

GIVING TO GOD WHAT HE ALREADY HAS

To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:11, NIV)

WHEN I AM INTERVIEWING A PLAYER for the Links Players Magazine, particularly a player who may not be so well known to our readers—a rookie, maybe, or an amateur—I will often ask them to describe their game. Now stop for a second. Do this for yourself. How would you describe your own game?

This question is closely related to another: What do you most need to work on in your game? No one likes that question much, though, because if we are going to work on our game at all, most of us would prefer to work on what we're already good at, as silly as that may seem.

All purposeful practice is good, of course, whether we are layering in a new skill or ingraining an established one. But we would not normally say to a great putter, for instance, "I've signed you up for a putting lesson for your birthday." That would seem redundant, even wasteful.

So are the words of Peter's first letter, written to God's elect throughout the world. He says that power is to be God's for all eternity. How odd! Power has been God's from eternity past. Why do we need to give him what he already has?

Maybe a parallel idea will help. You have often heard that we should "give glory" to God. Yet God, we know, is utterly glorious. So why do we sing his praises? To build him up? Hardly. We sing his praises because in doing so we are reminded of his inherent glory, and our faith in his excellence increases. And this is only the beginning. We also give glory to God by daily living according to his Word, in obedience and with honor. In this way, God's glory shines through us. We do not in our giving God glory make God more glorious, but we do increase the awareness of his glory on the earth.

The same is true for God's power. We will not in saying "to him be the power" increase the measure of his power even one tick. As golfers, we might say God already possesses infinite smash factor. But by ascribing his power to him in words like Peter's we remind ourselves to step back and let God do his work. The verses leading up to Paul's declaration tell us to humble ourselves, to cast our anxiety on God, to be self-controlled, to resist the devil, to enduringly suffer. These are not things we do well in our strength. So how important it is to be reminded that the power we need for all things is in the hands of God. To him be that power!

Opening questions How would you describe your game? What do you most like to work on in practice sessions? • How do you give someone honorable and authentic praise?

READING 1 Peter 5:6-11; 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 29:1-2

Why we need God's power (1 Peter 5)

Consider the several instructions Peter gave in this passage. Which is most challenging for you? How would giving God power over this area in your character and attitude make a noticeable difference in your life?

The great Lord (1 Timothy 1)

What attributes of the King did Paul attest to in this verse? Why are these particular traits deserving of glory and honor?

Ascribing glory (Psalm 29)

Why is important not only to know of God's glory and strength, but to ascribe those qualities to him? What purpose does verbalizing praises to God serve?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International.