

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR JULY 19, 2013

GOD IS GOOD

God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection. (Psalm 18:30, NLT)

WITH THE SUMMER IN MID-STRIDE, I'm sure you're finding that your golf game has hit full stride. No? You mean, it's not so easy to raise your game to its full potential?

Let me tell you how it's going for me. I am looking for a perfect swing, looking for a few more yards with my driver, for a putter that has magic to find the hole almost every time I line it up. When all those things come together at the same time—well, I just might be in heaven by then!

Still, this is the time of the year when our handicaps usually reach their lowest levels. At least you hope it's "our handicaps," because you sure don't want your handicap going down while your buddy's is stuck in the you-gotta-give-me-more-strokes position!

But here's one thing I fight no matter what time of year it is: keeping the game from defining me. When I've played a tournament, win or lose, the game is not my measure for goodness in life. There is an excellence that comes from the Lord that cannot be found anywhere else—not on the golf course, not in business, not at home, not on vacation. Notice that I've mentioned all nice, comfortable things. But what they offer is far from perfect and far from true.

That's why we need a relationship with Jesus; that's why we need to walk with him. And we need this friendship to take precedence over every other pursuit in our lives.

Here's what I've found. Not only are God's ways are perfect, but the sooner we accept that, we find that life gets a little easier. We may succeed, but we don't lose perspective. We may fail, but we don't lose hope. We learn that in spite of our circumstances, God is steady—he remains faithful, protecting us and granting us lasting comfort and real peace.

Your many "handicaps" in life will go up and down. In the midst of those peaks and valleys, though, God is there. Call on him. Trust in him. He will prove himself again and again, prove that he is good.

Opening questions: Moving targets

In golf, what makes it seem like you are forever taking "two steps forward and one step back?" How about in life—where are your successes seemingly always matched with failures?

The goodness of God

Read Romans 8:28. How would you measure the goodness of God? How has God demonstrated his goodness to you?

Passing on the goodness

Consider 1 Peter 2:9 in the New Living Translation: "But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." How does this passage give us a role in trumpeting God's goodness? How might we do this well in our lives?

Goodness still to come

Read the prophetic words in Hosea 3:4-5. What will believing people recognize about God "in the last days"? How does keeping in mind the awesomeness of God set against his kindness allow us to maintain a balance in approaching him?
