



Links Players

All's Well... That Begins Well

...You have gotten rid of your old way of life and its habits. Put on your new nature and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him. This new life brings you the true knowledge of God. (Colossians 3:9-10, NCV/NL)

Most tour pros have a "circle of care." Along with business managers, there are personal assistants, strength and conditioning specialists, massage therapists, nutritionists, a variety of golf instructors, equipment consultants, media advisors, and even psychologists.

A sport psychologist focuses on the mental part of the game to help players change their old way of thinking in order to become more effective in their performance.

Dr. Bob Rotella, one of the more notable golf performance consultants, believes 80% of any golf shot takes place before the player takes the club back. The pre-shot routine is where you repeat the same mental and physical steps before every shot. Webster defines it as a habit; "A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity acquired through frequent repetition."

Tom Kite found success when he implemented a consistent pre-shot routine. His pre-shot routine starts with an assessment to determine the distance, the wind, and the hazards before he selects the club. Gary Player says the number one amateur error is not taking the right club. Then Tom makes sure he is properly aligned to the target. A perfect swing with the wrong alignment makes for a bad shot.

In assessing my life and walk with Christ, I want to follow God's direction, ensure I'm aligned properly, and answer the question, "Where do I need to go?"

What will it take to get you where you want to go? If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten. Like using a yardage book, the Scriptures give me an accurate read on my heart.

Most professional golfers don't practice alone. Having feedback and encouragement from others will also be helpful in determining if you've assessed your life correctly. Here's a checklist to make sure your life is lined up correctly:

- Have I surrounded myself with people who encourage, challenge, and provide support for me?
- Are their attitudes or behavior patterns I need to change?
- Am I trying to be me or somebody else?
- What needs re-evaluating in my life?
- Do I practice my spiritual disciplines in a consistent manner?

-Are my relationships in good shape? Do I keep short accounts?

One last element Tom Kite incorporates before he swings is having the proper mental attitude. Is he focused positively and visualizing correctly, seeing what he needs to see in order to accomplish what he wants? Earl Woods said this aspect of the pre-shot routine was the hardest thing to teach Tiger. What separates good players from great players is their mental attitude.

The question is not, are you preparing, but rather, for what are you preparing? Success in golf and our spiritual life is a daily thing. One of these days is none of these days. I've been told that whatever you are doing today is preparation for tomorrow.

Tomorrow is a read-out on today, and what you're doing today was prepared for yesterday. If you want to be God's man or woman, it's better to prepare than to repair. All's well... that begins well!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, give me a sane estimate of who I am and strengthen my resolve to develop spiritual habits that will make my life a reflection of Jesus and glorify You.

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Bill Crawford

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The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.