

Links Players

CAN'T SEE THE TREES IN THE FOREST

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing; some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. (Hebrews 13:2, NIV)

I played in the senior division of July's Dallas Amateur Championship, contested at Trinity Forest just south of downtown. Locals find the club's name humorous, considering there are no trees in play on the course.

Combine the lack of shade with the intensity of the "heat dome" covering Texas this summer, and you had the makings for high temps and high scores.

In the first round, I was paired with a gentleman who labored through most of the day due to a thyroid issue his doctors had yet to bring under control. Let's call him Tim because, well, his name is Tim.

Tim couldn't drink enough fluids to stay hydrated in the 105-degree temps, and it was an effort for him to muster the energy required for each swing. Obviously, he was struggling, so I did what I could to help him navigate a difficult round. I didn't feel I was doing anything special, but my actions impacted Tim.

The subject of my occupation didn't come up during the competition, but Tim is a Links Daily Devo reader, and my turn in the rotation happened to be the Tuesday after the tournament. When Tim read my devotion and realized I had been his playing partner, he was moved to email me.

Here's an excerpt: "After round one, in which I was truly blessed by my playing partners, I was puzzled. Here I was, struggling with a health issue and under doctors' care; I kept thinking, how can these gentlemen be so kind and understanding? At every hole, my partners would assist me in my round. Picking up my clubs. Getting me water and cold towels. Retrieve my cart parked a distance away. As I apologized for lagging behind, they assured me all was good. Over and over. As we holed out on 18, we all shook hands. I then made a statement that I appreciated one partner's help and said something like, 'You're a fine Christian man, and thank you again.' Christ was beaming off of you. Unbelievable, and thank you again."

Tim's mail obviously made me feel good, but that's not the point. It was an affirmation of the words of Jesus: "By this everyone will know you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35).

Like my golf swing, I like to keep things simple. 'Love God and others' (the 'L' in our LINKS acrostic) is my North Star. After all, "There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:31).

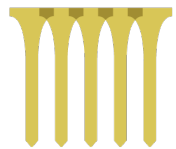
My daily routine starts with a prayer of gratitude for the day before and a prayer of blessing for the day ahead. Then I spend time in scripture, where there is no shortage of instructions on how to love others:

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10).

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (Philippians 2:3-4).

When my swing is in a groove, I don't have to think about what I'm doing. I pray that's the case when it comes to loving others and thus why I spend so much time in the Word renewing my mind.



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

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I would derive satisfaction if someone were to say I hit the ball like Tiger on a given day, which by the way, has never happened. But to hear someone say Christ was beaming off of you? I feel like I won a major.

Prayer: Lord, help us show others that we are your disciples by loving them as you have loved us.

--

Drew Hamilton

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