

December 2017

Dear Links Player,

**And so we've nearly made it.** Many people I know lamented 2016. Personal and political winds blew ill for them and they let the world know of their grudges through social media and old-fashioned Christmas letters. It was all a bit uncomfortable for me. I wasn't just trying to put on a happy face, but I had endured my own struggles last year and I wasn't feeling so awful in the end.

Now I wonder what these friends will say about 2017. Will they continue to gripe, or have they moved on? I sure hope it's the latter.

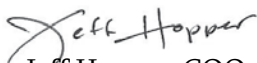
As I write this letter, I am in the midst of preparing the 2018 Links Players magazine. Let me give you a sneak preview, because it is so fitting here. I spent some time on the phone with Paul Stankowski, a two-time winner on the PGA Tour and now a broadcaster with Sirius-XM radio. Paul told me about a lesson he learned that took him eleven years to recognize. Eleven years! He said, "It wasn't like in those eleven years I was clueless. I just didn't realize what God was doing, how He was doing it, and we never really know until we look back anyway to see what He was doing."

Maybe the lesson for us here is that our December reflections may be made far too early in terms of seeing what God has really done in our lives this year. What if He is only beginning to reveal to us what 2017 has been all about? What if the experiences from this year aren't yet complete and need His "finishing" before we can come to understand His purposes for us?

Here's what I do know: When we take the long view, it makes it far easier for us to enjoy each day. No one episode takes over our perspective. This present hour doesn't have to bear so much weight unto itself. That's especially helpful news in a season like Christmas, when we can quickly bog down in obligations or frustrations and fall into telling ourselves that if everything does not turn out perfectly, it hasn't been worth the trouble.

**So let me wish you true blessings from all of us at Links Players.** It's easy enough, I suppose, to say, "Merry Christmas." We might even mean it more than most. But what we want you to know is that God is still with us, our Immanuel. It's a remarkable wonder and one we can count on, even pondering it in our hearts as Mary did with the child before her.

Jesus is here. It's our simple and constant message at Links Players. Thank you for helping us proclaim it.

  
Jeff Hopper, COO

# LINKS PLAYERS INTERNATIONAL

755 N. PEACH AVENUE, SUITE E11, CLOVIS CA 93611 • 800-90-LINKS • WWW.LINKSPLAYERS.COM

*Bringing golfers together beyond the game*