



# Links Players

## KINGDOM HABITS 4: PRACTICING WITH INTENT

*Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2, NIV)*

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A NICE GUY AROUND YOUR CLUB, you have to get used to patiently listening as another player tells you about his round. I know, none of us want to hear every detail, but that's what you get sometimes. If this other fellow has had a good round, at least his report might cheer you up from your own mediocre effort that day.

But here's what we really shouldn't have to abide: someone who takes blustery pride in a practice session. "Oh, I was striping it," you'll be told. Or, "I made 50 three-footers in a row from all around the hole." Goodness, what does it matter? It's only practice.

Yet "practice makes perfect," we're so often told. And while not all practice is created equal, there is value to be had in intentionally going about our preparatory business. It keeps our golf muscles loose, creates proper memory in them, builds confidence for when it counts on the course, and generally improves your chances of hitting the shots you want—or at least missing it better.

Instructor Jon Sherman reminds us that we should have a plan and practice purposefully. He says, "Many golfers think that merely showing up to the range and hitting balls entitles you to lower scores. It doesn't." So we need to be careful that we're not wasting our time with meaningless repetitions.

We find a similarity in the way we go about our practice of faith. After all, if we call ourselves disciples of Jesus, we're followers not wanderers.

The model we are shown in Psalm 1 reveals a person who is intentional in two ways, guarding where they go and attending to what they do. Such people do not spend intentional or fixed time with those who would steer them off the course of their faith. And these people attend deeply to the words of God in Scripture, learning the accounts, the stories, the songs, and the commands. What does such intentional practice produce? This should be no surprise: readiness. When the man or woman of God is equipped with the knowledge and understanding of God, he or she is prepared to do the work of God in the settings in which they are placed. A ready disciple is an effective disciple. So let's get ready!

**Opening questions** Do you practice your game seriously, or are you only a warm-up player? What is your favorite part of the game to practice?

**READING** Luke 6:12-16; Acts 17:11-12 & 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 1:1-2

### Jesus' intent (Luke 6)

What was Jesus' activity through the night? What did he do next? How valuable is it to pray about important decisions and actions?

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### Rewards for careful study (Acts 17 & 2 Timothy 3)

From these two passages, list rewarding results from studying God's word. Are you a "Scripture hound"? What positive outcomes have you seen in your life as a result of this commitment to study?

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### The engaged believer (Psalm 1)

What people or activities can throw you off your spiritual game? How do you balance your time with people who can keep you from pursuing Christ, yet engage them with purpose? | Is it really possible to meditate on God's law (Scripture) day and night? How?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. Jon Sherman's "7 Habits That Can Lead to Major Breakthroughs in Your Game" may be found at <https://practical-golf.com/golf-habits/>