



Weekly Devotion

“Solomon, Wyatt Earp, and the best way to calm a dispute”

One of my favorite movies is “Tombstone”, a western based on Wyatt Earp (played by Kurt Russell) and Doc Holliday (played by Val Kilmer) and their war against a gang of outlaws called the Cowboys.

I especially like the scene with Wyatt Earp and Ike Clanton—the scene where Wyatt confronts Ike and threatens to turn his head into a canoe.

This scene begins when a stoned-out-of-his-mind Curly Bill Brocius kills the town marshal, Fred White.

Wyatt Earp then jumps in and knocks Curly Bill unconscious with the butt of his pistol and starts to take him into custody. But Ike Clanton and the Cowboy gang surround Wyatt and try to intimidate him into turning loose of Curly Bill.

Wyatt of course refuses to let him go. So the Cowboys press in tighter, and Ike threatens to tear Wyatt apart. That’s when Wyatt cocks his pistol and shoves the barrel up against Ike’s forehead and tells him: “Your friends might get me in a rush. But not before I make your head into a canoe. Do you understand me?”

Go and re-watch this scene and take a good look at Wyatt Earp’s eyes during his interaction with Ike. Wyatt’s eyes say he’s made up his mind: He’ll pull that trigger in a second if Ike and his gang of Cowboys force him to—and he won’t think twice about it.

Then take a look at Ike. Look at his eyes. They’re filled with terror and helplessness because he knows he’s dealing with a man who

ain’t bluffin’ when he said, “You die first. Get it?”

This is a fun scene to watch. But it’s also very instructive because it brings to life something Solomon said in the book of Proverbs: “A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute” (Proverbs 15:18).

Ike Clanton and Wyatt Earp are good examples of the kind of men Solomon is talking about. Ike is a hot-tempered man who’s looking to instigate conflict and stir up violence. While Wyatt is a man who is slow to anger, even in the middle of a threatening situation.

A wise man will always maintain his cool—even when he’s dealing with threats. But keeping your cool doesn’t mean being a wimp. It means when threats come your way, you have the self-discipline to keep your mind, your emotions, and body under complete control so you can calm the dispute in the smartest way possible.

It means when a problem arises, you at first use your mind rather than your fists to solve the problem. But it also means being ready on a moment’s notice to channel the warrior within and dispose of threats in order to protect yourself and others.

In this scene, notice that Wyatt Earp never lost his cool. He was slow to anger and calmed the dispute without having to resort to violence—and because Wyatt kept his head, Ike Clanton didn’t have to lose his.

In fact, Wyatt didn’t have to kill anybody here.

But he was ready to take lethal force if necessary—and the important thing is this: Ike knew that. And that’s why the bullies backed down and everyone walked away with their lives that night (except for poor Fred White, whose death prompted this whole encounter).

The lesson we can learn from this scene is this: A man doesn’t have to be a trigger-happy cowboy to prove how tough he is.

A real-world tough guy is a man of wisdom and strength. He is a man of self-control who only engages in violence as an absolute last resort. He is a powerful man who’s capable of inflicting great harm; but at the same time, like Solomon said, he’s a man who makes the moral choice to exercise self-control and do what’s smart and right to diffuse a tense situation.

Bro. Colin Trisler

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Pastor

Memorial Service

Old Catahoula Church/Cemetery

Memorial Services

Will be held on **April 24, 2022**

beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Bro. Kent Nugent

will be preaching the message.

"Dinner on the ground"

to follow. Please bring your favorite dish!

Clean up days will be April 2 at 9:00

a.m. and April 9 at 9:00 a.m.

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