



# Links Players

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## Transformation

*Do not conform to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2, NIV)*

On a summer trip a few years ago, Jeff Cranford and I discussed patterns of the world and the golf swing. As we talked about the golf swing and the difficulty in making changes, we agreed that even the smallest changes take time, sometimes years. Bernard Langer came to mind during this discussion.

Bernard Langer was presented with the idea of a change in his swing; he had a strong grip, strong club face, and a hook to get as much distance as possible. He learned to gain power with all these habits but a strong leg move to the classic reverse C took a toll on his back over time and led to inconsistencies. Something needed to change.

Bernard Langer had built his swing without a teacher, the Golf Channel, or the hundreds of books and magazines a golfer can read today. He remembers "waiting in a small shed with the other caddies, sitting on a bench and staring for hours at the only thing on the wall, a swing sequence of Jack Nicklaus." Because his father was a bricklayer, he built a swing with the idea that everything had to be straight.

Bernard never changed his swing drastically; he did it bit by bit. His strong grip needed to change, but his coach, Willy Hoffman, suggested weakening it an eighth of an inch at a time over the course of years. This small but consistent change to a very established pattern was brilliant and allowed him to continue to play at a high level and win without the distinct feeling of change.

If you feel something in your golf game is holding you back or that you are doing something incorrectly, Bernard suggested keeping the theory of small changes at the top of your mind. When we consider "not conforming to the patterns of this world," let's think about customs and behaviors that are selfish and offensive in God's eyes.

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Like a swing change, we need to use our minds for transformation and renewal. This change can take time because new patterns must take hold within us that are led by the Holy Spirit.

As flawed human beings, we can avoid "worldly customs" but still be proud, covetous, selfish, stubborn, and arrogant. The pattern and the solution are described here in Romans 8:5-6, "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of the sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace."

The real change in my life came with my ongoing surrender to the Holy Spirit. Over time, he is breaking me of these sinful patterns. We often call the Holy Spirit our "internal GPS system." If you want to be in God's perfect will, listen to him through the word, learn, and make some small changes to the patterns of your life. He will fill us to live righteously in a way that leads to abundance.

**Prayer: Lord, teach us to rely on you and the Holy Spirit to guide our steps.**

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Chris Hermann

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