



Links Players

Adversity - Getting Back Up

Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, ESV)

If there is such a thing in golf as absolute truth, this is it—No one will ever master this game! Jack played in 586 PGA events. He won 73 times. That means he lost 513 times. That’s a lot of losing!

By a recent count, Tiger has entered around 358 tournaments. He has won 82 times. That’s a ton of wins. Of course, he lost 276 times. That’s a lot of losses. The two best players that ever played this game spent more days driving away from courses after losing than hoisting trophies.

I don’t presume to know how the greatest athletes in the world handle defeat, but I would suppose they know a thing or two about “getting off the mat after being knocked down.”

Golf, if anything, has its fair share of “ups and downs.” The mountain-top experience after a string of birdies is amazing. On the other hand, blowing one out of bounds on the last hole in a close match makes climbing out of the emotional abyss extremely difficult.

If one awful moment develops into an extended slump, then what’s a golfer to do? Quit! No! No! No! This begs a few related questions: How does one come back from a devastating defeat? How does one get back up after a string of losses? Where does one find the resolve to keep moving forward?

Many will remember that scene in Rocky V where Rocky returns to the gym in one of the lowest moments of his life. He has a flashback where Mickey, his deceased trainer, says, “If you ever get hurt, and you feel you are going down, you’ll hear a whisper, “Get up you...because the Mickey loves ya.”

What’s true in sports and movies is also true in the rough and tumble of real life. Everyone loses at some point. Everyone fails somewhere in the journey. What you do next matters greatly.

You might not go home after finishing second 19 times in majors like Jack. You might not be on the mat covered in blood like Rocky, but like Jack and Rocky, you must “get up.”

It’s easy to imagine Jack surrounded by family and friends urging him onward. In Rocky’s fictional world, Mickey was there to coach and inspire.

In the real world of life’s painful losses, we have an enthroned King saying, “Get up! Get up because I love you!” We hear him whispering to our hearts, “I have called you and set you apart for my purposes, and I will lead you through this defeat to victory.”

As life’s adversities confront us, tough as they are, let’s trust the love of Christ and the power of the Spirit to right the wrongs, energize us to rise again in his strength, and lead us in the wake of his triumph!

Prayer: Lord! Pour your Spirit on me and cause me to rise to battle another day!

READING: Ecclesiastes 4:9-10; Proverbs 17:17; Proverbs 18:24; Proverbs 27:6; Proverbs 27:17; John 15:14-15.

1. Losing a match is a bitter pill to swallow. Losing your swing can be very upsetting. Discuss the times you’ve lost in golf and how you navigated through it, either for good or ill.

2. After reading the suggested texts, go around the table and honor those friends who kept you pushing forward after a difficult loss in golf or life.

3. Are you investing time and energy in your friends? Are they investing time and energy in you? If not, what practical things can we do to remedy that?
