



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

I Love to Tell the Story

All Jesus did that day was tell stories, a long afternoon of storytelling. (Mt. 13:34, MSG).

My favorite movie may be *The Legend of Bagger Vance*. The original novel by Steven Pressfield (1995) is even better.

The book's opening chapter introduces a wonderful golf storyteller, Dr. Hardison L. Greeves, MD, now in his mid-70s, telling a fascinating story from 1931, when he was ten years old.

He spent two life-changing days with Bobby Jones, Walter Hagen, local Savannah hero Rannulph Junah, and a caddie named Bagger Vance, who turns out to be a picture of God in the flesh. The invisible God became a visible caddie, or so it seemed to young Hardy.

The book grabs your attention from the first page. A young golfer named Michael has made two dramatic choices. First, he has dropped out of medical school, a decision that Dr. Greeves said he could understand since "around the third year, when exhaustion and nausea have taken up permanent residence in your bones, the healing profession seems less like a calling and more like an exercise in expedience and venality." Some doctor reading this just said "Amen."

The next paragraph lays the foundation for the story of Bagger Vance:

But it's a different decision you've made that troubles me more deeply. I mean your choice to give up golf. When I heard, Michael, I knew something was wrong. That's why I've asked you here tonight. Will you stay and listen to an old man?

Michael had also been a champion golfer. Dr. Greeves was hoping that his childhood story might woo the young man back, not only to the game of golf but to God Himself. Michael had lost his way, and quitting golf was just a sign of his lostness.

He reminded Michael that, in golf, it all starts with the grip. "The grip, a remarkable fellow named Bagger Vance once told me, is man's connection to the world outside himself. The hands, he said, are where the subjective meets the objective, where we 'in here' meet the world 'out there.' True intelligence, Vance declared, does not reside in the brain but in the hands."

That sentence got my attention because I have had a bad grip since childhood. Indeed, my hands are not very intelligent.

Dr. Greeves now hopes that he can relieve Michael's disease with his story!

“Yes, I know your illness, son. I’m going to try to cure it this evening with a story. Will you stay and listen? It may take all night.”

What a lesson: don’t preach, tell a story.

This is God’s advice to Moses: “Tell your children and grandchildren... the stories... so that you will all know that I am God.” (Exodus 10:2, MSG).

Sometimes the story is just for yourself. “When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item... That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!” (Hebrews 12:3, MSG).

Micah told us to “keep all God’s salvation stories fresh and present.” (Micah 6:3, MSG).

Jesus knew that this was the best way. “All Jesus did that day was tell stories, a long storytelling afternoon.” (Mt. 13:34, MSG).

My website (www.timphilpot.com) attempts to tell stories from courthouses, golf courses, and a few exotic places around the world. The best tales are those that are “fresh and present,” stories of what happened recently, maybe even today! They will “shoot adrenaline into your soul.”

And if you are looking for a good story, try The Legend of Bagger Vance.

PRAYER: Lord, as the old hymn says, “I love to tell the story of Jesus and His love.” Help me find a new story today with a lost soul.

—

Tim Philpot

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