



Links Players

Golf Can Hurt You, And Not Just Mentally

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33, ESV)

"OK, that hurt," I said almost immediately after my golf ball left the tee it had been resting on.

Some of my snarkier golf friends might have asked, "What hurt, the swing or the shot?"

With friends like that, as the saying goes, who needs enemies? Thankfully, these particular friends knew it wasn't the shot; it was my shoulder.

Long ago, when I was teaching a sport that uses a fuzzy yellow ball, I stepped on one of those balls and twisted my left ankle. The next day, I was back on the court teaching, not because I was tough but because that was how I earned a living.

Coming back too soon, I favored that ankle and slightly tore my rotator cuff. Did I get it fixed? No, because I couldn't take the time off, and it didn't hurt my golf swing until now.

Your injury may be different. Four months after the 1991 PGA Championship, Steve Jones was in a dirt bike accident. He dislocated his shoulder, injured his ankle, and tore ligaments in the ring finger of his left hand.

My pain is nothing like Steve's ordeal, reinjuring the finger several times. But in 1996, with a modified grip, he won the U.S. Open.

It doesn't matter that my pain or yours is not as bad as Steve's was; we still play with pain. Distracting, bothersome, unpleasant pain. Because the joy of golf is worth it.

If we can do that, why would we ever consider not following Jesus fully because we get pushback? Because it isn't popular? Because of what someone might say?

Jesus promised us that in this world, as his followers, we would have tribulation (trouble). We do, and it is not pleasant, but we read Jesus' next words: "I have overcome the world."

The very next thing Jesus does is pray for us. (Read John 17 and note verse 20.)

Play enough golf, and you will play with pain. Love it enough, and you will keep playing.

Follow Jesus, and in this world, you will have tribulation. Love him enough, and you will keep following. Where else is there to go?

And even in your tribulation, take heart. He has overcome the world.

Prayer: Father, we don't seek troubles, but we know they will come. Give us the faith and courage to face them for your honor and glory. In Jesus' name, Amen

—

Lewis Greer

Copyright 2023 Links Players International

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