



# Links Players

## PRAYING FOR BETTER 5: KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way...growing in the knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10, NIV)*

**W**HEN YOU BEGIN PLAYING GOLF, it is easy to become quickly overwhelmed. There is so much to know: grip, stance, posture, takeaway, contact, follow-through. And that’s only the stuff pertaining to the swing!

But here’s a surprise: maybe the swing isn’t where we should start at all. At The First Tee, that national initiative engaged in helping kids find, enjoy, and appreciate the game, the leaders and instructors want the kids to learn nine core values for life: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy, and judgment. Through teaching kids golf, the instructors look to teach them these greater values.

Nine seems like a large enough number to tackle, and certainly these core values can take a lifetime to learn and master. But The First Tee keeps going. They talk about the overlap between the core values and life skills. And they have now added nine healthy habits, to help kids get in shape and stay there. Again, so much to learn!

As we have passed the midpoint in our study of Paul’s prayer for God’s people in Colossians 1, maybe you have the same sense. Faith can present as big a landscape as your average golf course, with an infinite number of places to find ourselves. Some days it’s easy enough, like being right down the fairway; at other times, it’s as though we are punching out from a thicket of trees, just hoping to get back in play.

When we consider all this, it may seem like Paul’s next point in prayer—that we would grow in the knowledge of God—is entirely unnecessary. How can we help but grow with all life’s experiences teaching us about who God is?

Still, there must be an intentional application of our heart, soul, mind, and strength to growth. In golf, we will grow in our knowledge of the game just by playing. But when we apply ourselves to practice, that growth can take off! The principle is the same in growing in the knowledge of God. If we are seeking him, he will show himself new things about himself each day. But if we add habits of Bible study and meditation and service to our as-we-go seeking, we will come to know God with greatly increased growth. This is healthy living.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2018 Links Players International. An introductory video for this Bible study is available here: <https://youtu.be/0a5fTSGl7A>.

**Opening questions** When you first learned the game, what was the hardest part to get hold of? • Do you feel like you know God pretty well, or like you have a long way to go?

**READING** 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16; Philippians 3:7-11

**How we grow (2 Thessalonians)**  
Consider this verse alongside Colossians 1:10. How might we know that someone is growing in the knowledge of God and faith in him? What evidences would be displayed in their lives?

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**A sweet aroma? (2 Corinthians 2)**  
As we grow in the knowledge of Christ, who will be blessed? Who will be bothered? How does this inform the way walk in that “triumphal procession”?

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**The great worth of knowing God (Philippians 3)**  
What quest stood above all for the apostle Paul? Can you identify with this dichotomy of life’s priorities? Paul wrote the Philippian letter in the middle years of his ministry. How might maturity change our perspective on what is important in life?

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