

REAL WORLD GOD 2: THE NATURE OF GRASS

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever. (Isaiah 40:6, NIV)

I LIVE IN A VALLEY ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF THE COUNTRY OF ISRAEL. As valleys go, it's a big one, with rich soils that feed the world. Gladly, there is also room here for some fine golf courses. Many can stake a claim to excellence, but when it came to best in the region, the conversation nearly always turned to one: Stevinson Ranch.

Until last summer.

That was when the managing owner announced the course would close. His was a family of farmers, and the combination of the thin golf economy, a remote location, a failing water supply, and the discussion of putting the land back into dollar-yielding production spelled the doom of this golfers' haven.

Grass, we know by observation and the words of the prophet, does not last. It is green for a season, then goes brown and sleeps. Here at Stevinson Ranch was the story of turf writ large. On the day it closed with one final shotgun round, that owner, George Kelley, swallowed hard yet told the players, "It's sad, but let's make this a celebration, a good old-fashioned Irish wake."

We cannot escape the question of death. It stares us in the center of our eyes and says, "What are you going to do about me?"

The revelation of Scripture makes it clear that three things are eternal: God, God's Word, and the souls of men and women. But these things do not live on independent of one another. If our souls are to be united with God in eternity, we must reckon with our mortality and the possibility of eternal life that God's Word says can be ours.

Maybe it has been some time since you have dove deep into that Word. Maybe you have been living off dormant bermuda, so to speak, only weakly sustained. You can still recite John 3:16, but it doesn't make you marvel any longer. Or you know the promise of 1 John 1:9, that your confessed sins will be forgiven in the faithful love of God, but you've been keeping long accounts with him, letting your debts linger.

The word of God is still living and active, as it has been from the day he breathed it forth. Run to it today, and find in it the life you need to lead you right past death.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International. This study is accompanied by a 5-minute video here: <https://youtu.be/LrCdLDh4fw>. It is the standard style of Links Players to capitalize "God's Word" when referring to the Bible but not when referring to the word(s) of God therein.

Opening questions What losses would you feel most if your favorite course closed? • How often would you say you reflect on death? What would you say is a healthy amount of such reflection?

READING 1 Peter 1:22-25; James 1:19-25; Psalm 119:97-104

The powerful word (1 Peter 1)

What is the nature of God's word? What does it supply to us? How might you improve your grip on the words of Scripture?

Reading, hearing, doing (James 1)

How strong is the connection between hearing or reading Scripture and putting it into practice? What is an instruction from God's Word that you know you need to follow more closely in your life?

A joyful following (Psalm 119)

What line jumps out at you most from this passage? To what extent can you identify with the joy the psalmist found in following God's word?
