



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

A Prayer For The Ages

For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. (Ephesians 3:1-3 ESV)

Paul had hutzpah. The fearless, bold, self-confident, self-assured, and maybe even a little pushy quality. These characteristics are on display in Olympic athletes while they compete at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Having hutzpah isn’t being arrogant, nor does it guarantee a medal. But it can elevate an athlete’s experience throughout the process of competing, including on the golf course.

Paul, who at one time murdered Christ’s followers, does a one-eighty and tells the people in Ephesus the “stewardship of God’s grace was given to me for you.” Paul could only do this because he first experienced and received God’s grace through his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road (Acts 3:3-6).

This phrase, “stewardship of God’s grace,” has caught my attention. As a professional golfer (and in most areas of my life), I hold high expectations for my performance. When I don’t achieve what I expect, I am hard on myself and not very kind. I struggle to receive grace in failure (real or perceived).

Most often, an athlete’s first response to failure is, “What did I do wrong?”

God wants you and me to understand his grace is a gift and we need to steward (responsible administration) it well. Generally, we are pretty good about encouraging others to receive God’s grace, but if we can’t steward it in our own lives first, then we are only offering “cheap grace,” as Dietrich Bonhoeffer coined the phrase. (Read more about cheap grace versus costly grace).

Further into Ephesians 3, Paul gives context to the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel in a beautiful prayer (verses 14-21).

Paul prays to the Father...Be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, be rooted and grounded in love, have strength to comprehend the breadth and length and height and depth of this love, know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, be filled with the fullness of God (paraphrased).

The stewardship of God's grace in Paul's prayer might feel unattainable. But as Bonhoeffer said, "Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock."

My heart and spirit have been encouraged to pursue the stewardship of God's grace, knowing I need it first before I can share it with others. Maybe a little of Paul's hutzpah will help the journey. Will you join me?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your grace, which can only be received and not earned. Strengthen me, dwell in me, and root me in your love today.

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Tracy Hanson

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