

The Master Packer

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At my house, I am known as “the Master Packer.” I just have the ability to fit things into nearly any given space and maximize usage. It doesn’t matter whether we are packing the truck or the car for a trip or loading the dishwasher. I just seem to be able to look at an area, look at what needs to go in and figure out the best arrangement so as to get the most use out of the space available.

This has some advantages, but some drawbacks, as well. For instance, if my wife knows that we need to get a lot of stuff into an area, she will get me to take care of it. On the other hand, sometimes if we add things to the existing cargo, I will take everything out and completely reload it. I like to see everything up front before I decide how I need to put it in.

The biggest drawback to being the Master Packer is that I tend to feel like I can do it better than anyone else. After all, if I am the master, then certainly I can do it better than another person. The worst part of all is that it fosters in me an attitude that I have to be right. If I can do it the best, then obviously I will always be right.

This line of thinking can easily lead to a feeling of infallibility. This attitude can lead to disaster. First, it will not allow us to take suggestions from other people. I once had a Commanding Officer who felt like since he was the CO, he automatically knew more about the operation of the ship than anyone else. Unfortunately, he was an aviator in command of an oiler. He had officers onboard who had spent over twenty years each serving aboard oilers and knew far greater than he did about underway replenishment. One of the CO’s decisions, which went against the recommendation of the Deck Department Head, resulted in serious injury of one of our Sailors. The CO began to feel that he was infallible and it resulted in needless injury.

There are times, however, when we would benefit from listening to others. The wisest person knows that even though he may be an expert, too many times we fail to see a better way because we have become so accustomed to doing it in a manner that has proven effective in the past. He knows that he is also prone to mistakes and does not always have the fullest information.

The Bible tells us that all people are fallible. We are not perfect. We all make mistakes. I hate to say it, but sometimes, even the Master Packer is wrong. We have a term for our fallibility. It is called “sin.” It means that none of us is perfect. The only One who is perfect is God. The only man who has ever been perfect is the one called Jesus and he was perfect because of His unique relationship with God.

If you, like me, sometimes think of yourself as the master of any given thing, remember that we are human and subject to be wrong. We are all sinners and in need of God’s forgiveness. There is nothing bad about being right, just don’t ever get to the point that you don’t think that you can be wrong. God alone is perfect. Not even the Master Packer is right all the time.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in church on Sunday.