



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

# Links Players

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## Breaking Down Barriers

*For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall... so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace....(Ephesians 2:14-15 NASB)*

In 1961, Charlie Sifford became the first African-American to join the PGA Tour. Among his many professional accomplishments, Sifford won the Greater Hartford Open in 1967 and the Los Angeles Open in 1969.

Sadly, he never played in the Masters Tournament or The Open Championship. Still, he broke down many barriers, and Lee Trevino once referred to him as the “Jackie Robinson” of golf.

In 1975, Lee Elder became the first African-American player to play in the Masters, and later played in The Open Championship in 1979. He then joined the U.S. Ryder Cup Team later that year in the matches at the Greenbrier Course in West Virginia. He also broke down barriers.

I don't need to give all the examples of the different golfers, men, and women, who broke down various barriers through the game of golf. Unfortunately, many other cultural and societal barriers continue to exist today.

We see them all over the world, and possibly, they are most evident in the Middle East today, where the conflict between Israel and Palestine is taking the main stage in world news, but they also exist in our lives, hearts, and relationships.

I am confident that this devotional will not resolve all conflicts; however, when we put our faith in Jesus' death and resurrection, we should understand that he is a solution to all our conflicts.

In his letter to the believers in Ephesus, Paul explains that all who were not of Abraham's lineage and receivers of the Law and Prophets (as the nation of Israel was) had “no hope” and were “without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12). Both groups were lost.

Israel had hope, but was missing knowing him as truth because of their self-righteousness and religious focus; the other had no understanding of God's ways whatsoever. Regardless of background, Jesus unites us in grace and truth.

In one instance, God brought the opportunity of peace and reconciliation for every divide and barrier through Jesus's ultimate sacrifice. He brought all into reconciliation and into “one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity” (Ephesians 2:16).

The answer to peace 2,000 years ago and today is Jesus. We don't need a new resolution, law, or policy. We just need to pursue Jesus and the advancement of his kingdom. As we pursue his reign in our lives, we will experience a peace that passes all [worldly] understanding.

**Prayer: Father, help me understand that there is no longer enmity in life in Christ Jesus. You have conquered all conflict through your Son.**

—

Josh Nelson

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