



Links Players

The Importance of Perseverance

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)

When you think of Ben Hogan, you tend to remember his impressive golf achievements. There were many – 64 PGA Tour victories, nine major titles, and one of only six players to win all four majors. But let's take a closer look at what Hogan persevered to achieve his status as one of the game's greats.

Born in Texas, Ben lost his father to suicide when he was 10 years old. He discovered golf at age 12, and as he grew into his twenties, he was long off the tee but struggled with a wild hook. He had limited tournament success until 1940, when he turned the hook into a power fade.

Hogan finally started winning tournaments, and it appeared fame was right around the corner. But then World War II came along, and Ben was inducted into the U.S. Army.

After the war, Hogan's career skyrocketed. From 1946 through 1948, he won 30 tournaments, including his first two majors. But then, in February 1949, on a foggy Texas morning, Ben and his wife collided head-on with a Greyhound bus.

He was lucky to survive, suffering multiple fractures, severe damage to several internal organs, and life-threatening blood clots.

Recovery was slow and painful, but starting in 1950, Hogan went on to greater success. Despite the many challenges, Ben persevered to become the legendary figure we remember today.

The Old Testament book of Job provides a great example of perseverance. In the first verse, we learn about his character: "Job...was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil."

Later in that same chapter, for reasons never explained, God permits Satan to test Job, which allows Satan to unleash a series of disasters, causing Job to lose his wealth and his children.

Job's faithfulness to God is revealed by his reaction to his losses in 1:21: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

Satan then increases the torture by inflicting Job with painful sores from head to toe. Job endures the intense pain for months, and while he questions his circumstances, he never curses God or falls away; Job perseveres.

While many think of Job as a story about perseverance through suffering, it is also about God's sovereignty and our proper relationship to Him. At the end of his struggles, Job humbly acknowledges that God's ways are far above his own. "How great is God—beyond our understanding!" (Job 36:26)

The trouble and challenges we face in life are not surprising to God. On the contrary, they can be integral to His plan for our spiritual growth. A quote that I often remember from those times sums it up nicely. "When we face challenges, often our first response is 'Lord, get me out of this.'" But the better response is "Lord, what do you want me to get out of this?" After all, He is the Great Teacher.

Prayer: Lord, give us strength to persevere during the challenging times in life. Help us to learn from those situations!

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