



Links Players

On Mission - Sending & Serving

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8, ESV)

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed. (Proverbs 19:17, ESV)

One of the more noteworthy aspects of the PGA Tour is its commitment to charitable organizations. Invariably, we see Jim Nance interviewing an executive about why their corporation pours millions of dollars into various philanthropic endeavors.

Week after week, we are given a glimpse into local charities and their volunteers serving the less fortunate. One week might focus on their educational endeavors. Another week might spotlight caring for those challenged in one way or another. It's all quite inspiring; it is also deeply convicting.

When we see the efforts of a tour player and his wife giving of their "time, talent, and treasure" to those in need, it often causes us to pause and ask ourselves, "Am I missing an opportunity to serve those who are hurting in my local community?"

All too frequently, the answer for this writer is, sadly, "yes." Unlike Isaiah, I forget to say to the Lord, "Here I am, send me." Then, on cue, the Lord opens yet another door for service to marginalized people. Indeed, his mercies are new every morning!

Opportunities to serve abound to those who are paying attention. It might be that homeless person who is genuinely in need. It might be that widow who is lonely and afraid. It might be that organization caring for the physically challenged is asking for volunteers.

More often than not, being available to the Lord is the key that unlocks the door for service. Saying to Jesus, "Send me into this broken world to serve those who are hurting," is the first step toward Jesus calling you up from the "minor leagues."

And, without question, Jesus is our ultimate role model as we migrate from living the "me-centered life" to the "others-centered life." After all, Jesus left the treasures of heaven and descended into the poverty of our sin-stained world to rescue all of us (Philippians 2, ESV).

Contrary to those who are peddling the gospel for personal gain, Paul reminds us that Jesus is our moral exemplar, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake, he became poor, so that you by

his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9, ESV). To state the obvious, Paul is not talking about material wealth.

One, among many, of the great benefits of service to those who are hurting is the opportunity it frequently creates to share the good news of the gospel. Serving others and sharing the gospel is meant to go "hand and glove" for those who follow Christ.

In today's video, Brett Gorney, the founder of Servantee Ministries, briefly discusses a recent mission trip to Latin America, where he and other golfers spent time partnering with another ministry to build a home and share the gospel.

When Solomon writes in today's text, "Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed," he intends for us to understand that the Lord rewards those who are "generous to the poor."

Prayer: Lord, send us into this broken world in the power of your name and for your glory!

READING - Proverbs 14:31; Proverbs 19:17; Proverbs 22:9; James 1:27; 1 John 3:17.

1. Ever get a chance to play an expensive course, and you want to invite your buddy who just can't afford it? When do you help him, and when do you back off? How is this different than true poverty?

2. After reading today's text suggestions (or other related texts, e.g., Matthew 25: 31-40), what are some things we learn about a Christian's relationship with the poor?

3. Application question—What are some practical ways that either I, as an individual or collectively as a Links Fellowship, can serve and share?
