



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

All Natural

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 15:14, ESV)

A fringe benefit of golf is the beauty of the arena in which it is played. Regardless of my play, I always enjoy the “natural” beauty of a well-manicured course.

Whether it’s a stone-walled pond guarding a green, a perfectly striped emerald fairway, a smooth Champion Bermuda green, or from where I hit a lot of my shots, the sienna red straw under the tall pines prevalent in the sand hills of North Carolina— interestingly, there are no pine cones or broken limbs anywhere.

Recently, I was driving down the main drag of Myrtle Beach, SC—a golfing resort town with over 75 golf courses in the immediate area. As I drove by a course, I glanced over and was shocked at what I saw.

Just a few months earlier, the course seemed to be thriving. But now the fairways were infested with weeds and saplings. The traps were overrun with grass and weeds. This all happened so quickly.

This raises the question: Which state of being is truly natural? As we open Scripture, we read, “In the beginning.” And in that beginning, all things were “good” and “very good.” Then, Adam rebelled, and the world and humanity were no longer found in their original pristine state. Tragically, the Creator had to pronounce the following to Adam:

“Cursed is the ground because of you; ...thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you.” (Gen. 3:17b-18a, ESV)

AW Tozer points out in “The Hunger of the Wilderness” that what is true of the field is also true of the soul...the bias of nature is toward the wilderness, never toward the fruitful field.

Due to our sin, “thorns and thistles” are natural. Dr. Harold Mason writes, “Man was made to dwell in a garden, but through sin he has been forced to dwell in a field, a field in which he has wrested from his enemies by sweat and tears, and which he preserves only at the price of constant watchfulness and endless toil.

Let him but relax his efforts for a few years, and the wilderness will claim his field again. The jungle and the forest will swallow his labors, and all his loving care will have been in vain.”

Think about the laborious man-hours it takes to keep a course in pristine condition. Not that long ago, I played Pinehurst No. 2, and on the 16th tee, there were two young men on hands and knees with a

bucket. Their task was to pull up by the root all weeds embedded in the seemingly already perfect tee box. Was that tee box naturally pristine? No!

Why was the Myrtle Beach course abandoned? More than likely, the business model was not working and was not generating a sustainable return for the owner. Consequently, without constant attention, the course reverted to its naturally infested state.

“What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briars and thorns shall grow up...(Isaiah 5:4-6a, ESV)

Let us apply these truths to the spiritual condition of our hearts and ask God to continually do a supernatural work in our hearts, keeping us true to Him.

Prayer: Thank you, Father, that you supernaturally enable us to believe your Word, nurturing and cultivating our hearts for the yield of spiritual fruit.

John Whitehead

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