



# Links Players

## Proverbs - Christianity Is a Team Sport

*...the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank.... (Proverbs 30: 27)*

Golf is known the world over for being an individual sport. Nobody can hit that shot for you, can they? If you are 165 yards out, your caddie can make suggestions about club selection, shot shape, and landing spot, but in the end, you must make the swing.

Golf is, for the most part, played individually; yet there are exceptions. Its easy to think of examples: The Ryder Cup, The Solheim Cup, and club intersquad matches. When it comes to team play, things change a bit.

It remains true that you must still play your shot, but now there are other considerations that come into play. For instance, you are usually wearing a team uniform. You travel together. You eat together. Your golf bags now have the same logo. The pairings are a matter of significant importance, especially in an alternate shot format.

All these considerations and more are done in pursuit of that magical, intangible, and often elusive “esprit de corps.” Forging individuals into a team is no small accomplishment.

One of the more fascinating things to say about team golf is that each player still matters as an individual. The idea is not to eliminate each player's identity. Rather, the idea is to inspire them to accomplish great things by achieving a sense of comradery. Developing comradery requires any number of qualities, but none more so than trust and a shared goal.

When locusts refuse to break rank, these locusts become a mighty force with which mankind must reckon. This is true about locust. This is infinitely truer of humanity; for good or ill. For example, Stalin motivated his military to unspeakable horrors.

Over against all human evil, Jesus is, from his throne in heaven, building a temple of individual “living stones;” all being shaped and fitted into a massive, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic temple.

When we are obedient to the Spirit's voice, we are being formed together for something much larger than our individual desires and purposes. We are becoming a massive force for the glory of God and the good of humanity.

Jesus reminds us that the “gates of hell will not prevail against the church.” When he teaches us that, he is teaching us that the church, collectively speaking, is a formidable force that strikes terror in the caverns of hell.

Let's march together under the banner of our King using our individual gifts for the shared goal of bringing the kingdom of God to bear on the kingdoms of his world.

**Prayer – Jesus, move us by the power of your Spirit to walk and march together for your glory.**

**READING - Romans 14:19; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31; Galatians 5: 13-15.**

**OPENING QUESTIONS:** Do you enjoy team competition? Discuss the difference between individual and team play.

1. According to **Romans 14:19**, Paul encourages individuals to pursue \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_? Discuss both the difficulty and delight in doing this.

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2. According to **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**, Paul maintains both our individuality and our corporate expressions of Christ. Make a list of those truths found in this section and discuss among yourselves what Paul is driving us to think about.

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3. In **Galatians 5: 13-15**, Paul encourages the church to \_\_\_\_\_? He also warns the church about \_\_\_\_\_? Discuss the importance of all the “one another's” found in Scripture.

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