



Links Players

Circles vs Lines

Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28, NASB)

There has been considerable consternation in the world of golf over the last couple of years. Much of it has been centered around the launch of LIV Golf.

Many of the pre-existing bodies of golf made their stance known very early that they would not have anything to do with it. The PGA Tour and DP World Tour (formerly known as the European Tour) both came out very early in the process, announcing that any of their members who play in a LIV Golf event would be suspended indefinitely from their tour.

A very clear line was drawn in the sand.

As some well-known players began to seemingly betray their perspective tours for sizable monetary offers from the new Saudi-backed league, many loyal to their tour and how professional golf had traditionally operated vocalized their opinions passionately. To some, if you crossed the line, you might as well be named Benedict Arnold.

A couple thousand years ago, a man known as Jesus of Nazareth entered the scene in a small province in the armpit of the Roman Empire known as Judea.

He was a thirty-year-old Jewish rabbi just launching his public ministry, and he was quickly getting a lot of attention. You could say he was going viral. What made him so unique was that his words and actions were crossing the lines – cultural, political, and religious lines.

In particular, he taught and did things that upset many of the Jewish leaders and religious figures. He did this by giving dignity to all that he interacted with, particularly women, children, poor, sick, disabled, and unrighteous sinners like tax collectors, gentiles, and adulterers.

His biggest enemies were the religious leaders. They did not like him because he drew circles instead of drawing lines like they did. And his circles were big. They were inclusive. They were for everyone, even religious leaders (e.g., Nicodemus).

Following today's verse, he said, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is comfortable, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:29-30). There was no line in the sand. This invitation was for anyone.

Religions draw lines, but Jesus drew circles. If we want to be known as Jesus' followers, we need to be more known for who we are for than for what we are against.

We should focus more on loving people and inviting them into our circles than drawing lines and ensuring they know they are not on our side.

We don't have to agree with someone's opinions, ideology, or actions to show them love, dignity, and respect, just like Jesus did and commanded his followers to do.

Prayer: Father, teach me to recognize the areas that you want to soften and teach me to love like Jesus.

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Josh Nelson

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