



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

The Way of the Imperishable

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. (1 Corinthians 9:24-25, ESV)

On the third playoff hole, I needed to make a four-foot birdie putt to keep going. I watched the grain pull the ball right, and with it, my hopes of winning the 2026 LPGA Professional Championship slipped away.

As I continue to process those three rounds, I realize that a few shots on the final nine holes kept me from lifting the trophy. At the same time, I am reminded of the Apostle Paul's words: "Every athlete exercises self-control in all things."

For an athlete, self-control means training and practicing with purpose, even on days when motivation is low.

It also means reshaping negative self-talk into constructive reinforcement my mind can learn from—not wishful optimism. I continue to train my nervous system's response to stress through breath training, neurofeedback, and therapy.

Self-control does not guarantee a win, but after four decades of competitive golf, I am still learning to embrace the process and the journey.

In one way or another, we can all relate to Paul's comparison of the Christian life to an athletic race.

Following Jesus is a journey that requires purpose, self-discipline, and an eternal focus. Every earthly trophy will fade, but the reward Jesus offers will never disappear.

Paul encourages us to live intentionally and practice spiritual discipline, so our lives are shaped by Jesus, and our focus stays on what lasts.

Journey with Purpose.

The Christian life is not meant to be casual or aimless. Because we never fully arrive, each day offers opportunities to discover more of God's love, grow in character through ordinary and difficult experiences, and learn to love others more wholeheartedly. A purposeful life has direction and moves forward, even when the path twists and turns.

Practice Spiritual Discipline.

As I age, the way I train and practice has changed, but I still need self-discipline to get to the practice tee. In the same way, there are days when I'm tempted to turn from Scripture and resist what God is asking of me. Spiritual self-discipline helps us stay on the narrow path when the wider one seems more inviting.

Keep Your Eyes on the Eternal Reward.

God desires excellence, but lasting value is not found in accolades or achievements. The choices we make shape our hearts and reflect what we do for Jesus. Faithfulness in trials, disappointments, and temptations requires self-control. When we choose to follow Jesus instead of temporary pleasures, we always win the imperishable.

Prayer: Lord, help me today to run with self-control. Teach me to walk with purpose and spiritual discipline. Whisper in my heart that you are near.

Jose Alvarez

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