



Links Players

Soft Answer, Wise Tongue

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly. Proverbs 15:1-2 ESV

The movement caught my attention. One of my playing partners was walking towards a fan behind the ropes. A quiet exchange occurred while the rest of us watched from the green. A dollar bill was exchanged for four quarters.

When the “Quiet Please” sign was raised for us to finish putting, the gentleman behind the ropes had a few less coins to jiggle in his pocket. The noise of someone mindlessly jiggling coins was a pet peeve of a fellow pro and mine.

It was a brilliant transaction. Instead of a harsh word or shooting an angry glare, this player softly and kindly made her point. The fan, although slightly embarrassed, received the message.

How do you handle internal anger when encountering a pet peeve or conflict?

Our proverb today states that our words can calm or inflame anger. A harsh word comes with intensity, puts the recipient on the defensive, and escalates anger. A soft answer invites conversation and maintains the relationship. This is the difference between reacting to something or someone versus responding thoughtfully.

We also learn that a wise person uses knowledge when they respond. Wise people are thoughtful and use truth as a guide to lead others to also pursue knowledge. A foolish person blurts empty words into the air without thought or regard for another person.

I know I can react with harsh words when I feel irritated by a situation or people. More so, I am highly reactive towards myself when I fail or hurt another person. I am working on recognizing when I need to pause, breathe, and create a moment of time to respond with softer words rather than react like a fool.

Becoming people who naturally give soft answers takes practice and sometimes a little creativity. Gentleness may not always extinguish a brewing fire, but it does eliminate any further fuel for it to burn.

Practicing wisdom, thoughtfulness, concern for others, and self-discipline increases our ability to offer soft answers that foster peace and understanding rather than escalating anger.

Prayer: Lord, help me pause today and offer a soft answer to others I encounter. Thank you for the knowledge of your Word, which is my guide.

—

Pete Hiskey

Copyright 2024 Links Players International

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