



Links Players

The Great Exchange - The Ultimate Mulligan

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (1 Corinthians 5: 21, ESV)

I once had a good friend ask if he could borrow my new driver. “Certainly”, I said. Then I turned to speak with another player in our foursome. When I turned back, my friend had the shaft in one hand and the clubhead in the other.

I eventually swapped an old driver for one I had seen in yet another friend’s bag. Surprisingly, I played well with that one for a long time.

One of the more remarkable stories about swapping out clubs is the one Fred Couples told at his Hall of Fame induction. As the story goes, he visited Tom Watson at his home in Kansas looking for advice.

As Fred was rummaging through Tom’s garage, he discovered a driver belonging to Tom’s wife. Fred was not only given that driver but would end up using it as a three wood in multiple Ryder and President’s Cups.

Scripture has some significant things to say about swapping things too. One is tragic. The other is infinitely glorious. Tragically, Paul tells us that mankind has exchanged the worship of the true and living God for something in the created order.

Rather than worshipping God, we exchange him for some aspect of creation. It could be our careers, our sexual drives, or our love of golf. Strange though it may seem, when we take a good thing and turn it into the best thing, we make it a bad thing.

Let’s be clear, God wants us to love our wives, our careers, and the game of golf. But he insists we love him first and foremost. When we reverse the order, Scripture defines that as idolatry. This is the tragic exchange. What about the infinitely glorious exchange?

Biblical scholars call the one found in today’s verse, “The Great Exchange.” Here, we discover the greatest exchange in the history of the world.

As you would expect, an exchange involves at least two people swapping one thing for another. Here the two parties are Christ Jesus and repentant sinners. In a stunning act of utter selflessness and love, at the cross, Jesus took our sin and in exchange gave us his righteousness. Could there be any better swap?

In “The Great Exchange,” we discover Jesus swapping his perfect righteousness, which is of infinite worth, for our sinfulness, which is only worthy of punishment & death.

When I think about this Great Exchange in comparison with the other exchanges I’ve mentioned, two things now stand out. First, while my buddy may have broken my club, what Jesus gives us never breaks, deteriorates, or diminishes. Second, while Fred Couples may have played some incredible golf with a three wood, it didn’t make him the perfect golfer, but when Jesus includes us in his righteousness, God sees us as perfect – totally forgiven of all sin.

Prayer – Father, take us deeper and deeper into our understanding of and appreciation for amazing grace.

READING - 1 Corinthians 5: 21; Romans 1: 21-27; Psalm 96: 4-5

OPENING QUESTIONS: Have you ever swapped clubs in a trade? Did you go on to play well with them?

1. In 1 Corinthians 5: 21, Paul teaches us that when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, an exchange occurs. What does Christ get? What does the repentant sinner get? Why is this so important? Discuss.

2. In Romans 1: 21-27, Paul mentions three exchanges. What are they? Discuss the significance and outcomes of each exchange.

3. In Psalm 96:4-5, the Psalmist mentions God and gods. He describes the “gods” as _____. How does he contrast God with the gods? Discuss the various idols that previously controlled your life. What do we see the Psalmist doing in this psalm?
