



Links Players

Road Trip - Partners in the Gospel

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. (Philippians 1:3-5, ESV)

When a close friend asks me to play in a scramble, I usually accept, even if I prefer to find a comfortable chair, coffee, and a good book. In my last scramble, our team shot 17 under (gross) and got walloped. We played behind the group that won!

I'm not accusing anyone, but from where they hit some shots, I was surprised they broke 80—a slight exaggeration! Outside of raising much-needed funds to support many worthy causes, I would just as soon have a "root canal."

While I prefer individual medal or match play, I love playing in "fourball" tournaments. Finding that guy who you enjoy being with is essential. If both men are in good form, all the better. If one partner struggles, the other will shoulder the load until his buddy, hopefully, regains his mojo.

Years ago, I partnered with a good friend in a best-ball event. I had nothing! He turned to me in the tenth fairway and said, "I've carried you longer than your mother." I'm still laughing. Sadly, his smackdown didn't work. If memory serves, I don't think I cut him on any hole.

Like golf, finding the right partners in the gospel is pure gold. Finding men with kindred spirits is a rare gift indeed. Laboring alongside men with whom we can lock arms in a shared purpose is sweet to the soul. Losing a friend is virtually unbearable.

C. S. Lewis, reflecting on the loss of his friend, writes, "In each of my friends, there is something that only some other friend can fully bring out...Now that Charles [Williams] is dead, I shall never again see Ronald's [Tolkien's] reaction to a specifically Charles joke. Far from having more of Ronald, having him "to myself" now that Charles is away, I have less of Ronald...."

I've heard it said that golf is for selfish people and consists entirely of a battle between a man and a course. While there is an element of truth to this, it hardly captures the whole story.

I can't speak for you, but this game has introduced me to some of the

finest friends in the world. Locking arms with my Links colleagues and the men in our Links Fellowships in gospel ministry through golf is a profound grace.

When I moved to Rome, GA, four years ago, it never dawned on me that at this stage of life, the Lord would bring me into friendships with some of the greatest guys in the world.

I pray that all our readers will find men "cut from the same cloth" with which to play golf, talk about the deep things of life, and advance the cause of Christ at clubs across the world.

Prayer: Jesus! Bring men together into tightly knitted relationships for your purposes on the earth.

READING: Philippians 1:1-11; Colossians 4:1-6; Acts 2:42-47.

1. Recall and discuss a time when you played in a "two-man, best-ball" event and went low or accomplished something extraordinary.

2. After reading these recommended texts, observe the camaraderie between Peter and Paul and others in gospel ministry. List the ways they supported one another.

3. Application- discuss ways to lock arms with others in gospel advancement at your club.
