



Links Players

Why Links? - Light of the World - Lights to the Nations

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6, ESV)

"Thank the golf gods for night golf," Jason Scott Deegan opines, writing for GOLFPASS. Deegan, borrowing from well-known golf nomenclature, appeals to the "golf gods" as the ones who should be thanked for those 60-plus courses in the United States that offer golf "under the lights." I demur!

Golf at night! If you've never tried it, give it a go. Playing golf under the stars with the added illumination of Edison's invention is loads of fun. Granted, the courses will not live up to Pinehurst or Pebble Beach, but all in all, playing golf at night is a blast.

Scripture has many things to say about light and darkness: good versus evil, understanding versus ignorance, truth versus lies, sight versus blindness—all these opposites and more are captured in the binary of "light and darkness."

As we trace biblical themes from Genesis to Revelation, we discover that the theme of light and darkness plays a prominent role in our understanding of who God is and our place in the world, in particular, what he has called us to do.

As we know, in his mutinous effort to seize autonomy—life out from under the government of God—Adam chose to revolt against God's wisdom. Consequently, he flung the human race into intellectual, moral, spiritual, and vocational darkness.

Due to Adam's disobedience, we are now bereft of an accurate intellectual understanding of the nature of God and our purpose in the world. We need the light that Jesus offers in his word to think rightly about God, ourselves, and our callings in this life.

Sadly, we are also morally corrupt. Augustine captured it best when he wrote that humanity is "incurvatus in se." This Latin phrase describes the life lived for self rather than God and others. In short, apart from the light and life of Christ, we are powerless to live the morally good life.

Furthermore, we are spiritually dead apart from the life-quickenning light that Christ shines into the heart of those who place their faith in him. As Charles Wesley wrote, "Long my imprisoned spirit lay, Fast bound in sin and nature's

night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray. I woke; the dungeon flamed with light! My chains fell off; my heart was free. I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

Finally, apart from discovering, as Paul says, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," we live in deep darkness regarding our callings. Until we situate our vocations (jobs/hobbies) in the overall context of our "vocatio" (Latin for "calling") to be lights in a world shrouded in darkness, we will have missed the ultimate meaning of our lives.

The Missio Dei (Latin for "the mission of God") beckons!

Prayer- Light of Life, send out your light and lead us to your holy hill to know you accurately and honor you in our callings.

READING - John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-16; Psalm 36:9; Psalm 43:3

OPENING QUESTIONS: Have you ever played golf at night? If so, discuss.

1. In John 8:12, Jesus says of himself, "I am light of the world." Discuss the multifaceted metaphorical, biblical meanings of "light."

2. In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus says of the disciples, "You are the light of the world." Discuss the connection between Jesus as "the light" and the disciples as "the light." What is it that others should see and then give glory to God? How do these good_____ relate to being "light?"

3. How is the Psalmist using the word light in Psalm 36:9? What does this suggest about knowing God, ourselves, and his calling? How does the Psalmist use light in Psalm 43:3?
