



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

So, Are You a Golfer?

Thus, you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 7:20–21, ESV)

This is a parable for golfers.

My seatmate on the flight to Edinburgh was dressed like a “golfer”—all the right apparel and logos. I took the bait and asked, “So, are you a golfer?”

“Yes, indeed,” he offered with a twinkle in his eye. He was on his way to the Open at Birkdale, golf’s version of a Holy Land trip.

He explained that he had decided to become a “golfer” when he was twelve, falling in love with Tiger Woods as he watched the 1997 Masters. His father nicknamed him “Cub” and gave him an old set of Patty Bergs.

He answered questions that I was not asking. He watched nothing but the Golf Channel. He listened only to golf on Sirius radio. He was a consumer of golf.

He had just returned from his annual “golf school” in Arizona. He belonged to eight golf clubs and served on committees at each one. He was chairman of the First Tee in New Jersey. He endowed a chair at Temple University to study better grass for golf courses.

He had a library of golf books that would be the envy of any scholar. His eight-year-old twins were currently in Bradenton at IMG, learning the intricacies of the swing from a golf guru.

After thirty minutes of Cub’s monologue, I asked a logical question to try to slow him down: “What is your handicap?”

“Oh,” said the self-avowed golfer, “I have no handicap. I don’t play on the golf course. I stay on the range and in the clubhouse. I suppose I am more of a fan than a player.”

This annoying conversation was now simply confusing. He said he was a golfer. But was he?

“Why do you not play?” I asked.

“The first tee scares me. All eyes are on me, exposing my weak and putrid game.” He took a breath.

“And frankly, I am so busy learning, handling administrative duties, and organizing reports for all the clubs.

Plus, I must confess, I love the clubhouse. It is a majestic temple, full of comforts and amenities that cannot be found at home. I enjoy the fellowship of golfing friends.”

My mind was reeling. Was Cub a golfer or not? Was he a golfer simply because he said he was? Don’t real golfers turn in scorecards and play the course?

A golfer is defined by his scorecard, not his swing. It is what happens “on the course,” not “on the range” or “in the clubhouse.”

This parable raises the question: “So, are you a disciple?”

In the American church, we know how to look the part. We consume Christian content. We attend church on Sunday mornings—and more. We listen to Christian radio and podcasts. We read Christian devotions.

Jesus gave us His creed in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you....’”—Matthew 7:21–23, ESV

So, are you a disciple? Or do you merely look like one? Are you on the course or on the range?

PRAYER: Lord, Lord, don’t let me look like a disciple without being one. Amen.

—

Tim Philpot

Copyright 2026 Links Players International

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