



Links Players

QUESTIONS | HAVE YOU EATEN OF THE TREE OF WHICH I COMMANDED YOU NOT TO EAT?

And he [Adam] said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He [God] said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" (Genesis 3:10-13, NASB)

Crossing lines on a golf course can be hazardous to your scoring health. Cross a boundary marked by white, red, or yellow stakes, and consequences follow.

Blow that dimpled, round, urethane-covered object way over those white stakes, and you are hitting three from the same spot. There might be worse feelings in golf, but that one hurts.

While in Ireland two years ago, I blocked a drive deep into the "gorse." I turned to my caddie and asked, "Can we find it?" He smiled and said, "Lad, you could wrap bacon around that ball, and Lassie couldn't find it." I was laughing so hard that I didn't mind the lost ball or the stroke-and-distance penalty.

Jim Barker, a former PGA Tour player you will meet in Jeffrey's video, talks about "crossing lines." Jim had crossed almost every forbidden line in life; there was one, though, he was sure he would never cross— "to cheat on the golf course."

On the third hole of the 1976 Texas Open, after a good drive, he pushed his second shot to the right. As he approached his ball, he discovered it was one foot out of bounds. In that decisive moment, he chose to kick it back in bounds.

Jim admitted, "I was flooded with terror, guilt, and shame for the wrong I had done." Moving that ball back in bounds crossed the one line he vowed he would never cross. The fear, guilt, and shame weighed heavily on his soul.

Months later, while playing in the Danny Thomas Classic, this man who had once mocked Christians fell to his knees and asked Jesus to forgive him, to come into his life, and to use him for God's glory.

Fifty years later, Jim Barker is still a gifted player and a much-sought-after instructor, and, more valuable still, a highly esteemed Bible teacher.

After God asked Adam, "Where are you?" he continued his cross-examination with a probing question that Adam was unable to dodge— "Have you eaten from the tree I commanded you not to eat?" Adam had vainly sought to flee God, only to realize his Maker was inescapable.

Adam was a real, historical figure, to be sure. But he is also the "representative man." That is, Moses, the author, intends that we see ourselves in him.

Just as Adam ran in fear, foolishly trying to hide, and vainly trying to cover his guilt and shame, we, too, run, hide, and attempt to cover our fear, guilt, and shame, only to discover we cannot escape the infinitely long arm of the Lord.

The Holy Spirit not only works within the life of a disciple; he also works on the one who refuses God's call by "convicting him of sin" (John 16:8-11). When we transgress God's immutable laws, the Spirit of God grips our conscience and tells us, "You are naked!"

Like Adam, when we cross God's moral boundaries, the Spirit of God, who knows no limitations of location or time, calls our conscience to account for guilt; and like Adam, we tend to run, hide, and cover.

Here is the choice: we can either run from God or yield to his Spirit and run to him. Trust this reality! The Spirit of God is calling you to return to your Maker through Jesus Christ in repentance and trust.

If and when you do, you will find God embracing you with indescribable Fatherly affection.

Prayer—Holy Spirit! Have your way in the hearts and minds of those you are calling to yourself.

