



# Links Players

## AN ORDER TO IT ALL 7: HELP WITH THE RULES

*Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7, NIV)*

**O**H, THE MIGHTY TANGLE WE CALL THE RULES OF GOLF! If you don't know your way around them—and even if you do—you can find yourself in trouble. Ask Lee Janzen.

We have to go back in time a bit to remind ourselves of the two-time US Open champion's bizarre penalty and subsequent missed cut at the 2001 edition of the national championship, played at Southern Hills in Oklahoma. Janzen's Thursday round was suspended and he marked the position of his ball. On Friday morning he returned. At this early hour, the grass was covered with dew. Janzen used a towel to wipe away some of the water before replacing his ball and playing his shot. Only after his round and after the signing of his card did it come to Janzen's attention that he had improved his lie in violation of Rule 13.2.

Because Janzen had already signed his card, his wrong score would have normally resulted in disqualification. But the USGA had walking officials assigned to every group, and since the official on the scene had not declared a violation at the time, Janzen was given a reprieve, only receiving a two-shot penalty. But the penalty was enough. Janzen's resulting 36-hole total caused him to miss the cut and go home early.

Knowing the rules and applying the rules is often the difference between intellect and wisdom. In Janzen's case, the circumstances—returning the next morning after a suspended round—caught him off guard and he made a mistake he might never have made otherwise.

Life can do the same thing. We can know God's Word pretty well, but then come the circumstances of our days, causing us to forget the basics or testing our conscience. At such times, we do well to rely on the experts, those who can "correctly handle the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15) and walk us through our decisions and actions in a way that honors God and benefits us.

In Christ's church, these experts are called elders. They have walked the road of faith and gained the wisdom of Holy Spirit-led experience. Their lives are an example and their words give us counsel that can keep us out of tangles. With their help, we are able to follow God's rules as those who love and fear him.

**Opening questions** Who taught you the game of golf? What did you learn from them? Where did their knowledge come from? • Do you have elders you rely on to help you in your walk of faith?

**READING** 1 Kings 12:1-15; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Proverbs 15:22

### Rehoboam's error in judgment (1 Kings 12)

Where did Rehoboam go for counsel? Why do you suppose he choose poor counsel over good? How was the bad counsel reflected in his actions?

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### An elder's role (1 Peter 5)

What work is expected from a righteous elder? How does it increase your confidence in an elder if you know that elder is following this instruction?

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### Gathering counsel (Proverbs 15)

Where do you go for counsel? How many counselors do you think you need to make a right decision leading to right action (obeying God)? For you, who are the elders who can help you apply God's rules to your life?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2018 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/2HF3dlofDGE>.