

**WHO NEEDS JESUS?**

*Some of the Pharisees...asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains." (John 9:40-41, NIV)*

EVERY TIME I MAKE MY WAY TO ONE OF THE LINKS FELLOWSHIPS in our region, I zip quickly past the local muni, a few holes of which skirt the highway. Yesterday, I saw a typical late afternoon player, teeing off with a stiff swing, bedecked in his gym socks and XXL printed T-shirt. From every indication in that fleeting moment, he was fully enjoying himself.

Players like this love the game for its camaraderie and relaxation. They may have an interest in getting better, but no determination or time. Even if you offered them a free lesson, many of them would decline. "Don't need to take it that seriously," they might say. Or, "It's just a ploy to get me to buy a bunch more after that."

In other words, need—whether in the golf realm or the spiritual realm—is not always impetus enough for people to seek or accept help.

Universally, we have a spiritual need. If we were to deliver the Gospel in two sentences, it could go like this:

Because we are sinners, we have no way to access a perfect God. Jesus Christ, who was perfect, is able to offer that access, because by his sacrificed blood he has opened the way to God for all who believe.

When you consider the first sentence, you find the need. We are trapped in our sin, unable to save ourselves. Nearly every person, though not necessarily admitting to their sin condition, will admit to having suffered the consequences of words and actions that do not honor God (or at least words and actions that do not honor others). It's impossible to escape the effects of our own sin.

But this does not mean we are all willing to accept God's offer of salvation, any more than every admitted duffer is willing to take a lesson. We are masters of excuse-making and procrastination. *Let me call the shots just a while longer.* And in our pride, like the Pharisees, we choose a blindness even as we say we can see. The only way out of this willing condition is a willing move toward the voice of Jesus, who in his exalted perfection still calls by his Spirit: "Come, follow me." It's an offer we refuse to our eternal detriment.

**Opening questions** Why do people remain in patterns they know are not good for them? In what ways have you seen this tendency in others? In yourself? What moves you to make important changes in your life?

**READING** John 9:35-10:5, Luke 5:27-32, Romans 1:28-2:11

**The blind man and the Pharisees**

In the John 9 passage, who was shown to be blind? What are the similarities between physical blindness and spiritual blindness? What are the differences?

---



---



---



---

**The well and the sick**

In Luke 5, Jesus defended his ministry to "sinners." What do we learn from this passage about the heart of people and the heart of Jesus?

---



---



---

**All forms of sin—one way out**

What kinds of sin are revealed in Romans 1:28-31? How about in Romans 2:1-3? What is the destiny of the those who turn to God in repentance, and the destiny of those who don't?

---



---



---



---

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2014 Links Players International.