating way to learn. While we do learn from our successes and our failures, often the learning does not compensate for the havoc we wreak in our own lives and in the lives of others.

Some people think observation and emulation of those we admire is a good way to learn. This too has possibilities if we are wise enough to admire those who are good and who follow after God, all the while having sufficient prudence to stay away from the faults of those we follow.

This *Wednesday's Wisdom* verse however smacks us in the face by coupling what we want—learning truth about ourselves—with that which is unpleasant—wounds. We would rather have people tell us things like, “That’s all right. You didn’t mean to be angry.” Or, “You *did* say you were sorry.” But God’s word says that faithful words from the camp director, from fellow counselors, or from others workers—even if they hurt us—make them our best friends. They may ask about the motives behind our behavior or whether our hearts have set up false idols while justifying ourselves because the outcome was okay.

What do you need most when these wounds come? You need a humble heart that sees beyond the embarrassment of the moment to know the intent of the proverbs: hear and listen! Ultimately it is God’s word that is the best teacher. When it is brought by faithful friends, you need humility of heart to hear and receive. In that moment be careful not to unfavorably judge the motives of your friend. Extend charity and assume that your friend has your best interests in mind. Don’t wish for kisses. Instead acknowledge that you need to change and grow, and this is how God does it.

Ah yes, the truth hurts, doesn’t it? But thank God today for friends that love you enough to tell you the hard truth. KJK