**ENCOURAGEMENT, CORRECTION, AND ENTITLEMENT (SUNDAY MORNING OF MAY 15, 2016)**

Many people often want encouragement more than correction, and many people often want to give encouragement more than correction; however, there needs to be a balance. A white belt, for example, needs more encouragement than correction at first just so that they do not get overwhelmed and frustrated. A black belt, on the other hand, would need little encouragement but should be perfecting their abilities.

One problem for a lot of people is that they do not allow others to struggle to a certain degree to see improvement. Some parents, for instance, swoop in and take over if they see their kids struggle. Then those kids never learn how to do things, get past failures, function in the world, and succeed. Always seek to succeed and win. That way, even in times of failure or loss, you can learn from it and still actually win. (By the way, what Jesus did at the cross was a victory.)

Many people have a sense of entitlement, having false beliefs that they deserve certain things that they have not earned. These people try to demand things from man or even God. For example, some people call themselves "self-made" men and demand respect from others. For one, there are not truly self-made people. Every single person has gotten help from somebody (parents, friends, teachers, coaches, and definitely God). For another, no amount of money, titles, championships, or success means that you have earned other people's respect (especially if all these things are yourself and not anybody else). Lastly, if you actually believe yourself to be a self-made man, then it will not matter to you whether or not you have my respect. If you keep seeking it, then I will actually have power over you.

In the church, we need to avoid a sense of entitlement, as if God owes us anything; however, we should humbly and gratefully accept what He gives us in His grace. God is not a respecter of persons, meaning that His love does not depend upon your wealth or social status (Acts 4:31-33 and 10:34, James 2:1, Psalm 138:6, Proverb 24:23). The Christian faith is the most level of playing fields.

There are two common perception issues amongst people: 1) "I cannot do that, so I will not try." 2) "I can do that, so I do not need to practice." Just as we do not accepts these mindsets in the gym or dojo, we should not accept them in the church.