



Links Players

Profile of a PGA Tour Player - Drifting?

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:19-20, ESV)

If golf is about anything, it is about hitting targets. Which, as everyone knows, is about aiming in the right direction. Of all the many mistakes players make, not establishing their alignment toward the target has to rank high on the list of unforced errors.

All sorts of bad outcomes arise from not correctly aligning yourself to the target, be it fairway or green. Compiling a list of undesirable outcomes resulting from a failure to “get square to the target” would exceed the word limit of twenty more devotionals.

A few months back, I played a late nine with a father-daughter twosome I’ve gotten to know. He is our nine-time club champion. Maybe it’s a seven-time club champion, but who is counting after five times? Maybe his mom!

After spraying it all over the course for six holes, he told me on the seventh tee, “your shoulders are aimed way left.” I adjusted and hit the remaining three fairways.

In today’s video, Danny Edwards mentioned he drifted from the Lord as he wrestled with disappointments during his PGA career. Like Danny, when we lose focus on our alignment and find ourselves wide of the target, it’s time to adjust.

Staying properly aligned in golf is essential to good play. As important as that is, “taking dead aim” in life is infinitely more so.

Seventeen hundred years ago, Augustine addressed the issue of “misdirected loves.” His insight into this human condition is a masterclass in one of our fundamental struggles.

Essentially, Augustine argues that humans become what they love. If our lives are directed toward Jesus, then, according to this giant in the faith, we become more like our King. In cherishing Jesus above all else, we, over time, begin to love what he loves and hate what he hates.

He also demonstrates what happens when we misdirect our loves and loyalties. If anyone knew about “misdirected loves,” it was Augustine before his conversion. He argued that when we give our primary affection to something other than Jesus, we drift into idolatrous and dangerous hazards.

The good news for Danny and the rest of us is that the Great Shepherd will chase down his straying sheep, rescue us from our self-imposed wandering, and bring us back safely to a life of soul-satisfying communion with himself.

If you are wandering, empty, and dissatisfied with life, turn to Jesus. When you do, you will know unimaginable love, receive his forgiveness, and life-transforming direction for life—in this life and the life to come.

Prayer: Jesus, align me with the purposes for which you created me!

READING - Luke 15:11-32 (The Parable of Two Sons)

OPENING QUESTIONS: Have fun discussing the times you thought you were square to the target but discovered you were aimed way right or left. How did you find out you were misaligned?

1. This famous parable shows the relationship between a Father and his two sons. What are your observations regarding these relationships? Discuss.

2. What do the Father’s responses toward the younger son’s misdirection and eventual re-direction teach us about our heavenly Father’s love toward us? Discuss the multiple aspects of the Father’s reaction.

3. How do verses 1, 2, and 3a of chapter 15 help us understand the meaning of this parable?
