

## Sin's DNA Problem

*Hunting Tiger Woods by CJ Mahaney*

Tiger Woods wants his privacy back. He wants the media entourage to disappear from his life. He wants to be left alone so he can manage his personal problems in private. Not a chance.

The story began unfolding in the early hours of last Friday when he crashed his Cadillac Escalade into a tree and a fire hydrant near his Florida home. He refused to speak with the police about the incident, raising curiosity about the circumstances. The story has now escalated into allegations of marital infidelity, and that generated a blog post from Tiger that stated, "I have let my family down and I regret those transgressions with all of my heart." This statement by Tiger has led most to believe that the allegations of infidelity are true.

As expected, the allegations of adultery involving a public figure are attracting a media pile-on. Tiger Woods is being hunted by the media.

But let us make sure we do not join the hunt. A Christian's response to this story should be distinctly different. We should not be entertained by the news. We should not have a morbid interest in all the details. We should be saddened and sobered. We should pray for this man and even more for his wife.



And we can be sure that in the coming days we will be in conversations with friends and family where this topic will emerge. And when it does, we can avoid simply listening to the latest details and speculations, and avoid speaking self-righteously, but instead we can humbly draw attention to the grace of God in the gospel.

But Tiger is being hunted by something more menacing than journalists. Tiger's real enemy is his sin, and that's an enemy much more difficult to discern and one that can't be managed in our own strength. It's an enemy that never sleeps. Let me explain.

The Bible in general, and the book of Proverbs in particular, reveals an unbreakable connection between our character, our conduct, and the consequences of our actions. These three are inseparable and woven by God into His created order.

Deception is part of sin's DNA. Sin lies to us. It seeks to convince us that sin brings only pleasure, that it carries no consequences, and that no one will discover it. Sin works hard to make us forget that character, conduct, and consequences are interconnected.

And when we neglect this relationship—when we think our sins will not be discovered—we ultimately mock God. We've all experienced it: Sin lies to us. We take the bait. And then sin begins to hunt us.

One commentator on Proverbs articulated this truth like this: "The irony of a life of rebellion is that we begin by pursuing sin...and end up being pursued by it!...You can 'be sure your sin will find you out' (Num. 32:23...)." In other words, sin comes back to hunt us.

In light of this fact, sin is an enemy Tiger can't manage. He can't shape this story like he does a long iron on a par 5. Tiger doesn't need a publicity facelift; Tiger needs a Savior. Just like me. And just like you. And if by God's grace he repents and trusts in the person and work of Christ, Tiger will experience the fruit of God's promise that "whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

Tiger cannot intimidate this enemy like he can Pebble Beach or any of the field of professional golfers. And there is no privacy he can claim from this enemy, regardless of his resolve, his silence, or the name painted on his yacht. It's likely Tiger only perceives the press hunting him out of a vain "curiosity about public figures." But Tiger is being hunted and hounded by a far greater foe: the consequences of his sin.

And this story should humble and sober us. It should make us ask: Are there any so-called "secret sins" in my life? Is there anything I have done that I hope nobody discovers? Is there anything right now in my life that I should confess to God and the appropriate individuals?

And this should leave us more amazed by grace because there, but for the grace of God, go I.

### WARM-UP

Discuss the Tiger Woods story and CJ's insights.

### WORKOUT

1. What does Romans 3:23 teach us about the sinfulness and disobedience of all men?
2. Read Romans 3:9-12. What do these verses teach?

### GOSPEL FOCUS

"Were I asked to focus the New Testament message in three words, my proposal would be adoption through propitiation, and I do not expect ever to meet a richer or more pregnant summary of the gospel than that." —J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*