



Links Players

Great Coaching

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. (1 Corinthians 1:27, NIV)

You may not recognize the name Dave Williams. But you will probably recognize some of the players he coached at the University of Houston: Fred Couples, Fuzzy Zoeller, Dave Marr, Steve Elkington, Butch Harmon, plus a golfer who ended up focusing on a different career – CBS sports announcer Jim Nantz.

Williams was affectionately known as “The Father of College Golf.” Part of it was his longevity as a coach – 35 years, from 1952 to 1987. But even more so, it was his success, winning 16 NCAA championships during that time. That’s twice as many as the next-highest coach on the list.

You might say he won because of the talent he had. And that surely was a factor; he coached 66 different players that spent time on the PGA Tour. But it takes more than just talent to win consistently like Williams did. As one of his coaching opponents said, “Coaching at this level is not about teaching fundamentals; it’s more about understanding human nature and translating that to motivating your players.” I think it’s fair to say Dave Williams motivated his players very well.

The Bible also tells us about a great coach from the region of Nazareth who went by the name of Jesus. Like Coach Williams, Jesus also had to recruit his team, a group that was known as The Twelve Disciples.

But unlike Williams, the men Jesus chose were not uniquely talented or highly sought after. They weren’t known for their speaking ability or their knowledge of Scripture. They weren’t socially elite; all but one hailed from Galilee, an area in the backwaters considered low class.

They weren’t religious leaders. Their professions of choice were very different; several were lowly fishermen. One was a tax collector, a position hated by the Jews because they overcharged for Roman taxes and pocketed the difference. There was even a Zealot, a group of revolutionaries committed to overthrowing Rome.

This group had some major faults and character flaws. In his book “Twelve Ordinary Men,” John MacArthur describes them as follows: “They were all too prone to mistakes, misstatements, wrong attitudes, lapses of faith, and bitter failure. Even Jesus remarked that they were slow learners and spiritually dense.”

With that as background, how could these be the men that Jesus was entrusting to carry out his mission after he departed? But as we see so often in the Bible, God works in ways that are contrary to the wisdom of the world. Jesus deliberately chose these men to be on his team after spending an entire night in prayer (Luke 6:12).

Despite all their faults, Jesus did the greatest coaching job in history. He patiently taught them, gently rebuked them, and continually encouraged them so that they were fully prepared to carry out the Great Commission outlined in Matthew 28:18-20.

The point is, if you feel called by God but don't think you are up to the task, remember that God's power is made perfect in our weakness. And take heart in the story of the disciples. They are living proof that God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies those he calls.

Prayer: Father! Help us remember that your grace is sufficient to overcome any challenges we face, as your power is made perfect in weakness. Amen

—

J. D. Bown

Copyright 2024 Links Players International

The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.