Links Players

Taking a Moment

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (Colossians 3:2)

Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established. (Proverbs 16:3)

To say that golf is unique in the sports world would be a major understatement. Like most other sports, it's physical. Like some other sports, it's highly cerebral. But like very few other sports, it provides time during the competition to be truly (rather than momentarily) reflective.

Caddies on the professional circuits understand that their players cannot sustain golf-only thinking for four-plus hours. Trying to do so would be massively draining for the player, both mentally and physically.

Instead, caddies come up with suitable chat topics at appropriate times. It's funny to listen to some post-round interviews with the pros who talk about how their caddies gave them mental breaks during the round.

There are a good number of professional golfers who are Christians and a few who unabashedly profess their faith in Jesus. Bernhard Langer is one who stands out.

Often, after a down-to-the-wire competition during one of his forty-seven victories on the senior championship tour, he was asked how he kept his confidence and composure.

Very frequently, he would reach into his pocket and retrieve a piece of paper. On it was a passage from the Bible. He would read the passage and explain (sometimes to the discomfort of the person interviewing him) that he used this passage to center his thinking on what is truly important rather than overinflating the consequences of the tournament he was playing in.

What is particularly interesting is that he didn't use the same passage each time. What he drew from the Bible wasn't a lucky charm or a rabbit's foot. It was something that focused him on his true purpose on earth.

It is reasonable to believe that, in a manner of speaking, each round was a private Bible study for him.

Is this something that other pros could and should use? It might be helpful. It would certainly be instructive. But why limit it to pros? Any of the rest of us could do the same thing.

And why limit it to golf? This is a successful focus-seeking technique for almost any undertaking, especially ones that require extensive time.

It would be natural to wonder which passage to choose for a particular round. “Which will have the greatest meaning for me today?” You could go with the tried-and-true, say, Philippians 4:13 or Luke 1:37.

Those would certainly work. On the other hand, after reflecting on it for a while (certainly a valuable exercise in and of itself), you might choose another one that feels just right to you. Maybe something that makes you think about its meaning somewhat more.

God affords us innumerable ways to worship Him and to draw guidance from Him. He also affords us many opportunities to do so. We really should take advantage of these occasions. We might be surprised to find that they help us in many ways, and not just on the golf course. [Of course, help on the golf course wouldn’t be all that bad, now, would it?]

Prayer: Lord, help me to find ways to focus on You and what steps I should take. May You point me toward meaningful ways to reflect on this even during activities that require my lengthy attention.

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Tom Berliner
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