



Links Players

KINGDOM HABITS 5: HAVING A PROCESS

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. (Daniel 6:10, NIV)

IT RESTED BELOW THE SURFACE FOR SEVERAL YEARS, but you can hardly watch a postgame interview without encountering the word these days: process. Competitive athletes, from golfers to gymnasts, talk about process. It can be a big picture idea for improvement or a smaller, more detailed series of actions to reduce tension at the key moment of competition. For many athletes, it is both.

In his list of seven habits that can really help your game, golf instructor Jon Sherman includes process. His specific focus has to do with the sequence of micro preparations we go through before hitting a shot. Often this is called the pre-shot routine, and we all have one, whether we know it or not. The question is, how consistent we are with it—because the more stressful the moment, the more likely we are to abandon it and go with something that takes us out of our best approach to a good shot.

Now if you've been with us throughout this series of lessons, you'll know that there is a helpful application for our spiritual lives as well. In this case, if we build certain processes (or disciplines) into our daily lives, we will see the steady, long-term growth that is a hallmark of excellent discipleship.

In the Old Testament, we find Daniel, a man of integrity who had been given a place of great leadership in the kingdom of Darius. But Daniel's integrity was no accident. He made personal commitments to prayer that kept him close to the heart and mind of the Lord. As it turned out, this closeness was of utter importance when enemies tried to trap Daniel and send him to his death.

Many of us, when the circumstances change and the hours grow difficult, scramble for any expedient solution. Daniel held fast to his process. He went to God and prayed, even though those prayers would be the "evidence" his enemies used to sentence him to die. What happened next? Many of you know. God rescued Daniel from a den of hungry lions.

We cannot always anticipate where our next great challenge will come from, but we can prepare for it now, by building routines that unite us to God more each day.

Opening questions What are some pre-shot habits that are part of your game? Do you have a way of maintaining consistency in these?

READING Psalm 5:3; Acts 2:42-47; Exodus 20:8-11

A good time (Psalm 5)

David wrote of beseeching the Lord in the morning. Why is the morning a powerful time to connect with God? What are some advantages of each time of day: morning, noon, and night? Which works best for you?

Community habits (Acts 2)

God's people live in community, so they can build habits together. What habits marked the gatherings of the early church? How can we cultivate these among ourselves today as followers of Christ?

A rich Sabbath (Exodus 20)

Sabbath was God's design for a weekly intentional habit in his people's lives in the Old Testament. Its purpose was a day of rest and attention to God, so many keep it today. Do you practice aspects of the Sabbath? What rewards result (or would result) by adhering to a Sabbath routine?

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/>