



Links Players

Searching for Authenticity...

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Colossians 3:9-10)

Are you a golfer or just someone who plays golf? That was the question that was asked by Arnold Palmer in a USGA commercial some years ago.

According to Mr. Palmer, all I needed to do was donate to the USGA and get the membership bag tag, and I could show the world that I was a golfer and not just someone who “plays golf.”

In a world of superficiality, my investigation goes deeper than that when deciding whether someone is a golfer or just someone who plays golf. Are you versed in golf course architecture? Do you play by the rules of golf even when it is challenging? How is your knowledge of equipment, and how does it affect your game and your ability to play different shots?

Are you familiar with the great players of the past and current top players? What do you know about them? Have you studied them to improve and learn, or do you just know who they are? Are you a “student of the game”?

Your definition of a golfer and my definition of a golfer may differ. Still, I believe there is a large element of authenticity that we would both require to put someone in the “golfer” category.

I’ve heard authenticity described as being true to who you are in personality, values, and spirit, even when there is great pressure on you to act otherwise”. Being someone who “plays golf” is a great way to enjoy the game we all love. I have many friends who just play golf.

However, authentically being a “golfer” takes a lot of hard work and dedication to the game. It is not for the faint of heart because this is a hard game.

I have started to apply principles similar to those when thinking about discipleship. Am I a true disciple of Jesus, or do I “play Christian”? What markers would we look at to decide whether I am truly a disciple of Jesus? Am I in the word consistently? Am I applying what I learn to my life constantly? As our scripture verse today suggests...am I putting on the “new self,” renewing myself daily, and walking closely with my Savior? Am I a “Fisher of Men?”

As a LINKS Player, am I committed to the five foundational pillars of L.I.N.K.S in my walk?

We must constantly remind ourselves and challenge ourselves to think about our true calling as Christians. I often think of what God asked of those faithful followers in the Bible. What did it take for the disciples to do what they did? How can I cultivate that kind of faith and obedience in my life every day?

I encourage you to continue asking yourself these questions. Remember, what God calls you to, he will sustain you through. Let's show the world that we are Jesus' disciples, not just people who are "Playing Christian."

Prayer: Lord, continue to make your call on my life known to me and lead me in my pursuit to walk by faith into that calling and not by sight. Amen.

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Todd Sturgis

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