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Melvin University
and Me

About "Listening"

In many cases, the training courses of leaders conducted in churches contain content about 'listening'. It means that it is important to listen well in the ministry of guiding and caring for a team or group.

Listening has a variety of teachings, such as passive, active, and paraphrasing, etc. It is also true that listening is highly important in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

But there's a fatal mistake in this regard: we're tempted to open up our own academic background, our own history, and our own Biography too quickly. This impulse is bound to happen all the time, a fatal mistake for a small group leader.

There is no problem between students and teachers at school, and there is no problem answering when the other person asks. However, in this case, opening too much is more harmful than helping in relationships. I don't think it's wise for us to talk about Biography first without the other person asking. This is because it results in causing the other person to have the following misunderstanding:

"Is he going to brag to me?"

"Is he coming to me to brag about himself?"

"Who doesn't know as much as he does?"

"Did I ask him?"

As a result, it becomes boring and negative rather than positive, as the mind that was considered good disappears. This is a fatal mistake. It can be made up for it with something else, but I think it's already a little late.

We can't avoid it when we have to use our own Biography. For example, when we write a book or have to submit a resume, we can't avoid it. But it's really forbidden for us to talk about academic background, history, and biography from our own mouths. Why do we expose ourselves so quickly? In the end, it has no choice but to see it as self-pride, and it has no choice but to see it as a lack of consideration from the other person. If we really want to introduce ourselves, we should wait until a third person introduces you. We can't do anything, even if they don't introduce us. The fatal thing lies in saying it ourselves. Moreover, these days, because of the Internet, people can find out all of our history by typing our name. We don't have to say it ourselves.

It sounds a little childish, but if the other person says, "I have visited New York." Then we might say, "It would have been nice!" That's enough. By the way, if I say "I've been to the U.S." and talk about my experience longer. Definitely, wouldn't it be rude?

Also, if the other person says, "I graduated from OOO university," You can say, "You graduated from a good university." That's it. But you say "I graduated from OOO University," and talk about my university longer, Definitely, wouldn't it be kind of weird?

Especially if this kind of talk comes and goes from inside the church! A small group leader should not do this. The leader also believes that self-discipline and self-control are necessary.