



Links Players

Walk In The Spirit

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." (3 John 1:4 KJV).

My father, Ford Philpot, died thirty-three years ago at age 74. Last month, on my 74th birthday, I tried to walk 74 holes in his memory.

I teed off at 7:20am on a clear 45-degree Alabama morning in a turtleneck. I finished at 6:20pm in 74-degree sunshine. It was eleven (11) hours of non-stop golf. I played the senior tees – less than 5,800 yards, which let me chunk wedges instead of clunking six irons. I remembered that golf is hard no matter which tees you play. The hole remains the same- 4.25 inches- never big enough.

The result was not certain. I have never been in great shape in my life. I cannot do five real pushups. I have never done even one pull-up. I was embarrassed in junior high to take off my shirt. I have no muscles anywhere. Most 12-year-old girls would beat me arm-wrestling.

But apparently, I can walk with a golf club as a cane. The journey was nearly thirty (30) miles. I was reminded from the language of the King James Bible that our life with God is a Walk.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:25 KJV).

Some lessons from my 74-hole walk.

Lesson One: Pain does not stop you from walking. At the half-way point, my back and hips started to hurt - a nagging pain that never really went away. But the agony did not stop me. In fact, stopping to swing seemed to help. It is all about expectations. If you know that the end is eleven hours and 74 holes, you just keep going. One more step. One more swing. No matter what.

Lesson Two: The walk is easier with a caddie. Six friends caddied for me and carried my burdens. I could not have done this alone. We all need caddies in our life.

Lesson Three: Every day brings moments of unexpected joy. Even miracles. I had not broken 80 in 2025 so my scorecard expectations were low. But then, as the sun was setting on the day, a small miracle emerged on the final nine.

It was all normal until a birdie on #14 (70th hole of the day). Then two more surprise birdies on the final two holes. I was too tired to think about the scorecard, but I rejoiced in the nice finish. When I got home, I sat in my easy chair and added up the numbers. The final eighteen was a "74". Wow! I shot my age on the final round- or even better, I shot Ford's age.

And then one Final Lesson as I contemplated the day, I think I heard Dad's voice: "Son, just like today, your final five holes will be your best. Your life can finish with birdies! Keep going."

Okay, dad, I hear you.

Ford was ready for heaven at 74. And now, so am I... (For more about Ford, check www.fordswonderfulworld.com).

PRAYER: “O God, help us to walk worthy of Him who called us into His kingdom and glory”. I Thessalonians 2:12.

Tim Philpot

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