



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Different Swings, Same Rules

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

A friend and I were playing golf recently and talking about some of the golf trips we'd been on over the years. One of those trips included another friend whom we both know and genuinely like.

At one point my friend said, “He's binary, but he's still a lot of fun to be around.” The conversation moved on, but the comment stayed with me.

To me, binary had always been a mathematical term. I'd never thought of it as a way to describe someone's way of thinking. I'd also never paid much attention to whether our friend tended to see the world that way.

Now I probably will.

Not because I want to judge him, but because I'd like to understand him better. It's interesting how hearing a familiar word used in an unfamiliar context can cause you to look at people—and even yourself— a little differently.

The more I thought about it, the more I realized that being binary isn't always a bad thing. In fact, there are some areas of life where it's exactly what's needed.

Golf, for example, isn't entirely binary.

There isn't one perfect swing. Arnold Palmer's swing looked nothing like Jim Furyk's. Jim Furyk's looked nothing like Scottie Scheffler's. Bryson DeChambeau approaches the game differently than all of them. Every great player has unique strengths, personalities, and strategies. The game allows for tremendous individuality.

Yet golf has the same rules for everyone.

A ball is either out of bounds, or it isn't. A putt either drops or it doesn't. A penalty either applies or it doesn't. The Rules of Golf don't change because someone meant well or prefers a different interpretation.

There is freedom in how we play, but not in the rules that govern the game. The Christian life is much the same.

Scripture is remarkably clear about God's moral standards. Truth is truth. Sin is sin. Good is good. Evil is evil. God doesn't redefine those things from one generation to the next or adjust them to fit the culture of the day.

Jesus said, "All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one." (Matthew 5:37)

But that's not the whole story.

If Christianity were only about a perfect standard or a simple answer, none of us would have any hope. Every one of us has fallen short. That's why the gospel is such good news.

The law revealed God's perfect standard, but it could never save us. John tells us that He came full of grace and truth. Not grace instead of truth. Not truth without grace. Both.

I wonder if that's the balance we're all called to pursue: to hold tightly to God's truth without becoming self-righteous, and to extend God's grace without compromising His truth.

We all know the world needs more truth. But truth without grace is like missing the green. Truth shows us where to aim; grace meets us when we don't get there. God never asks us to choose between the two. He calls us to live with both.

And for me, the Cross is where judgment and mercy meet.

Prayer: Lord, help me stand for Your truth and extend Your grace. May my life reflect both. Amen.

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