



REFLECTIONS

March 27, 2011 Refreshed from June 19, 2005

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10

More Than Just A Game...

Last in the series *Graduating from Sunday School*

Golf is a game I have been blessed to play with friends and family, and on other stages beyond my dreams. It is just a game; yet golf is a gift that has taught me a lot about life. In fact, someday I may write a book entitled, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned from Golf*. But I never considered using golf as part of Sunday school curriculum until a few years ago.

Back then I was handed a copy of an essay written by one of my grandsons. He was then a high school junior and he entitled his essay, *Swing Easy*. In it he described the fun our family shares in playing in an annual golf tournament at Christmastime and how competitive we all are. But I found the richness of his message about our times on the golf course together in the following paragraph that is shared with his permission.

Every hole we play in life is different, we select our club, estimate the difficulty, and approach it with every bit of knowledge we can. Sometimes we swing straight, while other times we overshoot or find ourselves lying in a deep bunker. A lot of times, unfortunately, my ball somehow always likes to find the bunker no matter how good I think I swing. "Now Phillip, just swing easy and the ball will do the rest," my Grandpa says. "You're swinging too hard." Sure enough I swung easy and my ball ended up right down the center of the fairway. My Grandpa along with everyone else in this world has not always swung the club easy in life. It takes patience, hard work, and support from family and friends to help be the caddy through these long 18 holes. ...When my Grandpa swings easy, and yet finds himself deep in the sand trap, he can't help the fact that that's just the game, but he was sure of a safe play out. There will be the right time, the right place, (the right hole) where your life sails smoothly down the middle of that flawless green grass, maybe not when your heart desires, but it truly will. He has taught me that with faith, trust and confidence, your ball will go in the right direction, but to just take it one stroke at a time, let the ball (God) do the work.

Golf is just a game, so I was surprised to discover that this seemingly common gift provided a setting for Sunday school lessons. Golf served as an influential stage I didn't know I was playing on. It was more than just a game. My grandson grew from it, and I have grown from it too. He learned to have faith as God works in his life; and although I know none of us ever finish growing in Christ, I learned that by using the gifts we have received to serve others God touches lives in ways we can never imagine.

And maybe that's what it means to graduate from Sunday school.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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