



Links Players

24-Hour Prayer

*Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.
(Luke 18:1)*

If, upon hitting a wayward shot, we were to give up golf, there wouldn't be anyone playing the sport. But, of course, we don't give up. We may chastise ourselves for failing to do something we said we would do (alignment, follow through, rhythm or something else) but we don't take our golf bags and chuck them in the lake. [At least most of us don't.]

Instead, we remind ourselves to incorporate that instruction into our next shot. And, little by little, we inch our way forward toward improvement. That's the beauty of golf. It's a perfect sport for imperfect players.

I wonder if God doesn't look down upon us in a somewhat similar way. He gave us a perfect world and, with it, provided humans with free will, the ability to do right or wrong. Could He have created us without free will? Of course. But would we have been able to love Him in a way that really means something? The 'no' answer to that is unequivocal.

As much as we might think that we would like to hit every shot perfectly, we really wouldn't. If we did that, it would get boring, to say the least. It's striving to hit perfect (or near-perfect) shots that is so exciting about golf.

Prayer is a deliberate effort to come alongside God. Like golf, it's not a one-time event. It's a supplication intended to affirm our need to ask for His active involvement. And it is a supplication that should be repeated, more to confirm that it is appropriate than for God to finally get the message.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually! (1 Chronicles 16:11)

Two friends and I were walking down the fairway when one asked the other: "How often do you pray?" Without hesitation, the answer was: "Once a day."

"Once a day?" came the surprised response. "I would have thought you would pray more often."

"I just don't have enough time since each prayer lasts 24 hours."

I had to laugh. How wonderful, I thought. There is a man who stays connected to the Lord. Since I am constantly trying to be conscious of God's presence, I loved that answer. If we do that, our wayward shots on the course and in life will become more manageable and our appreciation for this life will grow by leaps and bounds.

One English archbishop said, "It's amazing how many coincidences occur when one begins to pray."

Prayer: Lord, help me stay connected to you, not just at 'official' prayer times (e.g., at meals) but all through the day. May you be my 24-hour Counselor, and may I be attentive to your presence and advice.

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Tom Berliner

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