



Links Players

OH, TO BE WISE 9: GROWING STRONGER

The wise are mightier than the strong, and those with knowledge grow stronger and stronger. (Proverbs 24:5, NLT)

DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT THE LIMITS ARE? With Bryson DeChambeau leading the way at more than 320 yards per drive and about a dozen other PGA Tour players averaging above 310, the question up for debate is how far is too far? The ladies aren't threatening to "break" golf courses, but many of them are approaching the 300-yard threshold as well, including major champions A Lim Kim and Patty Tavatanakit. It's a big hitter's world.

While we might argue vociferously that technological changes need to be made, such as "dialing back" the golf ball or shrinking the size of drivers, it's harder to argue that players should stop working out. Physical conditioning is an athlete's prerogative. In golf this includes work in the gym and on the range, adding strength and refining technique.

Maybe you wish you could bat it out there with the long hitters. But golf can be played in more ways than one. Jordan Spieth, Webb Simpson, and Collin Morikawa all own major championships and recent wins despite landing in the lower half of the PGA Tour's distance stats. Farther back still is Patrick Reed. What gives these players their wins? We might call it finesse or a feel for the moment. As likely is that they have a good plan and stick to it.

Today's proverb, the last in our series, gives preeminent status to something besides raw strength. In Solomon's day, strength was lauded because it defended kings and kingdoms. Solomon's father, David, assembled a list of mighty men, those famous for their battlefield prowess. Put a strong man on a chariot pulled by a strong horse and you could almost count on victory.

But Solomon wrote of something greater: Wisdom. Knowledge. With these you might not need to fight at all. You can settle disputes as a peacemaker, lay plans as an architect, create laws that serve people of every status. With these you remember that the strongest one was never an earthly king, but God Almighty, the Creator and Lord.

Do you see now where we have been heading all these weeks? We've been moving into a position to see God for who he is and see the world as he sees it. When we do this, we become wise. When we do this, we become strong.

Opening questions What work do you do to become a better golfer—physical conditioning, mental preparation, repetitive practice? What pays off most for you when it comes to results?

READING Proverbs 2:1-15; Ecclesiastes 1:18; Acts 6:1-10

The scope of wisdom's aid (Proverbs 2)

As Solomon set up the proverbs he would give his son, he wrote of the benefits of wisdom. What were some of these? Would you say you have gained wisdom and its benefits during the course of this series of studies?

The downside of wisdom (Ecclesiastes 1)

Why do you think Solomon said that wisdom and knowledge can bring sorrow and grief? What should we do with the knowledge we gain in life?

Two key traits (Acts 6)

As the apostles chose deacons (servants of the church), they looked for those who possessed two traits. What were those traits? How do you think they identified these men? Do you see a connection between the work of the Spirit in a person and the wisdom that work produces?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. An accompanying introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/8pkRb9WWf18>