

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH 8, 2013

A BIT OF HELP

“Which of the three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” (Luke 10:36, NIV)

I DROPPED IN ON THE LOCAL COLLEGE TOURNAMENT EARLIER THIS WEEK. Some quality Division I schools, including the current NCAA top-ranked Cal Bears.

It was the first time I’d been to a college tournament in a long while—maybe, just maybe, since playing in one too long ago to remember whether I’ve made an appearance as a spectator since. It was a packed golf course, five-hour rounds back-to-back for 36 holes squeezed into a not-yet-spring short day.

Therefore, speed of play was of the essence. And yet, my biggest surprise? Coaches raking bunkers. I didn’t expect to see this any more than I’d anticipate seeing a basketball coach mopping up the court during a timeout or a college football coach working the chain gang. Even Oregon’s famously hobbled Casey Martin went down into the bunker and tidied it up for three players who made quite a mess there on one hole. I know how much going up and down hurts Martin. Yet there he was, serving like, well, a servant.

Servanthood is one of those very-much-Christian words. It doesn’t get a lot of play elsewhere in contemporary society. That doesn’t mean we don’t appreciate it. We give plenty of public praise to our civil servants and more yet to those who serve our country in the military (no matter which country you hail from!). But servanthood as an idea, as an exercise of character—not much discussion there.

Still, bring up one noted case, one brilliant example, and you’ll earn a hushed understanding from almost any crowd. His name—that is, all that anyone has ever called him—is “the good Samaritan.” Jesus, the original storyteller, didn’t even call him that, but just “a Samaritan.” It’s the rest of us who recognized him as good, as the one who was a true neighbor to the molested castoff left for dead on the side of the road.

Servants of all kinds function out of humility. They do things that others do not for no good reason other than good. Though it means going out of the way, they take that testy road because, they know, Jesus loved the idea.

Opening questions: Servant stories

What example of Samaritan-like servanthood have you witnessed recently? Do you think the person recognized that their serving was exceptional?

The Samaritan’s service

Read Luke 10:25-37. Why did Jesus tell this parable? What are the details of the Samaritan’s service? In the end, how did Jesus make the Samaritan a pattern for us all?

More Jesus on servanthood

Read Matthew 25:31-46. According to this teaching, whom are we to serve? How does service of this kind demonstrate our connection to Jesus?

Works and grace

Read Ephesians 2:8-10. Adding this passage to what we have already read, what balance must we keep between God’s grace and our works? What produces salvation? What enables good work? What brings reward?
