



# Links Players

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## Devoted

*...Thus says the LORD, I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. (Jeremiah 2:2, ESV)*

If we can say anything about the greatest golfers in the world, we can say without fear of contradiction they are devoted to their craft.

Any investigation into the PGA Tour's best player's daily activities will quickly discover extraordinary dedication to a list of routines. To do that, these players must not only be motivated and disciplined, they must also intensely love what they do. Whatever else might factor into these players' success, devotion to their craft is fundamental.

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What the television audience observes week-in-and-week-out is the way PGA Tour players measure themselves against par, against other competitors, against past performance, and against any progress toward their goals.

What we don't see is the enormous amount of time they've spent in the gym, on the range, watching video, listening to their swing coaches, revisiting their dietary habits, working on drills, etc. All these activities and more are expressions of devotion.

Devotion to golf is, in the final analysis, a matter of love. It goes without saying that we are devoted to what we love.

Our commitments to purchase the proper equipment, time spent on the range, time spent on the putting green, time taking lessons, and time playing, are, fundamentally, expressions of what matters to us.

What is true about our devotion to the game of golf is also true about our walk with Christ Jesus. Our walk with him, at whatever level we find ourselves, is largely a reflection of our devotion to him.

First and foremost, what shouldn't be overlooked is his devotion to us. His love for us is unfathomable. His commitment to his little brothers and sisters is inexpressible (Hebrews 2:12).

When we stumble, he doesn't give up on us. When we are faithless, he remains faithful to us. When we sin, he is committed to forgive us. He will, as promised, walk with us through all the dark and discouraging chapters of our lives; he will never leave or forsake us.

As we experience his grace and love toward us, our hearts are recreated and revitalized to follow him with the deepest affections. His affections toward us awaken in us untapped affections toward him.

If that sounds cyclical, that's because it is. The Father's initiating love is given to us through his Son's life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Then, the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit to communicate the reality of his devotion to his bride (the church). We, in turn, respond with our hearts in affectionate adoration.

Today's text is Jeremiah's rehearsal regarding Israel's rescue from the tyranny of Egypt. In this oracle, the Father is reminiscing about a time in Israel's past when she was flush with affection toward her Redeemer.

Sadly, at this point in Israel's pilgrimage, she has forgotten the Father's love and dedication to her. Consequently, she has "gone after other lovers."

Later, the Apostle Paul teaches us that what happened to Israel all too often happens to us (1 Corinthians 10). When our love (devotion) to him grows cold, we can be assured that we are not availing ourselves of his extraordinary affections toward us.

When Paul says, "...the love of Christ controls us....," he is not referring to our love for Jesus, he is referencing Jesus' love for us.

It was the love of Jesus that first saved you. It is experiencing his love anew that will recover that devotion you long to give back to him.

**Prayer – Jesus, overwhelm us with your love again and again.**

—

Dennis Darville

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