



# Links Players

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## Falling Short

*"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." (Romans 3:23, NIV)*

It is Monday afternoon, September 29th. Yesterday, I started my morning at 6:30 am by watching my beloved Minnesota Vikings play the Steelers in Dublin.

Despite six sacks of Carson Wentz, three turnovers, and eight penalties for 82 yards, there was still a glimmer of hope as the Vikes, down by three points, got the ball back with 1:06 to play. But, alas, they fell short of a successful comeback.

My attention then turned to the Ryder Cup. The evening before, I lamented that it looked extremely bleak for the U.S. Team as they faced digging out of a hole so deep that even a Bobcat front-end loader could not have rescued them.

Down 11 ½ to 4 ½ at the start of the day, I watched the Americans rally to corral 8 ½ points — winning six matches, tying five, and losing only one — a remarkable performance. However, the Euros retained the Cup, 15-13. The U.S.'s attempted comeback fell short.

My sports teams are not the only ones that fall short from time to time. We all fall short every day.

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, provides a rebuttal to the belief that one group of people or one nation could be differentiated from others because of their sinful nature. He tells us in verse 23 that WE HAVE ALL SINNED---Jew and Gentile alike. Sin is universal. No one is exempt from this indictment.

The Greek word for "sin" is "hamartanó." It literally means "missing the mark" or missing the target. God's target or bullseye for us is to love him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

When we aim at something else in our lives, whether it is wealth, comfort, pride, power, possessions, fame, or anything else that does not focus on God, we miss the mark - we sin.

We continually fall short of God's glory---his perfect, righteous, and holy character that he created us to reflect. When we fail to live up to God's standard, we are separated from Him just as Adam and Eve were separated from Him in the Garden.

The truth sounds depressing. However, Paul is simply setting the stage for the gospel message that follows. He demonstrates the critical need for a solution that we mere mortals cannot provide for ourselves.

Verses 24-26 provide both the hope and the resolution to our predicament:

“... and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood, to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:24-26, NIV)

Paul shares with us the way to be declared “Not Guilty” by our Heavenly Father. We must believe and trust in Jesus Christ, who has taken away our sins, so that we might be made “right” with God and receive the power to live our lives in the manner He intended, bringing glory to Him.

What a wonderful gift our Father has given to us when we miss the target and fall short. We must continually express our gratitude to Him for His gift of saving grace.

**Prayer: Heavenly Father, we know that we fall short every day because of our sinful nature. We are so grateful for your grace, mercy, and forgiveness of our sins. We thank you for loving us so much.**

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