



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

# Links Players

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## It's Normal

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16, NKJV).*

One of the silent and persistent undertones of playing golf, of distinguishing amateurs from professionals, of good amateurs from pedestrian ones, is repeating a bad habit long enough to make the habit seem normal.

Of course, normal means imperceptible because, well, it is normal. The poor result produced by this wrong suggests something is amiss, befuddling, and undetectable.

Missing from this golfer's physical and mental lexicon is an understanding of the forces and fundamentals needed to produce better results.

So it is with the mind, heart, and soul along the spectrum of good and evil (sin). We are adept at our nature. Ever so slowly and subtly do we inch toward this nature that says everyone else is doing it, this one time will not matter, no one will know; it is only me and will not hurt anyone else, and soon we are convinced this is normal.

Our rationalization denies Christ. Thereafter, it becomes habit, imperceptible, and worse—acceptable. We raise our hand and say with a shrug, “Whatever!”

But those who know God know good. Those who are aware of God know good. And by his denial, the atheist admits the possibility of God and, therefore, good. But either we are perverse in our intent or callous toward our knowledge of good and its perversion, evil.

Slowly, subtly, we inch toward this perversion, unaware we listened to those rationalizations. Not too long after, when those rationalizations seep below the conscious, acceptable becomes right and is defended with certainty.

This is how good and evil work. We could not know evil without good.

This is all original. The rationalizations began in the garden. For a long time, I did not understand original sin. But since age offers hindsight, I am beginning to understand. Original sin is like everyone who lives in the same country, and having never left it, know only their country. Or it is like a family who is known by a certain genealogical characteristic passed through generations. The crook in their nose gives them away. Without it, we would not know them as the family with the crook nose.

Since the garden, the lines have become blurred. All has become normal. Not simply normal, but elevated, even celebrated, even institutionalized. We should not be surprised. Rationalization was the original sin.

We prove our inheritance daily. Hard pressed to separate sin from rationalization, isn't rationalization desire intellectualized? We may seek our proofs and call it normal, but let us not be fooled. Sin is a poor result, something amiss, sometimes undetectable and imperceptible, normal because of our nature, not so befuddling.

But didn't God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son? That whosoever believeth shall not perish but have everlasting life?

When we accept Christ, born again of the Spirit, we are united with Christ in His resurrection, free from sin's grip, inheritors of God's grace and mercy. Living in grace, our rationalizations soon become detectable and perceptible. The rooster crows. The new life begins.

It's normal.

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