



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

On Seeing God

Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness, no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14, NIV)

I didn't have the benefit of golf lessons growing up. I was a pretty good athlete, though, and I eventually got down to a 1-handicap, despite my golf swing rather than because of it.

After I graduated from law school, the demands of being a good trial lawyer took priority over the time necessary to maintain a good golf game.

I don't enjoy things I don't do well, so I decided to devote my limited golf time to improving my technique. I figured if I could improve my fundamentals, even with less time to play and practice, I would be better when I returned to the game. So, I began taking lessons.

The transformation of my golf swing took time, years, actually. As anyone who has ever played golf knows, almost every natural impulse one has about how to hit a golf ball is wrong. I had to change my grip, posture, alignment, take-away, swing plane, and finish, but it worked.

I realize now that even when I played well when I was younger, I was just swatting at the ball. I had never experienced the full clubhead speed a good golf swing produces at impact, the club naturally releasing at the bottom of the swing through quiet, soft hands, or the momentum a good swing produces that carries one into a natural, balanced finish. The golf swing I had before could not have produced the purity of that experience.

When the writer of Hebrews says to make every effort to be holy because no one will see the Lord without holiness, he is not speaking of our salvation; salvation is by grace through faith. He is speaking of experiencing God's presence in our lives. Jesus said the same thing in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8.

Holiness opens our spiritual eyes to God's presence. Holiness is a spiritual tuning fork that sets us on pitch with God's divine presence, allowing us to hear and see Him to whom we were formerly deaf and blind.

This is why history is full of Christian ascetics who thought that withdrawing from society, living in monasteries, caves, and even on top of poles would make them holy—thinking that removing themselves from the world made it easier to live holy, which made it easier to experience God.

The good news is we can experience God's presence without living in a monastery, a cave, or on top of a pole, and we can do it while living in the world.

Just as my poor fundamentals hindered my ability to experience a purely struck golf shot, living in sin hinders our ability to experience the purity of the Lord's presence. Nothing compares to experiencing the presence of God, not even a well-struck golf shot.

Prayer: Lord, show me what is not holy so I can fully repent and approach You in holiness to experience Your presence.

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Scott Fiddler

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