



Links Players

Healing

Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces; now he will heal us. He has injured us; now he will bandage our wounds. (Hosea 6:1)

I do not know about you, but I hate playing bad golf. I especially hate playing bad golf when I am playing in a tournament that I practiced and prepared for.

I can relate to Bobby Jones's famous quote, "There is golf, and there is tournament golf. And they are not at all alike inside."

I learned that the word "inside" is often omitted from this quote, but it is essential to Mr. Jones' thought. Bad golf in a tournament hurts on the inside.

Yes, it is embarrassing on the outside but crushing on the inside. Recently, I played in a tournament and played well for the first two rounds. On the last day, I struggled at times, but my perspective was different on this day.

On the second hole of the day, one of the other two guys in my group told me that the third player didn't like to talk while he played.

On the next hole, that guy asked me to move out of his field of vision while he putted. I did not sense that I was encroaching on his play. While I wanted to play well, my goals for the day dramatically changed at that point. My mindset shifted.

I needed to try to make the day more enjoyable for this guy. By the time we finished our round, this guy was encouraging me, talking to me, and even asking me about LINKS Players Fellowship at one point.

At the end of our round, he smiled, shook my hand, and said he enjoyed the day. You never know when you might be able to affect someone's life.

Today's verse is significant to me. God does tear us to pieces in this life, but if we look to him in our times of difficulty, he will heal us. We are told in James 1:2, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when (not if) you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness."

My faith is definitely tested when I struggle in golf tournaments. I often think, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Then I remember, as we usually do, "It is just a game."

In the grand scheme of things, this one round of golf will not negatively impact my life that much. I feel injured, but God's word provides the bandages I need to heal and prepare to battle for Christ again.

My encouragement to you today is always to remember our ultimate purpose: to love God and His people. That's it! Keep it in perspective when you compete.

I am confident that I will get many more opportunities to play good golf, but I may only get that one chance to show the love of Jesus Christ to this guy I played with in the tournament. I didn't want to miss the opportunity.

Prayer: Give 'em Heaven today, LINKS family!

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Todd Sturgis

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