



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Love Your Neighbor

*For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."
(Galatians 5:14, NIV)*

Without a doubt, Arnold Palmer was one of the most beloved golfers of all time. Of course, Arnie was a great golfer, with 62 PGA victories and seven majors. But he was much more than that.

Arnie transformed the game with his personality, charisma, and "go for broke" style of golf. He reached his peak just as television was there to capture it, captivating his fans. The public adored him and showed up in droves to follow him around the course. Arnie's nickname may have been The King, but he was a man of the people, a hero for everyday folks who comprised "Arnie's Army."

The fans loved Arnie because he loved them. He bent over backward to please them, acknowledging their cheers with a big smile, giving them his famous "thumbs up" gesture, and always signing autographs – very carefully so people would recognize his signature.

When fans wrote to him requesting an autograph, Arnie always responded and paid the return postage himself. The 2014 Golf Channel documentary on Arnie reported that his expenses for that act of kindness amounted to over \$100,000 annually. Men and women, young and old, Arnie showed kindness and compassion to all of them.

Two thousand years earlier, Jesus set the standard for kindness and compassion. In particular, Jesus specialized in showing love to the last, the least, and the lost, which annoyed the Jewish leaders.

Note these verses from Matthew 9:11-12: "When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

Jesus made a point to reach out to those that society rejected. He met and healed the demon-possessed, touched those with leprosy, and allowed prostitutes to touch him.

Consider his decision to choose the twelve disciples who would walk at his side for three years and absorb his teaching. These men would be entrusted to continue his mission after Jesus ascended to heaven.

For that critical task of leading the way toward fulfilling The Great Commission, did he choose religious leaders, scholars, the wealthy, or those with political power? No. Jesus chose everyday people, ranging from fishermen to a tax collector.

In the 22nd chapter of Matthew, the Pharisees asked Jesus, “What is the greatest commandment?” While the question sounds innocent, there were over 600 rules and commandments of Jewish law at that time.

It was one of many attempts by the Pharisees to trap Jesus into making statements that could be used against him. But Jesus didn’t hesitate; he gave them a two-for-one answer: “Love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself.”

Today, make it a point to “love your neighbor” and demonstrate it by being a blessing to those you meet. A smile, a kind word, or an offer to help goes a long way. It doesn’t take much effort on your part, and it may turn their day around – or maybe even turn their life around.

Prayer: Lord, give us the courage to follow Paul’s words from Romans 12:16: “*Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position.*” Amen

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John Bown

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