



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Baseball

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)

I have a confession: I love baseball more than I love golf. Even more offensive, perhaps, is my belief that baseball is a little closer to heaven than golf.

Golf offers unparalleled beauty, but baseball offers unparalleled community. Nine players take the field together, each with different gifts but working toward a common purpose.

They practice together, travel together, share meals, laugh, struggle, fail, and celebrate together. To me, that looks a little more like the Kingdom of God—and hopefully our Links Fellowships—than one man walking the course alone.

Baseball also possesses an almost eternal quality. There is no clock. Once you step onto the field, time seems to stand still. Perhaps that is why W. P. Kinsella chose a baseball field as the setting for *Shoeless Joe*, the novel that inspired *Field of Dreams*—a story ultimately about fathers and sons, regret, reconciliation, faith, and grace.

Ray Kinsella is an Iowa farmer who hears a mysterious voice whisper, “If you build it, he will come.” Believing the voice is calling him to build a baseball field in the middle of his cornfield, Ray obeys.

Soon, Shoeless Joe Jackson appears, followed by other players from baseball’s past. But the voice keeps calling, sending Ray on a strange pilgrimage to help others recover dreams they thought were lost forever—and, along the way, find healing from failure, regret, and shame.

Eventually, however, Ray discovers that the journey has also been about him.

At the center of Ray’s life is an unresolved wound with his deceased father. They had become estranged, and his father died before they could reconcile. In the final scene, Ray discovers his father on the field, young again and wearing a catcher’s mitt.

The field has become more than a ballpark. It has become a sacred space where past and present meet, estrangement gives way to reconciliation, and regret gives way to grace.

Significantly, Ray doesn’t offer a lengthy apology or try to explain everything that went wrong. After introducing his father to the family he never lived to know, Ray simply asks:

“Hey, Dad? You wanna have a catch?”

Playing catch becomes a kind of sacrament of reconciliation. The very thing Ray once withheld from his father becomes the means through which their relationship begins to heal.

Perhaps that is why Field of Dreams resonates so deeply. We all long for a place where what has been broken can be restored, what has been lost can be found, and those who have been separated can be reconciled.

The gospel tells us that such a place exists. God has opened the door to reconciliation through Jesus Christ, no longer counting our sins against us. And having received that grace, Paul says we have now been entrusted with the message of reconciliation.

Our own act of reconciliation may not begin with a glove and a baseball. It might begin with a golf club and an invitation.

Is there someone you need to play golf with this week?

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXjz-M_6eN8&t=1s)

Prayer: Lord, help me make amends with those I have harmed and find peace with those who have harmed me, always remembering how much I, too, have been forgiven.

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Boo Arnold

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