



Links Players

Learning to Listen

He [Peter] was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." (Matthew 17: 5, ESV)

Suppose for a moment you are in a crowded ballroom at Baltusrol Golf Club. It is a majestic room filled with golf journalists, club professionals, and a smattering of golf enthusiasts. You are fortunate to be there as the guest of the USGA. Representatives from all four majors are present. The atmosphere is electric.

The guests of honor are Tiger Woods and Jack Nicklaus. The event is a forum to hear Tiger and Jack discuss how they won all those majors. Combined, they have 33 much-sought-after championships. They have been asked to reminisce about the highs and the lows of winning and losing on the game's biggest stages.

As Jack and Tiger are wrapping up their thoughts and sharing memories that cover roughly sixty years, the moderator slowly approaches the stage to not draw attention to himself. He almost succeeds. The crowd quickly regains their focus on the two honorees. Appropriately, Jack waxes nostalgic as he covers some of the finer details in winning the 1967 PGA and the 1980 US Open at Baltusrol.

It is time for an hour of Q &A. Right out of the gate, a gentleman asks Tiger and Jack who they thought was the greatest golfer of all time. Jack and Tiger chuckle and simultaneously say, tongue and cheek, "me."

The next question is asked of both golfers. The reporter wants to know about their Ryder Cup experiences. Jack and Tiger spend a considerable amount of time reliving memories from multiple decades of golf's most intense rivalry.

Once again, a hush comes over the audience indicating a deep respect for the two men who made headlines decade after decade. Listening to these two men reveal the inner workings of their thoughts during some of the greatest moments in golf is nothing short of extraordinary.

Another question is posed and before Jack and Tiger could answer, a man from the front row offers his own thoughts. Forgetting himself for a split second, he quickly offers his sincerest apology. Can you imagine the embarrassment? Every guest, if they know anything, knows they are there to listen, not talk.

Can you imagine Peter's embarrassment? He, along with James and John, are invited to ascend the mountain with Jesus. As they gather at the top, Jesus is transfigured before them and "his face shone like the sun."

To their amazement, Moses, and Elijah (i.e., representing the Law and Prophets) are there with Jesus. It is not as though Peter had a bad idea—after all, tabernacling seemed the right thing to do. What Peter failed to recognize was that it was time to listen, not talk.

Peter is in the presence of the Father, Son, and Spirit—not to mention Moses and Elijah—and he begins to hold forth about what he thought they should do. The Father interrupts, honors the Son, and then says, "listen to him."

Essentially, the Father is saying, "Peter, be quiet and listen." I wonder if we aren't more like Peter than we care to admit. Drawing near to the Lord in prayer and offering our opinions on how to run the universe and advising him on what is best for our lives is to forget into whose presence we've come.

Let's learn to draw near and listen.

Prayer – Father, forgive us for trying to advise you on what is best for our lives. Teach us to listen!

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Dennis Darville

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