Tell it as it is

The task of the coach can be a thankless one. Despite every effort, the rigorous training schedule, the attention to detail, the goading, the encouraging, the shared insights and wisdom, there comes that moment when all that is left to do is to watch. The player athlete steps out onto the pitch or court, the athlete steps onto the track, and has to perform.

Parents along with coaches have lived this experience thousands of times and they know it doesn't end with the stepping out. Afterwards, something has to be said. In success the actual words may be lost in celebration but **something** has to be said. If the result comes shrouded in disappointment, again, **something has to be said**.

Finding the right words to say is a part of life. What we say to one another reveals something of ourselves and even more about our relationships. And while there are times when it is right to be silent, to simply 'be', even the silence has to be broken and then both what is said and how it is said are so important.

Some of the important things we say come from the head such as when the coach has analysed the athlete's performance and passes on observations and technical advice. But usually the most important things we say come from the heart. These are weighted by the feeling that drives them, the passion, the depth, perhaps even the need to release a burden.

There is a world of difference between saying what we think and saying what we believe and the Christian desire to let others know of our faith will be heart-driven as much as, if not more than, mind-driven. And, yes, I know, that is so much easier for me to write than for any of us to do.

So what can be said? Tell it as it is. There is no story more authentic to share than your own. It does not have to be glossy or dramatic let alone worthy of being made into a movie. Indeed, simple is profound. And yet simple can be amazing when it is the story of a life changed for ever.

The most effective words from the coach will be those which are sincere, honest, positive and well-intentioned. They will also be offered within a trusting relationship. Maybe that is a good basis for us when we are presented with an opportunity to share our faith. We may not all be eloquent, but we are who we have been made, and, if others are willing to listen, let's be ready to speak.

(See Ephesians 4; 15, Proverbs 24; 26, Zechariah 4; 15)

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