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The Squeaky Wheel

Mr. Literal

The thought that the squeaky wheel gets the grease brings to mind the idea that there is a purpose for the squeak. The squeak is actually a warning to add grease. If the wheel did not squeak the easy fix of adding grease may not be done. Not only that, but if the squeak occurs and no one is around to hear it, the simple solution of adding grease is not accomplished. Also, if a person hears the squeak, they must be prepared to know what to do. To some the squeak is an annoyance, but to the maintenance tech, it is an alarm. Problems to some are annoyances; but to others they are opportunities. To some people, a squeaky wheel is something to be avoided. Maybe through ignorance, or laziness, or familiarity, people have learned to live with the squeak. To them it is how it has always worked. The dangers of ignoring the squeak are many. An ignored squeak leads to the wheel falling off. It may fall off at high speeds and fly through the air causing damage to other equipment

and men. Many times it is not a scheduled event but an emergency. The squeak can be ignored for a short time to schedule a time to grease it but it cannot be ignored long because it causes irreparable damage.

I met a man at the VA Nursing Home the other day. His name was literally, Mr. Literal!

I had arrived at the home a little early and was going to visit and talk with some of the residents before our service. As I entered the elevator, a nurse I knew stopped me and said, "*Would you mind talking to a man on the 5th floor that keeps hollering?*" When asked to help, I always have a hard time saying "No." So I told her I would stop by and see if I could help him. She gave me his room number, but as I got out of the elevator, it was apparent what room he was in!

I could hear him yelling, "*Please help me! Someone, please help me. I don't know where I am and what I am doing and where I am going!*" I hurried to his room and got him to calm down. I told him that he was in the VA home and that they were going to take good care of him. He kept saying, "*But I don't know where I am going.*" I tried to reassure him but was not making much headway. Finally, all the sudden it occurred to me that maybe he was talking about death.

I asked him, *“Do you mean that you don’t know where you are going when you die?”* He said *“Yes!”* Well, I knew right then, that I could help him! I got him to tell me about his life. He said he had been baptized and believed in God but did not know if he would go to heaven or hell! I told him the amazing story of the death of Jesus and His purpose for dying on the cross. I then told him that if he would believe in Jesus, and what Jesus did on the cross for him, all he had to do was to ask God to save him for Jesus’ sake. He said he would like to do that. He then bowed his head and prayed, receiving Jesus as his Savior! I don’t know who was happier, him or me! He calmed down and I left.

I decided to go back and see how he was doing the next Tuesday. I went to his room, and he wasn’t there! When I had left, he was lying in bed in a hospital gown. I feared that he had died, and I was glad that he trusted Jesus before he died. Just then a nurse entered the room. I asked him, *“What happened to Mr. Literal?”* He said, *“I don’t know, maybe he is down in the dining hall.”* I went down to the hall. I looked around the room and, partly because of my eyesight, couldn’t find him. Just then, the nurse who had asked me to talk to him met me. She exclaimed, *“I don’t know what you said to Mr. Literal, but he is a changed man!”* I told her that I told him about trusting Jesus as his Savior. Which he did! I said, *“I am looking*

for him, but I can't find him." She pointed to a table and said, "That's him right there."

I went over to the table. I didn't recognize him! He was dressed up and was sitting there just as calm as he could be. I asked him if he remembered me. He said *"Yes, and thank you for telling me about Jesus! I wanted to get dressed and tell others about what happened to me!"*

He was definitely a changed man!

I am reminded of the Bible story of Blind Bartemaeus.

Mark 10 :46-52 "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.”

He sat on the side of the road and they told him that Jesus was passing by. He started yelling, “...**Jesus thou son of David, have mercy on me!**” He didn’t know what Jesus would do but he knew he needed help. Others tried to get him to quiet down, but he just kept on yelling. Finally, Jesus stopped and asked him what he wanted. Jesus then healed him giving him his sight back!

This is a good example of the squeaky wheel. Blind Bartimaeus and Mr. Literal both started yelling until they were helped!

I visited Mr. Literal many times after that. He got weaker and weaker. He was always glad to see me. I remember the last time I saw him. They had moved him into the hospice room and were preparing him for death. I asked him if he remembered trusting Jesus as his Savior and he said, “*Yes, and thank you for telling me.*”

The next time I went back he was unconscious. His three brothers, who I had never met, were in the room. I told them that

they didn't need to worry about Mr. Literal. He would be in heaven soon! I then told them about how he had trusted Christ as his Savior.

I am so glad that, in this instance, the squeaky wheel got the grease!

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