



Links Players

Driving Range Banter

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent, or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11: 9-13, ESV)

Driving Range banter has to be one of the best things about golf. When our former club champion arrives at the range, the banter begins. It is hilarious!

He uses nicknames exclusively when addressing those banging balls: Caveman, Little Bones, Ramone, Ticket, Love Machine, Barnsley Brown, Doctor T, Chuckles, Tuck-Tuck, Batman, and The General.

Not only that, he affectionately teases them about their quirky swing mechanics. No one is offended; they all love it. He gets away with it because he is an excellent player with more than a few impressive state and national achievements. Not to mention, his swing is magnificently graceful. We all covet his tempo!

Of all the “back and forth,” one of the consistent questions directed at friends comes in different forms. A few examples will give you the gist: “Have you found it?” “Have you discovered the secret?” “Have you found what you are looking for?” “If you find it, will you text it to me?”

What is implicit in all the good-natured ribbing is this—everyone on that range is seeking the answer to a better or more consistent swing. We are all in the never-ending search for “the magic.” It might be nothing more than the answer for that day’s game or the search for long-term improvement, but either way, every man and woman on that range is searching.

In today’s text, Jesus makes his followers an unbreakable promise. He says, “...the one who seeks finds....” In Matthew’s version (Matthew 7:7-11), we find the Father’s “good things.” In Luke’s account, we find the “Holy Spirit.”

Both gospels are telling us something inexpressibly important. If we make “seeking his kingdom” the priority of our lives, we will receive what the Gentiles are chasing but never really find (Matthew 6:25-33). And, infinitely more important, we receive the best thing the Father has to offer—himself in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Now that is an offer that should blow us away. The Father is never guilty of empty rhetoric. He always means what he says, and nothing can prevent him from making good on his promise. Unless, of course, we refuse to “seek first the kingdom of God.”

The idea is to “keep seeking, knocking, and asking.” That is, Jesus is teaching us that a life lived with an ongoing awareness of the presence of God is found by consistently seeking him with all one’s heart. Many years ago, a deep and godly man, Herman Witsius (1636-1708), wrote, “It is inconceivable that God should require of us to love and seek him and yet refuse to be found by us....”

Witsius is only repeating what Jesus had promised, but he is saying it as a man who discovered in experiential ways that it was true. It is one thing to acknowledge the truth of a proposition. It is an entirely different matter to experience it for oneself.

As Jonathan Edwards once observed, “There is a difference between having a rational judgment that honey is sweet and having a sense [taste] of its sweetness.”

May we go beyond mere mental acknowledgment of the veracity of Christ’s promise and build our lives around “seeking and finding” the Lover of our Souls.

Prayer: Father! Draw us irresistibly to yourself!

—

Dennis Darville

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