

Wednesday Word July 16

Proverbs 16:32 “Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.”

Growing up, some of our really close family friends had a house on Harstine Island in Mason County. It was an amazing A-Frame house right on the water. As kids, we would search for crabs on the beach, play in the water, ride Jet skis, and swing on this big rope swing that connected to a tree that was right on the edge of the concrete bulkhead. The tree extended from the beachside lawn out over the water. We would jump from the tree, quickly sit on the 2x4 seat and swing over the beach and water and then back over the lawn until the rope settled and we could hop off.

One day, when I was about 12 years old, I decided to jump on the swing, swing out over the water and jump off at the highest point of the swing and go for a swim. I pushed off of the tree for extra momentum and careened out over the lawn, the bulkhead and readied my jump into the cold water. At the highest point of my swing, I let go and prepared to take the cold plunge. For some reason that still escapes me, once I had let go of the swing and was in midair, I changed my mind and decided I wasn't ready for the cold waters of the outlets of the Puget Sound. So, I grabbed the 2x4 seat at the end of the rope and swung back towards the tree and starting point. Now, usually it would just be the lower part of my legs below the rope swing but now it was my entire body making my much lower to the ground than normal. As I swung back toward dry land, my legs slammed into the concrete bulkhead and scraped them badly to the point of bleeding. Of course, the house we were staying at had no bandages or first aid kit, so I had to tape napkins to my skin where the bleeding abrasions were. I never tried to jump off the swing again.

I think about this story from time to time and it gets me to consider my decision making. The words I say, the simple actions I make, the way I treat others. Once I speak a word to someone, I cannot get that word back; once I act, I cannot get that behavior back. It is so important to be prayerful about our decisions and actions and not to speak or act out of emotion or frustration. How many times have we entered conflict or created hurt feelings or strife in our relationships by acting out of poor judgment or frustration? Just like my decision to not follow through with my original plan to jump into the water and grab the bottom of the swing lead to a painful encounter with the concrete bulkhead, so can our actions and words lead to painful moments in life.

The challenge for us all as humans is to build into our discipline prayerful responses as opposed to emotional reactions. The Holy Spirit will give us self-control when we surrender our emotions to Him.

Let's pray over and consider these things this week!

I love you and God Loves You,

Pastor Eric Lundberg