



Links Players

The Straight and Narrow

... remain steadfast in all your ways. (Proverbs 4:26)

I read about a guy who loved to play golf matches against someone who had recently had a haircut. His logic was that when his opponent was in the barber shop, it was quite probable that he read the most recent issue of Golf Digest and would try one or more of the tips that he gleaned in his next round.

This has been my golfing history. I tinker, trying out a new swing thought, a modified putting grip and stroke, a new driver, or a different golf ball brand. I want to find the key to a better golf game.

In my faith journey, there have been times when I have been tempted to veer off from the basics by embracing a popular theology or adopting a new ethical construct to deal with a thorny issue. Sometimes the opportunity to “tinker” was an inviting diversion.

In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul describes the potential problems we face... tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. (Ephesians 4:14 NLT).

Solomon provides great advice for us when we are faced with these potential diversions. He suggests that we should “remain steadfast in all our ways.”

We should be faithful and incapable of being diverted from our primary purpose or mission. One paraphrase reads, “Take care you don’t stray from the straight path, the way of truth, and you will safely reach the end of your road.”

Here’s what I’ve discovered about how to remain steadfast and resist the temptation “to tinker” with my faith. I need to be in the Scriptures daily and to pray for guidance and strength to stay on the path. When I experience a major or mini “crisis of faith,” I seek the advice of spiritual mentors.

I’ve been told I tend to change my swing as often as most people change their underwear; consequently, I’m not going to read any more golf magazines before a big match. In both my golf game and my faith walk, I want to stay on the path I started on by sticking to the basics.

Will you join me in trying to avoid sideshow distractions that might divert us from our focus on trying to be more like Jesus? Let’s bring glory to Him in all that we do.

I’m going to strive to avoid the temptation of being a “tinkerer” when it comes to my faith life and stick with Biblical Theory so I can be steadfast in my walk with Christ.

The Latin word, “Sine Cera” from which we get our word “sincerely” literally translates to “without wax”. In days gone by, if a merchant had a crack in the pot they were selling, they might put wax in that crack to pass it off as a genuine item.

However, later the wax might melt, and you’d have a leaky pot. A wise consumer would hold the pot up to the light to see if there was any wax filling a crack, and if not, they knew they had a sincere pot.

So “sincerely” as much as is possible, I hope you’ll make every effort to gather with your church family this coming Sunday.

I believe your pastor has a timely and important message for you. And if you are out of town, watch the live stream or find a church to worship with where you are vacationing.

Prayer: Jesus! Keep me on the straight and narrow!

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Bill Crawford

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