



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Pressing On!

But one thing I do: I press on toward the goal for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. (Philippians 3:13–15)

When someone joins a golf club, they're usually thinking about the benefits—what they get with their membership. The American Express tagline is true: membership has its privileges. The same thing is true when you become a member of the family of God.

The privileges of becoming a Christ-follower are extraordinary, but they come with responsibilities. It's the difference between a country club and the Marine Corps—two distinctly different organizations.

Some people think believing facts about God makes them a Christian. But James 2:19 says that “even the demons believe—and tremble.” They would pass a knowledge test about Christianity with higher grades than most. Was Jesus the Son of God? Yes! Did He die for our sins? Yes! Did He rise again? Yes! Is He still alive? Yes! They pass.

It's not about the facts we believe. Almost every time Jesus taught, He said, “Come and follow me.” And today's verses are the proof of following: “Whoever claims to live in Him must strive to live as Jesus did.”

So, what does “come and follow me” look like over time for a Links Player? This is where the country club and the Marine Corps come in. If you join an exclusive country club and pay the dues, you get some cool perks. If you pay your bill, you've got a lot of rights—not just privileges, but rights.

Imagine signing up for the Marine Corps with that same attitude. Can you picture it? The first day of boot camp: “Wait, I signed up to see the world. I signed up to pay for the GI Bill. They make me get up early and run every day.”

Here's the sad thing: too many Christians see their relationship with Jesus and the local church as being about their privileges—what they like, what they need, their personal preferences, their tastes, and their interests.

Well, that's part of being in the Marines. It would be foolish not to understand that along with all the privileges come some important responsibilities.

Notice what Jesus says: whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. That statement sums up the call of Jesus to all who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ. Too often, it becomes about what we want and what's in it for me.

I'm not going to unpack the many incredible privileges of being a Christian, but here's the most significant: when you step across the line of faith, you are pardoned from death row.

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we have been set free for eternal life. And that, in and of itself, should be reason to serve Him.

But the privileges come with some responsibilities. The call to follow, put in simple terms, is come as you are, but for God's sake, don't stay that way. When we become a Christian, the Holy Spirit lives in us and changes us from the inside out.

Some of us have walked with God for decades, but the call to change never goes away. You may have grown for ten years and then lived the last forty years on those ten. "That's just the way I am" won't cut it for a believer.

Our call is to become more like Jesus in our attitudes, our willingness to serve, and our learning to sacrifice our desires and preferences a little more. The truth is it usually doesn't work that way. The older some people get in the Lord, the more set in their ways they can become and the more they can stop growing. I hope that's not you.

Prayer: Father, give me a greater desire to grow in my understanding of Scripture, my character, my concern for lost people, my service for Christ, my giving to Kingdom initiatives, and my countenance in terms of love and joy.

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