



Links Players

Proverbs - Disciplined For His Use

*Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.
(Proverbs 12:1, ESV)*

With rare exceptions, most PGA Tour players live disciplined lives. If you ever watched Feherty, you'll know that most tour players have serious regimens to achieve their maximum performance.

Whether it's Dustin or Justin, these players discipline themselves with dietary habits, time management, and swing mechanics; many tour players also leverage their chances by adding sports psychologists and strength coaches.

Analogously, Scripture has a lot to say about discipline. Studying the Word, developing a prayer life, and taking every thought captive all require discipline. Discipline is essential if we are to avoid drift.

If experience teaches us anything, we know that far too many find themselves coasting. The problem with coasting is that you eventually come to a complete stop.

At core, many of Jesus' disciples don't have a discipline problem; they have a desire problem. After all, the disciplined life follows the heart's desires.

Keeping our eyes on the prize energizes the will to commit to the necessary disciplines to achieve it. This realization, begs the question—"How does one create new desires or revitalize flagging ones?"

One way to stir the soul is through healthy self-talk. We see the Psalmist engaged in this throughout the Psalms (cf., Psalms 42, 43). An honest conversation with oneself will do wonders for the soul, especially if our conversations are filled with scripture.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones once asked, "Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?" Reciting scripture to our souls will, over time, alter the course of your life.

Of all the messages you might communicate to yourself, regularly remind your soul, "...the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chronicles 16:9).

Additionally, say to yourself, "The Lord called me to himself for a purpose."

Say to the Lord, "Put me in, Coach; I can do it." The thought of being "useful to the Master" will strengthen even the weakest of wills (2 Timothy 2: 20-21).

I had a college roommate whose God-given abilities to play golf were, quite simply, extraordinary. He would eventually go to Q-School and qualify for the PGA Tour.

The last time I saw him, many years ago now, was on a practice range at 7:00 am. He had a 7 UP bottle filled with Vodka. Tragically, an undisciplined life eventually cost this amazing player many unrealized achievements.

May we lay aside everything that prevents us from "being useful to the Master."

Prayer – Lord, discipline us that we might share in your holiness and be useful to you.

READING - Psalms 42-43; Proverbs 12:1; Hebrews 12: 7-11

OPENING QUESTIONS: Even if you are not a tour player, what might a disciplined golf life look like for you? What areas in your approach to golf need discipline?

1. In **Psalms 42: 5** and **11**, and again in **43: 5**, the Psalmist is engaged in "self-talk." A) Why? Remember, context is king. B) Discuss how this practically relates to our walk with God.

2. If Proverbs is framed around instructions from a father to a son (see Proverbs 1: 8), what is he driving at in **Proverbs 12:1**? Spiritual applied, how does this relate to us as sons and daughters to our heavenly father? Explore and discuss.

3. The writer of Hebrews has a lot to say about discipline. Focus on **Hebrews 12: 7-11** and discuss the various truths we discover regarding discipline.
