

## GOLF & LIFE FUNDAMENTALS 5: TARGET FOCUS

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. (Colossians 3:1-2, NIV)

TIP OF THE DAY: Narrow your focus.

When golfers begin to struggle with finding the fairway, often they will bark at themselves, “Look how wide that fairway is! How can you miss that?” The error in their eyes when they do this is that they have shifted their focus from the middle of the fairway to the edges. They’re fixated on the boundaries of success rather than its center.

It’s easy to make this same mistake when considering our righteousness. We compare ourselves with those on the margins, rather than the one who shines brightest. *I don’t get as angry as that guy. I don’t talk about others in the way she does. I give more to the poor than most everyone I know. I haven’t missed church in a month of Sundays.* These are the mantras of a religious mind, one bent on being “good enough” to pass through the pearly gates.

The fault in this approach is that it has no biblical support. When we’re working hard to be “good enough,” our eyes are on us and on the others we’re looking better than. Where our eyes need to be is on Jesus.

In golf, we fight our widening misses by narrowing our target. Pick the edge of a bunker, a tree trunk, the flag. Get that small. And as we walk out our faith, our focus there must also be singular, with Jesus occupying our eyes to the ignorance of all else.

Just as you practice many other disciplines in your life, practice focus. Start with five minutes, move to six, seven, eight. Meditate on the Word of God and the God of those words. In this way, you will see Jesus clearly and follow him well.

When Paul wrote to the Colossians about where their focus should be—in their hearts and in their minds—he began by showing them Christ. Resurrected. In heaven. At God’s right hand. This is the picture we should have in our minds when we consider Jesus. Seeing one so pure, so righteous, so exalted, we find our true target. “Good enough” gives way to good. We are called to pursue our Savior in his glory.

**Opening questions** What distractions get in the way of your focusing well on the golf course? How about in other endeavors? • Describe a time when Christ was in clear focus for you.

**READING** Colossians 3:1-2; Hebrews 12:2-3; Matthew 6:6

### ‘Things above’ (Colossians 3)

What are the “earthly things” that frequently gain control of your mind? What “things above” can you trade these for in your meditations?

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### Fixed eyes (Hebrews 12)

What attributes and accomplishments of Jesus make him worthy of our fixed gaze? How does this fixation specifically help us (v. 3)?

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### Escape to prayer (Matthew 6)

What kind of prayer practice did Jesus teach his disciples? Do you have a habit of escaping for prayer? How would lonely prayer help your focus on Christ in the midst of life’s demands?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available at <https://youtu.be/Lig1RR44JFw>.