



DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR SEPTEMBER 20, 2013

A WINNING ATTITUDE, PART 8

In everything give thanks for this is the will of God... (1 Thessalonians 5:18a, KJV)

DRIVING TO THE PRAIRIE CLUB IN VALENTINE, NEBRASKA with Lorraine, my bride of 55 years, was almost as important as the destination itself.

The Prairie Club, named “the St. Andrews of America” by Golf Digest, was a vision of Paul Schock and brought into being by PGA Tour champions Graham Marsh and Tom Lehman and their architectural teams. Surrounding the two 18-hole layouts is a land mass of prairie dunes about the same size as Ireland or Scotland. Mounds and mounds of prairie grass cover the sea of sand decorated by verdant yucca plants.

Lorraine and I just walked out to one of the five dedicated places of solitude behind the fourth hole of the par-3 Horse Course. I’m overlooking hundreds of green ponderosa pine. Opposite the canyon below are white sand cliffs. Below is the Snake River. I hear ripples of water and feel the breeze whistle across my face.

Our hosts here are Shawn and Melanie Munn. We were told today by a staff member that he is one of their favorite members. Shawn lives in Colorado but grew up on a farm in Nebraska. Shawn has three big loves in his life. First, Jesus; second, Melanie and his three children; and third, golf. When Shawn was a teenager, he almost lost his life in an accident when he was helping his father grind corn. That accident took one of his arms and a leg. He was an athlete and felt his days in sports were over. Marriage and a family too.

But God had other plans. Shawn learned to walk with a prosthetic and play golf, his sport of choice. I know few people who enjoy life and the game of golf more than Shawn. Those of us who know him always notice the smile on his face. I’ve never heard him say a word about his missing leg and arm. What I do hear from him is how thankful he is to be playing golf.

It’s not hard to give thanks as Lorraine and I sit here today. As I reflect upon, “In everything give thanks for this is the will of God,” I’m struck with the phrase that giving thanks *is* the will of God.

Opening questions: Unusual thanksgiving

Describe a difficult time in your life that, in retrospect, you ended up being thankful for. How did you come to this place of thanksgiving?

Against the tide

The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk understood that the judgment of God was going to come upon the Jewish people and they would be taken into exile. *Read Habbakuk 3:16-19.* How did Habakkuk describe the difficulties of his time?

What allowed him to rejoice all the same?

Our response to circumstances

Consider 1 Thessalonians 5:18 in light of Philipians 3:7-9 and 4:10-13. Where did Paul’s perspective come from?

In what ways have you reached this kind of perspective? In what places do you still need to layer in thankfulness against the press of certain troubles?

Written by Jim Hiskey ©2013 Links Players International.