



# Links Players

## WHY AM I HERE? 6: BEING TRANSFORMED

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2, ESV)*

**T**WO TIMES NOW I'VE HEARD THAT GAINING WEIGHT is good for your golf game. The first was when Nancy Lopez lost weight and her father told her to put it back on because she also lost distance. Now Bryson DeChambeau is the poster child for adding weight and overpowering golf courses. Even Winged Foot in a US Open.

Have you started your "bulk up" program yet? Are you gaining muscle along with pounds? Are you getting your driver swing speed up into that 128-mph range? Me neither, though I'm now thinking donuts might be better for my game than kale.

Bryson's story is much about physical transformation. Many of us have wanted to transform our bodies and some have succeeded in doing that. If you are among those, good for you. But physical transformation, even at its best, is temporary.

Spiritual transformation at its best is eternal, but it can also be temporary. We use the expression "You clean up good" as a compliment to someone who has donned new clothes or had a haircut—or in some cases a bath! We might use the same expression for a believer who has put on a new self (Ephesians 4:24).

We know that a brand new polo shirt is probably going to give way to a favorite (and well-worn) tee shirt. Will the new self last, or will it give way to the favorite (and well-worn) old self? Apparently there is some danger that it might, or Paul wouldn't have made renewal a recurring theme in his letters.

As followers of Jesus we are being transformed continually, and we have a role to play in that. Bryson DeChambeau didn't walk into a gym and expect a trainer to transform him instantly. He knew it would take work on his part. The same is true for us. Being transformed implies effort on our part. Our helper, the Holy Spirit, is the finest "personal" trainer ever. But we still have work to do.

The word Paul used for renewal can be translated "renovation." If we renovated our house, we would have a plan. If we renovated our body, the plan might be to make it look like a champion golfer. But now we are being transformed into the likeness of God, and we become image-bearers. No one will tell me I look like Bryson or Tiger or Nancy, and that's fine. But I hope they say I look like Jesus.

**Opening questions** Have you transformed yourself or your clubs to improve your game? Did it work, and if so did it last? How hard is it to change your swing? Is it harder than changing your life?

**READING** Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:17-24; Colossians 3:10-14

### Transformed (Romans 12)

Is *conformed* the status quo for many who call themselves Christians? Why is it tempting to be like the world? Was Paul's appeal to individuals, to the body of believers, or to both? Why?

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### Make a change (Ephesians 4)

Paul wrote that the recipients of this letter "must no longer" live like the Gentiles. How did he describe the Gentiles? What three steps should we take to be different?

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### New clothes (Colossians 3)

The "new self" is that which is being renewed "after the image of its creator." What kinds of characteristics do we put on that are part of the new self? What is the role played by love when it is part of the new self?

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Written by Lewis Greer ©2020 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/IUXhTEmkUQE>