

## ARE YOU QUALIFIED? 6: QUALIFIED BY GOD'S EQUIPPING

*Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding. (Proverbs 23:23, ESV)*

I NEED A LESSON. MAYBE A FEW. Not long after I crossed the threshold of fifty, I met up with an unwanted diagnosis. Those co-conspirators have robbed me of swing speed and thus distance. A pure shot is still pure, but wow is it short!

Here's the trouble. I've spent most of my adult life as a book learner. This works for theology, but learning golf from a book sounds a lot like the nurse who recently set an IV in my arm with particular efficiency. When I told him "nice work," he replied, "Thanks. First time I've ever done that. Watched a good YouTube video about it, though." We shared a laugh over that irony, because some things can only be learned hands-on. Golf is much that way.

Fortunately, there's help on the horizon. I'll be with several good players and teachers next week (such is our staff at Links Players). I'm hoping they can help me recover lost ground. Literally.

Surrender is not always easy. As we considered a couple days ago, change often follows hardship. And who wants that? More so, who would choose that? Yet that is what subjecting ourselves to discipline means: a willingness to go through the pain that brings gain.

God has every intention of equipping you for his work. But as with our golf dreams, we wish it would "just happen." No decision making. No sweat. Just magic.

Well, here's a kingdom principle. Through the work of another, our Savior Jesus Christ, we inherit eternal life. We can do no work that will earn us resurrection. But we can in this life submit to the rigors that make us increasingly representative of a holy God. This is God's discipline "for our good, that we may share his holiness." Painful at the time, "it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:10-11).

In all of life, there are decisions to be made. This is daily true of the currency we possess. How will we spend it? Solomon spurred his son to buy truth, wisdom, instruction, and understanding. Golf lessons might fit the bill here, but what the ancient king had in mind was that we would use our assets (including our time and attention) to gain what we cannot lose.

**Opening questions** If you were to take a golf lesson today, what would you seek help with? • What kind of discipline have you found most effective in your life?

**READING** John 14:26; Romans 5:15-17; Hebrews 12:7-11; Acts 5:40-42

### The indwelling teacher (John 14 & Romans 5)

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Who has access to this marvelous resource?

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### The blessing of discipline (Hebrews 12)

How do the author's words encourage you to receive discipline, even though it may be painful? How is God's discipline evidence that we are part of his family?

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### Suffering and joy (Acts 5)

What caused the apostles to rejoice? What do you think it takes to reach this level of acceptance when it comes to hardship for the gospel?

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