



# Links Players

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## Born From Above

*Jesus answered him, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. (John 3: 3, ESV)*

At the dawn of 1986, Jack Nicklaus was “winding down his career,” as one author expresses it. At forty-six years old, the Golden Bear was past his prime, and most people never expected to hear him growl again. In the prestigious Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Tom McCollister boldly wrote, “Nicklaus is gone, done. He just doesn’t have the game anymore.”

As the azaleas were blooming at Augusta National in the Spring of ‘86, Jack hadn’t won in six years. At the time, he was 160th on the money list. After posting a score of 74 on Thursday and a 71 on Friday, hardly anyone considered him a viable contender.

When Tom Kite was asked if he thought Jack could win the ‘86 Masters, Kite replied, “I don’t think he can win any tournament.” Tom was voicing what more than a few were thinking.

When Corey Pavin was interviewed about Jack’s chances, he respectfully answered, “I think the players now respect him more for what he has done and what he has meant to golf than they respect him for his game.”

As we often say, “hindsight is 20/20.” Anyone familiar with golfing lore knows that Jack captured lightning in a bottle that week at The Masters. To shoot 30 on the inward half, at the venue, in that moment, at that age, was truly magical.

Columnists across the globe made valiant attempts to capture this amazing moment in writing. Headlines read: Master of Ceremonies Steals Show; Nicklaus Conjures Up Some Old Jack Magic; Nicklaus Saves a Ho-hum Masters. All sorts of figures of speech were used to call attention to Jack’s extraordinary accomplishment.

In a casual conversation, a former colleague off-handedly remarked, “Jack was born again.” Of all the symbolism in the world from which to choose, using sacred language to describe Jack’s amazing feat is tawdry at best and vulgar at worst.

When the screenwriter for a Rocky movie had Apollo Creed say, “God, I feel born again,” it reduced a supernatural event to a mere metaphor. Being “born again” is hardly just a figure of speech. Being

“born again” is certainly analogous to physical birth, but it is so much more than an expression of getting a new lease on life.

When Jesus tells Nicodemus that he “must be born again,” he is not merely talking to this first-century Rabbi; Jesus is announcing to everyone in the world—  
If you are to see and enter the kingdom of God, you must be born again.

When scholars translate the Greek words as “born again,” they could have easily translated them “born from above,” “new birth,” or “rebirth.” Whatever our preference, each of these translations points to that pivotal moment in a person’s life when the Spirit of God causes them to be born a second time. Why is a second birth required?

Scripture informs us that all human beings are “dead in their trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1-10, ESV). Therefore, when Jesus says, “...you must be born again,” he is not merely using a figure of speech to express a sense of heightened physical awareness. He is saying that his kingdom is spiritual. For anyone to enter, they must be born spiritually.

Charles Spurgeon was the greatest preacher of the 19th century. On one occasion, a lady in his congregation asked him, “Why do you always preach on the need to be born again?” Spurgeon responded, “Because madam, you must be born again.”

Have you been born again?

**Prayer- Jesus, send your Spirit to my heart, and bring me to life that I may enter your kingdom.**

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Dennis Darville

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