



# Links Players

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## Becoming a Target

*...Everyone who wants to live a Godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:12, NIV)*

“What’s the number?” You may hear this question several times while playing golf with your friends. Some use range finders, and some use GPS. Sooner or later, a flag isn’t visible, or the GPS signal is weak.

The request is heard again, “What’s the number?” Why? We are in search of our “target.” We need confirmation and affirmation. We want to give ourselves the best opportunity to be successful with that next shot.

Have you ever considered that you are often a “target?” Have you ever thought that each time you encounter resistance or even hatred for speaking the truth to others, it is also an affirmation that you are no longer walking in the same direction as the world?

In the above scripture, Paul is writing to encourage and instruct Timothy, but he is also preparing him for the persecution that will come for living a godly life in Christ Jesus.

In John 15, Jesus also reminds us of this likely outcome. Immediately after he instructs us to remain obedient to him, he tells us that some in the world will hate us. The consequences of bearing “fruit that will last,” a central theme in this chapter, often come with harshness and hostility.

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.” (John 15:18-19)

I can’t imagine any of us finding joy in being a target of hatred, but I am confident that we have experienced this in some way or another for speaking Biblical truths. If Jesus, the most loving and compassionate person in all the world, couldn’t avoid being an object of hate, what makes us think we can escape it? Take heart!

I’m reasonably sure it didn’t bring Jesus joy when he received ridicule and rejection rather than gratitude for his words and actions. When he healed the paralytic and said, “...your sins are forgiven...Get up and walk.” Some claimed “blasphemy,” even after witnessing a miracle, while others were filled with awe and praised God.

I don't know about you, but it is not pleasant to get affirmation of being a follower of Christ by experiencing rejection or ridicule for sharing his message. Still, it is an affirmation I long for. I don't mind becoming that kind of target.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (Matthew 5:11)

**Prayer: Father in heaven. Give us the courage and the love it takes to be willing to share the gospel's message with the world.**

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Rob Dawson

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