



# Links Players

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## Love-Hate Relationship

*Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. (Matthew 7:3-5, NIV)*

The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness....(1 John 2:9, NASB)

Do you, by chance, have a love-hate relationship with this crazy game called golf, like I do?

Over the years, golf has provided me with some of my most favorite memories, and it has also ripped my heart out and stomped on it. I am not talking about how you felt when you made your first hole-in-one and received the bar bill afterward.

I think more like the time I shot my lowest round ever (at the time) to take the lead in the first round of a U.S. Amateur Qualifier and how I felt at dinner that evening with my parents and caddie. Then, I remember how disgusted I felt the next day driving home after shooting twelve strokes worse and not even coming close to qualifying.

One day, I sure loved golf. The next day, I hated it!

I can remember it working the opposite as well. I was qualifying for the U.S. Open and shanked the ball every time I hit a wedge. I had never had that happen and could have used a few days away from the game, but I was already committed to playing the next day with some men I was a guest of at their course. The next day, with the worst memories from the day before, I hit the ball as well as I ever have and broke the course record.

Yes, I have a love-hate and hate-love relationship with this game.

I don't consider it an issue with my character when I have a love-hate relationship with a game like golf.

However, I know from Scripture that in Jesus, having a love-hate relationship with our fellow man or woman is not permitted. More specifically, hatred toward anyone is not okay if we live in Christ.

When Jesus had every reason to be ill-willed toward those who had brutally beaten and were in the process of crucifying him, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

The Apostle John, who knew him as intimately as anyone, wrote in his first epistle right before today's verse, "The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked" (1 John 2:4-6).

We are called to follow Jesus, which means learning to love even when our natural selves want to hate. Hate is not of Jesus. That includes people of different political, religious, or social views and the person who cheated you in business, humiliated you in public, or wronged you in unthinkable ways. That requires inviting Jesus into our thoughts and feelings and the Holy Spirit to transform our minds because “The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him” (1 John 2:10).

**Prayer: Holy Spirit, friend, teach me to walk in the way of Jesus and to grow into a lover of my fellow man, absent of hatred.**

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