



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Finding Inspiration for Excellence

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men....” (Colossians 3:23, NASB)

Who can forget the 1995 Masters? Ben Crenshaw’s longtime coach and mentor, Harvey Penick, had passed away just days before the tournament. Crenshaw declared he was playing that week in honor of Penick. Inspired by playing for his mentor, Crenshaw went on to win by one stroke over Davis Love III.

Such stories are by no means rare. Phil Mickelson’s 2004 Masters win following the death of his grandfather and Tiger Woods’ 2006 Open Championship win at Royal Liverpool following the death of his father are examples.

When professional athletes play for something more significant than a paycheck, it can engage their hearts on a deeper level while raising their performance to a higher level.

In the Scripture above, the Apostle Paul offers guidance to servants on how to perform their duties. Servants did much of the work in the Roman Empire. Servants included teachers, manual laborers, and professionals such as physicians, accountants, and legal advisors. But they were not free, and they performed their work for their masters.

They would have had their reasons to simply go through the motions. Instead, Paul told them, "Do your work heartily, as for the Lord . . ." (Colossians 3:23). The Greek word used here for heart is "psyche," which includes the mind, will, and emotions.

Some translations use the word "wholeheartedly" or "with all your heart," and they convey the idea of being fully engaged in one’s work at a soulful or heartfelt level.

Crenshaw, Mickelson, and Woods were more fully engaged in their mind, will, and emotions, and it elevated their performance. This shouldn’t surprise us. This is why the most successful team in just about any professional sport is the home team.

The cheering and adulation from the home fans engage the athlete’s mind, energize his emotions, and steel his will toward victory.

The good news for Christians is that they need not wait until a loved one dies to find inspiration for excellence. That inspiration is available always because it comes from Him for whom we should work.

That we are to do our work for the Lord should not be a license for sloppiness but an inspiration for excellence. If the passing of loved ones inspires great athletes like Crenshaw, Mickelson, and Woods, how much more should the approval of the King of kings, the one who laid down his life for us, inspire excellence in our work?

Prayer: Lord, please remind me to always direct my work toward You so my work will always be elevated toward excellence. Amen.

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