

GOD'S BRAIN

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought the field.”
(Matthew 13:44, NIV)*

WHEN ZACH JOHNSON APPROACHES A TOURNAMENT COURSE, he does so with a measured preparation that allows him to apply his exceptional shotmaking skills target by target and hole by hole. In his own words, he picks golf course apart.

Contrarily, Bubba Watson goes after a course with shapes and colors. He noted last week that his annual difficulty with TPC Sawgrass has to do with an inability to see where the rough cuts into a fairway and how the land lays itself out in front of him.

What we’re saying is this: Zach Johnson plays golf out of his left brain, Bubba Watson out of his right. Johnson is a tactician, Watson an artist. Johnson forges a game plan and sticks with it; Watson decides on the spot what shot is best played. And yet there is a place set for both each year at the Masters champions dinner.

Now think, if you will, about which side of his brain God uses. Maybe that seems too anthropomorphic to you—applying human qualities to a God who cannot be captured that way. Except that we were made in God’s image. Though God’s functional parameters extend infinitely beyond ours—his thoughts really are vastly higher than our thoughts—we function according to the same principles. God thinks and we think; God feels and we feel; God communicates and we communicate; God loves and we love.

So what of God’s brain—righty or lefty? Of course, the answer is both. Without limits, both.

This can be hard to recognize because we spend so much time with our own limitations and the limitations of those who teach us. Here’s one way to see it. Dare you to find bullet points in Scripture! I know, our pastors and theologians sometimes consider themselves duty-bound to extract “a list of truths” from a treasure in a field and the wide-eyed, all-in man who found it there. But this tiny unstructured parable came from the right brain of God just as much as the left-brained commandments of old did. Should we expect anything different? Aren’t we the ones who speak of the “fullness of God?” Go ahead, pick God’s brain. Just remember that sometimes we need to approach him like Bubba, and sometimes it’s better to take aim like Zach.

Opening questions Do you understand the difference between a left brain approach and right brain approach? Which is your default? Which do you think is more prevalent in Scripture?

READING Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 23, Luke 10:25-37

Seeing as broadly as God does

Today’s reading includes three well-known passages of Scripture. Consider each afresh today. How would you describe their presentation: left brain or right brain? How would you describe the gist of their content: left brain or right brain? How does the passage let you in on the mind (and heart) of God?

The Ten Commandments _____

The 23rd Psalm _____

The Parable of the Good Samaritan _____

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