



Links Players

Can You Learn From Someone Else's Mistakes?

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice. (Proverbs 12:15, ESV)

Through a series of God-orchestrated events that would both encourage you and take up this entire devotion, I recently found myself playing golf with – in several ways – my twin brother.

We were born in the same year, though months apart, and in different parts of the country. But we graduated from high school the same year. Both ended up in Bible college and were “set apart” for ministry along the way.

We both became golfers, early for me and later for him, but today, our games are somewhat similar. That made it easy for me to see why he was hitting the ball left.

On the 17th tee, he hit a big pull into another fairway, and I happened to watch that swing more closely than I had any all day. Then I stepped up and striped it down the fairway. After he complimented my drive, I thanked him for the lesson.

“What lesson?” he asked.

I told him he had just one flaw in his swing that was causing his pulls, and I recognized it because I have the same issue if I don't pay attention. He wanted to know what it was.

“On your backswing, you let your weight get to the outside of your back foot.”

After our successful approach shots on 18, I said I was sorry I hadn't started watching him sooner.

He said, “Play enough golf with me, and you'll find all kinds of things you shouldn't do!”

Immediately, my mind traveled back several decades, and I could hear my dad telling my brother and me this: “You can learn from your own mistakes, but you can also learn from the mistakes of others.”

The people in the Bible (not counting parable people) were actual humans who made actual mistakes. Paul, Peter, David, Mark, Solomon, Sarah—and the list goes on—all made mistakes, and we can learn from them.

The question is, can we learn from them and not repeat them?

Always look for good examples, both in golf swings and in life, and imitate those. But notice the mistakes as well and eliminate them.

Prayer: Father, May we learn from our own mistakes and the mistakes of others, and may we grow closer to you because of it. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen

Lewis Greer

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