



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Growth Spurt

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. (2 Peter 3:18, NIV)

I still like to play competitive golf, but unfortunately, my ability to keep up with younger opponents continues to dwindle.

Take, for example, the recent Texas State Open qualifier I played in. In addition to being the oldest guy in my group, I may have been a medalist for age in the field.

Watching my professional playing partner's irons off the tee sail 60 yards beyond my driver was comical, but the real chuckle came when I thought about the play-by-play of my only birdie on the day: driver, 3-wood, hole-out wedge. From 50 yards!

Being 57, it's probably time to shift my focus to senior events. (Yes, I realize some readers will relate while others will think, "Thanks, Captain Obvious!")

The problem is I still feel young, but my body doesn't react the way it used to on the golf course and tennis courts. I'm finding it hard to embrace the concept of aging, and I know I'm not ready for the "Old Guys Rule" line of clothing yet. However, I am starting to come around to the idea thanks to some wise counsel from retired pastor, friend, and mentor John Redfearn.

If you get the chance to visit an East Texas Links Fellowship, you will come to cherish John. He is so well-versed in Scripture it is difficult to know what parts of his speech do not come straight from the Bible.

In fact, at my most recent visit to Eagle's Bluff (outside Tyler), one participant joked that not only does John memorize verses, but he also memorizes when he memorizes them!

Something he said years ago has always stuck with me. "The one thing we can get better at the longer we live is not our golf swing, or anything else, except growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." I thought it was a Redfearn rumination, but he was quoting 2 Peter 3:18, today's verse of the day.

I can't tell you how encouraging this is to me, as I was late to the game in giving my life to Christ. Because I'm making up for lost time, I'm grateful there is no retirement age for getting to know our Savior.

So, how do I grow in grace and knowledge? I eat a steady diet of church, small groups, Links Fellowships, podcasts, worship music, devotions, books, quiet time, and prayer.

But most importantly, as Jesus said himself, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). I spend time reading Scripture, meditating on Scripture, and memorizing Scripture.

Trust me, I still work on my golf game, but I’ve done the cost-benefit analysis. My conclusion? If we invest our time wisely, “Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16).

I may be losing distance in the game of golf, but in the fairways of faith, I feel like I’m gaining ground.

How “bout you?”

Prayer: Lord, you encourage us to grow in the grace and knowledge of You. Help us derive as much pleasure from this as you do from watching us grow.

—

Drew Hamilton

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