



Links Players

Preparation

In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning, I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly (Psalms 5:3).

Before we hit the links, we all take the necessary steps to ensure a great day! For example, we put on sunscreen to protect our skin from the harmful rays of the sun and a hat to shield our face and eyes.

We wear a glove to help prevent calluses from forming on our hands and to keep them dry providing a tackier connection to the handle of the club. Maybe we pack a small cooler with some refreshing drinks and energizing snacks to keep us fueled and hydrated throughout the round.

We make sure we have enough golf balls, tees, and maybe we even put our ball marker clip onto our hat, ensuring we have all the essential golf necessities within reach.

Before teeing off, we take practice swings to loosen up our muscles and warm up our swing. Maybe we even roll a few balls on the practice green to get a feel for the speed and break of the putting surfaces. The point is that we take time to prepare before our rounds, or at least we should, to have the best shot at scoring well and enjoying the round to the fullest.

If we prepare this much to play golf, a leisure activity, how much more should we prepare in our spiritual lives? Like the routines we have prior to playing golf, what is our daily routine that gives us the best shot at having a good and committed day in Christ?

Developing routines is crucial for our spiritual well-being and growth. One of the first things I do when I wake up is pray and read the Bible. Some early church fathers have said that praying first thing in the morning gives God your first fruits or 'tithe' of the day.

It is connecting with our very Creator, our Savior, Jesus Christ, to give praise, thanks, and petitions to Him before anything else. King David, the psalmist, exemplifies this practice when he says in Psalm 5:3, "In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning, I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly."

Additionally, I always try to make sure I put on my spiritual armor before leaving my home. Just as we can't go to the golf course without our golf clubs, attire, and necessities, we can't expect to make it a full day without equipping ourselves spiritually.

The Apostle Paul encourages this when he says, "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against

the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

We are fighting an invisible war here on earth, and we need to fully prepare each day for whatever comes our way, whether it be temptations, trials, or spiritual battles.

Just like we would naturally prepare to play golf, taking care to gather all the necessary equipment and accessories, we need to take the same time and care in preparing ourselves every day for the spiritual battles we face.

By starting our day with prayer, reading the Word of God, and putting on the full armor of God, we are giving God our first fruits of the day and equipping ourselves with the necessary tools to navigate the challenges that lie ahead. This daily routine sets the tone for the rest of the day and fortifies our spiritual defenses, allowing us to face whatever comes our way with confidence and resilience.

Prayer: Lord, help us to give you our first fruits every morning upon rising from bed. As soldiers, help us always be prepared for any trial or temptation that may come our way.

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