

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR APRIL 26, 2013

DOING THE WORK

“Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’” (Luke 19:13, NIV)

YOU DON’T HAVE TO PRACTICE YOUR GOLF. Then again, you don’t have to play very well!

Not everyone is a competitive golfer, committed to a regimen of improvement through lessons, range work, and fitness. These commitments take time, and with a business, a family, social obligations, and church activity, your golf may drop down the list. You still enjoy it, but you leave the good shots up to serendipity as much as up to preparation.

This approach is all right with a game, but you would never do well to employ it with those other endeavors—work, family, friendships, church. In these arenas, you do best to keep looking at how you might do better.

Why do you attend a marriage retreat or read a book on parenting? Why do you keep up with the ongoing requirements for licensure in your career field? Why do you participate in a small group at your church, where you engage in the mutual ministry of giving and receiving encouragement and exhortation? You do each of these to improve, to get better. This doesn’t happen by accident. You make a commitment to it.

Jesus told an intriguing parable about preparing for his return. He spoke of “a man of noble birth” (himself) going off to “a distant country” (heaven) to be appointed king. Before the man left he placed his resources under the care of several of his servants, and he told them to “put these resources to work” until he returned. Later, when the man returned, the servants were called to account and rewarded according to their engagement of the resources. One servant, however, had let the money sit idle, and for this he was severely reprimanded.

This may strike you as odd, because we are often told that “there is nothing you can do to gain God’s favor,” as though you just have to sit back and soak in his love and grace. Certainly, there is much soaking in the wonder of God to be done, but in Jesus’ parables this is almost always done “later,” at the time of celebration. Until then, our *modus operandi* should be one of readiness, engagement, activity—we should be busy in righteously serving the Lord.

Opening questions: Working at your game

What needs the most work in your golf game right now? How hard do you work at getting better? What other areas of your life receive attention to improvement?

The Parable of the Minas

Read Luke 19:11-27. What encouraged the first two servants to work? What discouraged the third servant? Who was proven right in the end?

Discipline, readiness, preparation

Read the following passages and make notes about how each encourages a life of diligence and perseverance.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 _____

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 _____

2 Timothy 2:1-7 _____

The end of the age and Jesus’ return

The New Testament writers were consistent in their affirmation of the imminent return of Jesus. For this reason, they urged a life lived to honor him. Read 2 Peter 3:10-18. What practices do you need to add to your “holy and godly life” in the season ahead, as you too anticipate the possible return of Christ?
