



Links Players

THE ETHERNAL SCORECARD

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23, ESV)

At the end of each round, professional golfers review their cards for accuracy before turning in a score. Circles and squares draw attention to birdies and bogeys.

*Several years ago, I was inspired to create *The Eternal Scorecard*, which is my way of keeping track of things more important than the game we all love. At the end of each day, I tally up my score from a course I call *The Fruit of the Spirit* and hope to see more circles than squares.*

No tee times are required, so feel free to play the track and see how you do.

#1 Love – “Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position” (Romans 12:16 NIV).
(Par: How did you treat those who can’t help you?)

#2 Joy – “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13 NIV).
(Par: Were you a pleasing aroma to others, possibly causing them to ask what’s different about you?)

#3 Peace – “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).
(Par: Did your worry or stress manifest itself with a curt reply to a loved one?)

#4 Patience – “But for that very reason, I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life” (1 Timothy 1:16 NIV).
(Par: Did you view an interruption to your schedule as a nuisance or an opportunity to show the love of Jesus?)

#5 Kindness – “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).
(Par: Did you make the effort to ask the name of each person with whom you interacted today?)

#6 Goodness – “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:31 NIV).
(Par: Did you keep the extra change from the unaware cashier or look out for their best interest and return it?)

#7 Faithfulness – “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments” (Deuteronomy 7:9).
(Par: Did you honor your spouse even if you’re in the “worse” of “better or worse?”)

#8 Gentleness – “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Proverbs 15:1)
(Par: Were you able to resist the urge to one-up your buddy’s 19th hole jab with a reciprocal zinger?)

#9 Self-Control – “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 1:7)
(Par: Did you take the time to pray and read Scripture, or did you cave into the temptations of social media and Netflix?)

Following the British Open, I heard Cameron Smith attribute his improvement over the last year to putting in an extra 30 minutes on the range each day rather than cutting out early to get a beer with his mates. I wonder how much fruit (of the Spirit) we could bear with that same commitment in our spiritual lives.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help us to develop and exhibit the characteristics of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

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