

Outsmarting the Game Warden

In the little book, *Laughter in Appalachia*, Fred Park of Berea, Kentucky, tells a story about a man named Quill, who lived way back in the woods where he hunted and fished all the time.

Quill didn't pay any attention to the hunting seasons or laws or anything, and he knew the woods better than the game warden.

The game warden had been trying to catch Quill for a long time. Today was the day. He knew Quill would be up early to go fishing. So the game warden sneaked down there in the middle of the night and hid on top of Quill's house. This way, he knew he had the jump on Quill. He'd let him head out and then he'd follow him. His plan was to hide in the woods until Quill had caught a large, illegal bunch of fish, and he'd catch him.



As it started to get a little bit of daylight, the game warden could hear Quill get up, start a fire and put the coffee on. His stomach started growling at the smell of that coffee and those fresh-smelling biscuits as they baked in the oven. He could hardly contain himself.

Suddenly, out walked Quill on the porch and hollered, "Come on down here and git some of this coffee and biscuits while they're hot! I know you're out there!" He went back in and shut the door.

The game warden could not believe it. He climbed down and walked up on the porch and into the house and exclaimed, "Well, how did you know I was out there?"

Quill replied, "I didn't. I walk out there and say that every morning, just in case ye are!"

Quill may not have been a genius, but he knew enough to take precautions. He was ready!

The lesson is loud and clear. The difference between winning and losing in life is often preparation. The one willing to prepare gets the victory.

In 1976, Indiana University's basketball team was undefeated throughout the regular season and captured the NCAA national championship. Controversial and colorful coach Bobby Knight led them to that championship. Shortly afterward, Knight was interviewed on the television show *60 Minutes*.

(more)



The commentator asked him, “Why is it, Bobby, that your basketball teams at Indiana are always so successful? Is it the will to succeed?”

“The will to succeed is important,” Knight said, “but I’ll tell you what’s more important is the will to prepare. It’s the will to go out there every day training and building those muscles and sharpening those skills!”

Preparation is an essential quality of character. It is a mark of wisdom. The Bible is clear on this point.

Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest (Proverbs 6:6-8 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter