



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

The Divine Pairing

If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? (Matt. 5:46)

There is something unique about the game of golf. Unlike many areas of life, you can spend four to five hours walking alongside someone you may have never met before. Sometimes you arrive at the first tee excited to play, only to discover that your playing partners are not the people you would have chosen.

Maybe they are negative. Maybe they complain after every shot. Maybe they are impatient, angry, or see every situation through a pessimistic lens. If we are honest, our natural response is often to withdraw. We prefer the comfort of familiar friends, the people who think like us, laugh like us, and make the round enjoyable.

But what if that unexpected pairing was not an accident?

What if God, in His sovereignty, placed that person in your foursome for a reason?

As Christians, we are encouraged to pray for opportunities to share our faith and be a light in the world. Yet sometimes we fail to recognize that the very people who challenge us may be the exact people God has placed in our path. Jesus challenged His followers with these words:

"If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?"
(Matthew 5:46)

It is easy to love people who love us. It is easy to spend time with those who are positive, encouraging, and enjoyable to be around. The true test of Christlike love is not how we treat those who make us feel loved and comfortable, but how we respond to those who stretch our patience and reveal areas where we still need God's grace.

The golf course can become a classroom of the soul. Every missed putt, every frustrating hole, and every difficult personality can become an opportunity for us to practice patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control.

The truth is some of the people we initially struggle to connect with often become the people who teach us the greatest lessons. When we take the time to listen to their stories, understand their struggles, and see beyond their rough edges, we often discover something surprising: we are not as different as we thought. Their fears, disappointments, and insecurities are often reflections of our own.

Jesus did not call us to stay within the comfort of our preferred circles. He called us to bring His presence wherever we go.

In Matthew 5:14–16, Jesus reminds us:

“You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

The next time you receive an invitation to play with someone new, or you are paired with someone you would not have selected, consider that God may have arranged a divine appointment.

Instead of asking, “Will I enjoy this round?” perhaps ask, “Lord, what do You want to teach me through this person, and how can I reflect You to them?”

We know golf is more than a game. It is a journey of character, humility, and relationships. Sometimes the greatest shot we make is not the perfect drive down the fairway—it is extending kindness, patience, and love to the person walking beside us.

So, the next time you step onto the first tee with an unfamiliar face, remember: this may not be a random pairing. It may be a divine one.

Prayer: Lord, show us how to love those who may be harder to love. Open our hearts and eyes and let us see all people the way you see them.

Meredith Kirk

Copyright 2026 Links Players International

The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.