



# Links Players

## 9 WHO AM I?: FREE IN CHRIST

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. (Galatians 5:1, NIV)*

**A**FREE SWINGER. These are the words you hear used to describe a golfer who lets loose without concern for the repercussions of a wayward swing. It's not the way I was taught. But maybe I should have been, because if we're all going to miss shots anyway, maybe the tradeoff is worth it on those days when all does go right. What if the caution the old school called "smart golf" was really just a step away from fear? How many yards did that fear cost me for the sake of finding the fairway? I'll never know.

On the putting green, though, I rarely had fear. Playing all the time made me fully comfortable with the green speeds and thus supremely confident about hitting putts on my line. And if I missed? It was no big deal to have a four-footer coming back. I might see a kid do that today and call it young nerves. But in truth, confident putters, no matter their age, don't really wrestle with nerves.

Confidence can serve us well in many arenas. Think of the difference between a confident public speaker and a nervous one, or between a confident artist and one who draws with a quivering pencil.

Now, does confidence have a place of value in our faith? Well, if a believer can be both humble and confident at the same time, it is a wonderful sign that he or she is flowing in the freedom of Christ.

The fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians is a master study in what it means to exercise true Christ-ordained freedom. The apostle began by linking the freedom we are given to the freedom we will live out. Christ's salvation frees us from the sinful bonds that held us. We are not meant to stand atop those chains with fear of walking in faith. No! We are to move into a whole new life, free of the repercussions that come from sinful living.

And this is where Paul headed at the end of the chapter. He outlined the difference between a life of sin and a life of abundance. This abundance is the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Paul then drove home the message of freedom when he wrote, "Against such things there is no law." When we function in Christ, indwelt by his Spirit, we live freely, without damage to our body, mind, or spirit. We walk in the confidence of knowing that he is leading the way.

**Opening questions** What do you think keeps you from swinging or putting freely? Are there other places in life where you act with lesser confidence? How about with greater confidence?

**READING** John 8:31-36; Romans 6:1-7; 2 Corinthians 10:17-18

### Slavery and freedom (John 8)

What did Jesus come to free us from? What are we given to attain this freedom? What truths of God have you learned that have set you free from sins that once ruled you?

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### Anarchy and freedom (Romans 6)

How are anarchy and freedom different? Why does this passage encourage us to keep boundaries on the freedom that Christ's grace gives us? What boundaries have helped you live more freely?

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### Concerns about overconfidence (2 Corinthians 10)

Should we be concerned about demonstrating an overconfidence or pride in our faith? How does this passage help us maintain the right priorities? Can confidence and humility grow up together in a follower of Jesus?

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