



Links Players

Knowing God | Jesus as Pioneer

In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. (Hebrews 2:10)

If there were ever a man we would consider a pioneer in golf, it would be Arnold Palmer. Without a doubt, there are other contenders, but Arnie blazed a trail that few golfers before him could even imagine.

With swashbuckling charisma, he single-handedly popularized golf for the masses, making it more than just an elitist sport. With forearms that would make Popeye envious, Mr. Palmer showed himself as a “man’s man.”

Hitching his pants as he went, Arnie and his go-for-broke style captured the imagination of millions. Not content to arrive by car, Arnie’s adventurous spirit took to the skies, where he made his mark in a lifelong pursuit of ever faster planes.

Speaking of an “adventurous spirit,” and if you’d indulge a personal observation, “With a few exceptions, the vast majority of people I’ve met throughout my pilgrimage on this planet are bored out of their minds.”

Lacking the pilgrim spirit needed for the great adventure of following Christ, most have fallen into a comfort-driven lifestyle, surrendered to the virtual world of entertainment, and bought into the false narrative of endless leisure—all the while working tirelessly to suppress the nagging sense of emptiness.

In Scripture, we see various historical figures who embody the pioneering spirit—motivated by a specific vision of life revealed from above, these men and women “risked all” to live by faith in God’s promises.

The paradigmatic Old Testament example of a “trailblazer” is Abraham. In response to the heavenly call, this pilgrim left the safety of country, family, and idols and journeyed toward an unseen but promised land (Hebrews 11:8-10). Living as a pilgrim, this man hitched up his robe and “went for it.”

Another example is Joshua, who refuses to “cry uncle” under the pressure of formidable obstacles. This pioneer, Joshua, foreshadows Christ—the greater “Yeshua”—who leads the way into the true rest and inheritance of God’s “now and not-yet kingdom.”

As impressive as Abraham and Joshua are, they are vastly overshadowed by the One whose life outshines everyone else—Jesus,

the ultimate pioneer, who suffered immensely to lead us into the greatest adventure of all, both in this life and the one to come.

When anyone fails to find the secret elixir of life—the energy, motivation, and joy of following Jesus, the pioneer who leads us into a cosmic adventure planned before time, revealed by prophets and apostles, and preserved for us in Scripture—life inevitably becomes listless.

And since humanity cannot live without purpose, we imitate it by trying to replace God’s purposes in our lives with our own. Beneath all the idolatries of adultery, drunkenness, insatiable wealth, binge-watching TV, endless travels, and gorging on sports is the misguided pursuit of adventure.

The cycle never ends: We are bored! We refuse His call into the Great Adventure! We channel our desire for excitement into lesser pursuits, only to be endlessly disappointed. And it all begins again... Sisyphus has nothing on us!

Looking to slake your thirst for meaning, purpose, and adventure? Follow the trailblazing Jesus!

Prayer: Empower us to believe!

READING: Hebrews 11:8-18; Hebrews 2:10; (for a deeper dive, read Genesis 12-25).

1. On a small scale, each golf round is an adventure. Few, if any, are exactly the same. Explain why this attracts us and how it reflects our bigger need for adventure in life.

2. After reading the narrative of Abraham, through all the ups and downs, defeats and victories, successes and failures, discuss how faith in Christ sustained him.

3. Application: Examining our hearts, how might we be involved in misdirected adventures?
