



# Links Players

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## Where's The Joy?...

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)*

I don't know about you, but when I play golf, it is so important that I find the right frame of mind that allows me to play my best. It's a constant battle.

I don't get to play as much golf as I once did, so I find that when I can tee it up, I get pretty excited. I often tell my group, "I can't imagine being more excited to play golf today."

Announcing my joy puts me in a state of thankfulness and helps me recognize how I should feel when given the opportunity to play a game I love and be with a group of people who share my feelings about it.

However, often after a poor start by me or someone else in the group, the joy seems to be sucked out of the air far too quickly.

I'm working very hard not to be that person. I'm sure we all know people who we might refer to as the "fun vacuum," the one who sucks all the fun out of the game for us through constant complaining.

Recently, my friend Chris Herman suggested in a Links devotional that we must "examine what you are putting into your mind through television, social media, books, conversations, movies, and magazines." That devotion caused me to be more aware of what I'm taking in.

For quite a while now, I have been amazed at the power of music, particularly contemporary Christian music, and the encouragement and emotion that it can produce in us.

I have very little musical talent, so I am in awe of those artists who are so gifted. For example, "Heart of God" by Zach Williams, "Desert Road" by Casting Crowns & CAIN, and "Praise You in this Storm" by Casting Crowns & Phil Wickham are some of my favorites.

These songs express powerful messages of what it means to follow Christ. Learning to bounce a golf ball on the face of my wedge 500 times without stopping (a product of my misspent youth) might not have been the best use of my time. I should have learned to play music.

Because of my love of music, my son and I recently turned on the TV and watched “The Voice.” We were amazed that everyone on the show was extremely talented and wondered how the judges could choose a winner in this competition.

As we watched, one young lady stood out; the reason was her joy of singing as she gave what can only be described as an amazing vocal performance.

That spoke to me. In the face of what I would think was extreme pressure, much like playing in a golf tournament, she could not contain her joy.

Golf is my/our platform, and while practicing, preparing, and competing in this game comes with many “trials of various kinds,” I plan to count it all as pure joy from now on and see what God will do. I hope you will do the same.

**Lord, help me see the joy in every day I get to spend seeking and saving the lost for you through the platform of golf, especially when trials come my way.**

—

Todd Sturgis

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