



# Links Players

## KINGDOM HABITS 1: GRATITUDE

*One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. (Luke 17:15-16, NIV)*

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, I have become a fan of Jon Sherman, a teacher out of New York who shares his many insights at Practical Golf, where one of his mottos is “Fighting the war against double bogeys.”

Jon is a realist. He doesn't think too much of his own game, and he doesn't want you to think too much of yours—because that's one of the biggest mistakes in trying to improve your scores. Jon knows you won't go from a 16 handicap to a 2 any faster than you'll lose those excess 50 pounds. Success comes in increments. Which means you have to establish good habits.

In a recent article for his site, Jon established seven habits that could well turn your game around if you follow them diligently. I like these habits because they aren't drill-down-to-the-minutia, weigh-every-bite directives, but perspectives and approaches that are simple to keep in mind. They also provide a lot of overlap to what we do in this space week-to-week, which is to see what perspectives and approaches God would have us take toward life. So that's where we'll go for the next seven Fridays, letting Jon's lessons in golf lead us to lessons our life of faith.

First up: Gratitude.

When was the last time you walked away from a round of golf thankful? It doesn't matter what you're thankful for really, as long as you don't tie your gratitude to one thing only (such as your score). When we recognize that golf provides exercise and silence and friendship and panorama and respite—feel free to add your own happinesses to this list—we wind up leaving the course with thanksgiving pretty much every time. Indeed, as Jon says, we should be grateful for the financial ability to pay our fees and the physical ability to tee it up and let it fly.

This all leads to the bigger second question. When was the last time you felt truly thankful for what God has done for you? If we take the moments this requires, it's rather impossible not to see the mercy-giving, provision-giving, truth-giving, grace-giving things God has done for us. Never, ever should we be like the nine healed lepers who plumb forgot to thank Jesus, their healer. Instead, let's be ever ready with thanks, even loud praise, because God has given us so many reasons for gratitude.

**Opening questions** Would you consider yourself a thankful person in general? Was this perspective taught to you by someone, or have you learned it throughout life?

**READING** Luke 17:11-19; Psalm 35:18; Philippians 1:3

### Healed and happy (Luke 17)

Why do you suppose the nine lepers forgot to thank Jesus? What keeps us from seeing God at work in the midst of our days? How can we remain grateful even when the results of our prayers aren't exactly what we're looking for?

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### Aiming our thanks (Psalm 35)

With the psalmist, who receives our thanks and praise? Yet who should hear these offerings? Why is important for others to know that we are thankful to God?

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### Thankful for others (Philippians 1)

Who are others God has brought into your life who cause you to be especially grateful? What are some good prayers you can offer for them?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. Jon Sherman's "7 Habits That Can Lead to Major Breakthroughs in Your Game" may be found at <https://practical-golf.com/golf-habits/>