



Links Players

Kingdom Expansion - Being Tested

...death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one [Jesus] who was to come. (Romans 5:12-14, ESV)

The Wyndham Championship, the PGA Tour's last regular season event, is normally chock full of tests. This year's event was no exception. Joohyung Kim made a quadruple bogey on his first hole. If that's not a test, then I'm not sure how we would define one.

This championship is played on one of Donald Ross' masterpieces, Sedgefield Country Club. This course is considered a great test of golf, especially on the greens. Then, because it's the season finale, it's the last chance for many players to "keep their card." That's a test with which most of us are not familiar.

No one gets through life untested. In fact, seen from a biblical point of view, life itself—all of it—is a test. We tend to reduce the idea of being tested to the hard times in our lives.

In truth, the good times are tests as well. Sadly, the pilgrim's path is littered with men and women who have abandoned the faith after succeeding in business, triumphing in sport, and achieving fame, et al.

Before considering what the Scriptures teach us concerning our tests, let's ponder the tests that confronted the First and Last Adam (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15: 21-23, 45-49).

The first Adam was tested in a garden, a paradise of unspeakable and unsullied abundance. The last Adam was tested in a wilderness, a place of complete deprivation. The first Adam could eat from any tree in the garden, except one. The last Adam was without food for forty days.

The first Adam failed at trusting God's word. The Last Adam fended off the enemy by citing the written word. The first man Adam, in a coup de grace, attempted to seize the throne. The last Adam didn't consider deity a thing to be grasped. The first Adam died. The last Adam was exalted to the highest throne of heaven.

Scripture is not merely a self-help guide to having your best life now. The Bible is not primarily a "tip and technique" book on how to get through the gauntlet of life. Scripture is primarily God's self-portrait found in the "face of Christ."

Ultimately, Scripture is the story of the Father's love in the sending of his Son to rescue wayward sinners from a futile life and an eternity spent separated from his friendship. We are not the hero of the bible; Jesus is!

A "Christless Christianity" seems unthinkable. Logically, it is. Yet, every time we bypass him, we run the risk of reducing the story of the gospel to a moralistic tale of dos and don'ts. Let's not do that!

Prayer – Jesus, open our hearts and minds to greatness of the Last Adam.

READING - Romans 5: 12-21; 1 Corinthians 15: 21-23, 35-49.

OPENING QUESTIONS: What is the worst score you've made on an opening hole? Did you come back from it? Have fun with this one!

1. In Romans 5:12-21, Paul is contrasting Adam and Jesus. Discuss the "one and the many" found in these verses. Because of "one" man, Adam, _____ and _____ entered the world. Because of "one" man, Jesus, we have received _____ and are _____.

2. In 1 Corinthians 15:21-23, Paul is making the case for our resurrected bodies. What happens to "all" men in Adam? What happens to "all" men in Christ? Are these two "all's" the same? What phrase in vs. 23 qualifies the second "all." Why does that matter?
