



Links Players

Proverbs – The Ant

Four things on earth are small, but they are exceedingly wise: the ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer....
(Proverbs 30: 24-25, ESV)

Rushing to the tee box is not the wisest of strategies. Failing to stretch before a round is foolish. Not taking the time to rehearse your putting stroke is short-sighted. In addition to physical preparation, sports psychologists have taught us the importance of pre-round, mental preparation. To improve performance on or off the golf course, preparation is crucially important.

In a recent interview, Jack Nicklaus explained why he would arrive early in his preparation for the majors, “I always want to play three or four, five practice rounds beforehand to make sure everything else was out of the way and all I had to do was concentrate on golf.”

If we know nothing else, we know that Jack arrived prepared for the “big ones.” You don’t win eighteen majors by “winging it.” Other tour players have their own unique preparation strategies.

A few weeks back, Tiger arrived at Southern Hills in his efforts to prepare for the 2022 PGA Championship. The Director of Golf, Cary Cozby, caddied for Tiger. Asked about Tiger’s preparation, Cozby replied, “I think he can contend.... This trip was all business.”

Whatever the strategy necessary to contend, to win, to win the big ones, a major key to success is preparation. Now, to be fair, preparation doesn’t guarantee success, but it certainly increases the odds.

To succeed in business or marriage, preparation is essential. Failing to prepare for that upcoming board meeting is irresponsible. Forgetting your wife’s birthday is steroidal stupidity.

Considering today’s text, and just for fun, I did a little reading on ant behavior. While there is far more than I can report, and far too much that I didn’t understand, let’s just say—Solomon was way ahead of his times.

As fascinating as ants are, none rise to the level of being “image bearers” of God. If the animal kingdom can teach us a great many things about our Maker and ourselves, let’s make sure to pay attention.

The famous theologian of the First Great Awakening was Jonathan Edwards. He was also a proto entomologist. He spent an enormous amount of time studying the behaviors of insects, especially the spider. As a result of his many studies, he wrote volumes of erudite theology from which practical applications of Christian living emerged.

Even if we never rise to the level of Jonathan Edwards, let’s learn from the created order and prepare our spiritual lives accordingly

Prayer – Lord, teach us to especially live our lives in preparation for your arrival.

READING - Proverb 30:24-28; 1 Peter 3:13-17; Luke 12:35-40.

OPENING QUESTIONS: what does your pre-round preparation look like? Compare and contrast among yourselves.

1. Why would Solomon here (**Proverbs 30:24-28**), and others elsewhere (e.g., Jesus in **Matthew 10:29-31**), encourages us to observe the animal kingdom? What can we learn from an ant’s behavior?

2. **1 Peter 3:13-17**, especially verse 15, is the classic text on defending the faith. List and discuss the what’s, why’s, and how’s of defending the faith. Discuss the importance of preparation.

3. In **Luke 12: 35-40**, Jesus teaches the disciples the importance of “readiness,” or preparation. What can we learn about preparedness from this section?
