



# Links Players

## Stories Tales of Transformation Pat Duncan

*...our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly [mortal] body to be like his glorious [immortal] body.... (Philippians 3:20-21, ESV)*

If there is any such thing as an essential quality required by every golfer to play well, better, or overcome some disastrous obstacle like a string of bogeys, it would be a disposition disciplined in “hopefulness” — that deep-seated, heartfelt sense that things will be better.

Show me the person who plays in fear, doubt, and chronic negativity with the corresponding negative talk about their swing, putting, or round, and I will show you someone who usually has awful outcomes.

Being hopeful is a powerful antidote to all sorts of negative tendencies. Even when battling a slump, if you have nurtured the quality of positive expectations, you might wake up singing the song from the musical, Annie, “The sun will come out tomorrow, tomorrow...”

If you are like Winnie the Pooh’s Eeyore, you will mumble, grumble, and forecast doom and gloom on your future in golf, plummeting into a dark hole of despair.

This thing we call “hope” is like an anchor. It steadies us in the tumultuous seasons of life. It is more than an attitude; it is a powerful force far more potent than “wishful thinking.”

When we talk like this, we use hope as a verb— it is something we do. We visualize a better future than our current circumstances indicate. Lose hope, and the heart sinks, and not long after, our shoulders slump.

Scripture has much to say about hope, using this virtue in two distinct ways. On the one hand, because of God’s promises, we hope for positive outcomes when life throws the kitchen sink at us.

In distinction from this earlier way of talking about hope, the word hope is often used as a noun describing an inevitable future reality. This reality is yet in our future, but nevertheless real.

When the writers of Scripture use hope as a noun, they refer to the object or content of our confidence, something God has promised.

When Paul prays, “...that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you..., he uses hope as a noun. He wants God to open our eyes to that which awaits us— a future reality not yet seen by us but already inhabited by Jesus.

Paul is not petitioning God to make us more inclined to hopefulness, though he would want that, too; he is asking the Father to show us what lies ahead in our future— “the hope to which he has called us” (Ephesians 1:18).

For many weeks, we have examined how biblical writers talk about “being transformed” and interviewed men like Pat Duncan who have stories about personal transformations.

In today’s text, Paul refers to the reality—our hope—that awaits every Christ-follower—Jesus will transform our mortal bodies into immortal bodies.

This hope anchors us during the difficult seasons of life. One day, we will swap this body vulnerable to sickness and destined to die for an immortal body eternally immune to illness and death.

**Prayer: Jesus! Open our eyes to see and understand where you are taking us.**

**READING:** Philippians 3:17-21; Ephesians 1:15-23. 1 Peter 1:1-5.

1. How good are you at envisioning positive outcomes after a string of bogeys or an “other?” Would your friends characterize you as optimistic or pessimistic?

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2. Do you spend time pondering our ultimate hope, your eternal future? If so, how much does it inform your day-to-day perspective?

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3. Application: Spend some time exploring the many promises of Scripture regarding our eternal hope.

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