



# Links Players

## Humility - Humility and Humiliation

*For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 14:11, ESV)*

More than a few people have said, “If you want to learn humility, play golf.” Many will agree that golf can also “humiliate the best of us.”

We often see this difference in how golfers handle defeat and victory. There is no shame in losing if someone does their best with honorable behavior in defeat. And, of course, there is nothing inappropriate in celebrating a “W” as long as the winner doesn’t dishonor a worthy opponent.

Jack Nicklaus’s loss to Tom Watson in the 1977 Open at Turnberry is the gold standard. Jack’s magnanimity (a refusal to be petty) in defeat was exemplary behavior modeled by a true champion.

As we know, Tom’s 65 won by a nose in the final round. From the vantage point of forty-seven years, their post-round speeches rivaled their brilliant play. Tom appropriately honored Jack. Jack responded, “I gave you my best shot, and it just wasn’t good enough. You were better! Well played.”

We see something similar in today’s game. After the recent President’s Cup, most players acknowledged their opponents’ skill under pressure. Unfortunately, we also saw some boorish behavior.

Competitive golf is typically portrayed as a zero-sum game with a winner and a loser. And, from one point of view, it is. But from another angle, finishing out of first after a hard-fought battle while conducting oneself with integrity is noble, indeed.

How can that be? In our secularized world, we tend to forget that life is more than what journalists report or others see from a horizontal perspective; rather, our Maker’s gaze is what ultimately counts.

The supreme example is Jesus’ death on the Cross as the ultimate triumph—exaltation through humility. To the unaided eye, Jesus’ ignominious death is often portrayed as a disillusioned man dying an ignoble death or a martyr merely giving himself in death on behalf of others.

However, to those with eyes opened to the Biblical account, Jesus’ death

at Calvary was the Son’s willingness to suffer humiliation, mocking, and scorn from sinful humanity. Ironically, he suffered humiliation for what we, in our boorish behavior, deserved.

Furthermore, what our unaided eyes could never see in his humiliation on the Cross is the unfathomable and unspeakable horrors of bearing the wrath of God for our sins. That’s humility!

This kind of humility is infinitely beyond our human ability. But through the love of God, the grace found exclusively in Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, we at Links Players endeavor to humble ourselves by serving you, sharing the good news of Christ’s redeeming love, and making disciples.

We would love to tell you that we’ve been entirely redeemed from a self-centered life. But everyone who follows Christ knows we are all a “work in progress.” That said, we deeply desire to honor God and serve you, the people of God.

**Prayer: Father! By your grace, empower us to serve our readers and Links Fellowships and become more like our Savior, Christ Jesus.**

### READING: Philippians 2:3-11; Matthew 18:1-4

1. Looking back across the many years of playing golf, what behavior in victory and defeat are you the most “proud” of or most embarrassed by?

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2. After meditating on Philippians 2:1-11, list the steps Jesus took in his downward path of humility.

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3. What behaviors on the golf course should we seek to rectify? How might we amend our ways to honor our heavenly Father?

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