

One of the greatest movie monologues I have experienced has to be the speech that Coach Boone gives in *Remember the Titans*, one of my favorite sports movies of all time. Coach Boone's monologue serves as a lynchpin in the movie, marking the turning point where the Titans team, divided along racial lines, finally starts to come together. It is a touching scene where the coach pleads with his young players to abandon the madness of continuing to hate their brothers. The context of his delivery of this rousing speech is symbolic in and of itself. Coach Boone has taken the players on a grueling, seemingly crazy and directionless run through the forest that ends at the graveyard marking the site of the battle of Gettysburg.

Up till then, most of these young men have been running a crazy and directionless course in their own personal lives, letting themselves be ruled by the segregation and resulting racial tension common in Southern society for too long. Only when they stop to simply listen to a voice of reason are they able to change course and begin to heal the wounds of division.

Being able to stop and listen. This is such an important thing for all of us in our walk as Christians. Isn't it so easy for us to just go, go, go and never really take the time to consider if we are going in the right direction or if we have any direction at all?

Jesus shows us the way in the Gospel. In human terms, His ministry seems to be going incredibly well. The entire town is gathered at the door of the place He is staying! On a deeper level, though, Jesus knows that His work is unfinished. He didn't come simply to amaze people with His power and healing. Above all, He came to bring people freedom from their sins.

By spending time in prayer early in the day, He shows us the way to have the proper perspective in our own walk of faith. Jesus wasn't just looking for worldly popularity or easy success, He wanted people to know His Father.

He showed us how to do this by the way He lived His life, often taking time apart to simply be with Abba, his Father!

It is easy to get so caught up in the pursuit of worldly goals that we progressively make less and less time for God. When this happens, the direction of our lives becomes controlled by what we give our time to: money, success, career advancement and other things. With these in control, we find our peace disrupted and our lives pulled in different directions. This is not what we were made for. We were made for God!

So let us all stop a moment and take stock of our own lives. Are we running through life following our own guides? Or are we looking to be guided by the ultimate Wisdom of our Father, Abba, who loves all of us with the same infinite love that He has for Jesus! The Father is calling us to give Him priority just like Jesus did, to come away with Him at the start of each day to be strengthened and given direction by His wisdom, love and grace.

However much or little we are giving God that space where we can talk to Him and, importantly, listen to Him, He is calling us deeper. I pray for myself and all of us: *Father, give us ears to listen to you and hearts open to giving you priority and time in our lives. Help us to know the path that you have laid for us, that we might find peace and joy in your direction, and more and more leave behind the confusion and rudderlessness of sin in our fallen world. Amen.*