



Links Players

How to Cure a Slice

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (James 1:22-23)

My father didn't take up golf until his twenties, and when he did, he didn't take any lessons. He was what they call "self-taught." On top of this, he never even saw what his swing looked like until twenty years later. This was the age before cell phones and video cameras.

As a result, his swing was, well, unusual. He took the club back way inside and then came back over the top from so far outside he must have considered at times stepping out of the way. One time, he didn't, and he released the club firmly into his left foot. I can still see him dropping his club and hopping around in pain.

So, what I'm saying is it wasn't a pretty swing. To quote David Feherty, it looked like an octopus falling out of a tree. My father called his move a loop, but it was more like a double helix. Unsurprisingly, he fought a slice his whole life. Lee Trevino said, "You can talk to a fade, but a hook won't listen," but my father's slice was stone deaf.

Here's the thing, though: To my father, the swing felt natural—on good days, maybe even presentable. Without video or an instructor, how would he have known any different? Feel is not real, and in the absence of a mirror, feel can be downright deceptive.

It's the same with us. As James says, the Word of God is like a mirror, a real-time video that allows us to see the kind of person we really are.

We feel we are loving because we feel affection for our spouse, but we look at the Bible, and it says love is patient, does not seek its own, and does not take into account a wrong suffered. We feel we are faithful to our spouse so long as we don't commit adultery, but Jesus says that lust is unfaithfulness.

Feel and real are two different things, but the Word of God enables us to tell which is which. It shows us Christ, and then it shows us ourselves. And if we pay attention to what we see, we won't have to fight the same slice the rest of our lives.

Prayer: Lord, help form the image of Christ in me. Amen.

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Scott Fiddler

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