



Links Players

Perfection

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6, NASB)

Do you sometimes feel you aren't making progress in your spiritual life? How about in your golf game?

As a member of The Palms Golf Club, I can play in two club championship tournaments yearly, a match play and a stroke play event. This year I decided to enter the net division club championship, which started on a Monday with 32 players, and a five-day commitment to make it to the finals.

It is a great opportunity to meet new guys and "change the conversation" in a competitive event. Of course, I wanted to win, but my focus was on how to share the LINKS story if given the opportunity. After 12 holes on the third day, I started asking my opponent, Bryan, questions about his family, where he grew up, and how he came to the desert. As it turned out, he and his eight brothers lived in New Jersey, about 30 minutes from where I grew up.

I eventually beat Bryan in golf, but the important outcome is that we are now friends, and he wants to continue the work that God began in him and attend our fellowship at The Palms.

In the opening verse, Paul describes the Christian's growth and maturity process when we accept Jesus and continue until Christ returns. God completes what he starts and helps you grow in grace until he has completed his work in your life. He never gives up on you!

We often let our present circumstances steal our joy in life, golf, and walk with Christ. Of course, we need to be prepared when these inevitable challenges happen.

Whether it is a shot that lands behind a tree, a foul-mouthed playing partner, or a life challenge, Christ is always there, even when we least sense his presence.

Proverbs 8:35 states, "For whoever finds me, finds life and receives favor from the Lord. But whoever fails to find me harms himself, all who hate me love death."

Don't you want the Lord's favor in all situations and bring your friends along the way?

Dr. David Cook, a sports psychologist, states that we must "See, Feel, and Trust" when preparing for a golf shot. In our spiritual preparation, we need to believe in what the disciples have seen and trust that there is joy, whatever the circumstances. Sometimes the joy is in the struggle.

God was with me all week and showed up to provide me with peace, focus, and constant nudges to remember the purpose of playing. After winning on the 19th hole on day one, a closing birdie on 18 to win on day two, and wins on days three and four, I managed to proceed to the final match, where – unfortunately - I lost.

My goal to win 17 years after my only other club championship was not to be, but God's goal to change the conversation was accomplished, which brings me joy. He is continuing "this work in process."

Prayer: Thank you for your patience, perseverance, and love for us, Lord, as we seek your purpose daily.

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Chris Hermann

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