

The Bulwark

SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

O.B. MARKERS

It was a glorious day, bright blue sky with a few puffy white clouds and a temperature of around 80 degrees. The grass was a lush green and the flowers were in full bloom. As I stood on the elevated tee box, peering down the fairway at the flag on the green some 500 yards away. I held the driver in my hands and began to waggle it back and



forth. Then with a mighty swing, I whacked the ball. It was majestic, for all of about 150 yards, then it decided to begin slicing to the right as it dropped in elevation.. Soon it hit the ground and began rolling at a fairly good clip. "It's going out of bounds", I heard someone behind me say. "Hit another one just in case you can't find it or it went O.B." I assured my golfing companions it would be found, and it hadn't gone out of bounds. To make a long story short (too late for that), my ball hadn't gone out of bounds, but had found a concrete culvert that ran along side the rough of the fairway. Apparently, my golf ball continued to roll in that culvert down hill until it came to rest even with the green. The out of bound markers were two feet to the right of that culvert. What luck, much to the chagrin of my fellow golfers, as I was able to take a drop without penalty.

"Do you not fear Me? Declares the Lord, 'Do you not tremble in My presence? For I have placed

the sand as a boundary for the sea, eternal decree, so that it cannot cross over. Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it. But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and have departed." (Jeremiah 5:22-23)

Using this passage, it is easy to see God's authority over nature and His setting of a boundary, in like manner He is clearly stipulating that there are boundary lines drawn for mankind. The lines have been drawn and if one goes outside those lines there is penalty that must be paid. In the book of Joshua, chapter one and verses seven and eight, God stresses that the people not turn to the right nor the left, but to remain within the boundaries, and in so doing "will make your way prosperous, and then you will find success."

The danger found in crossing the boundary lines of God are not just expressed in the Old Testament, but can also be clearly seen in the New Testament. "But even though we or angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8, see also 2John 8-9)

God has set boundaries in His word for mankind to respect and stay within. He did so, not so much

as to frustrate, but to bless mankind by staying within. In golf, one is penalized for going "o.b.", but is rewarded by keeping the ball in the fairway. Subsequent shots to the green are easier to control and place in proximity to cup in order to score par or lower. Consider what is seen in Deuteronomy, chapter thirty and verses nineteen and twenty. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and length of days." This is still applicable to us. We are rewarded for staying in bounds.

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