

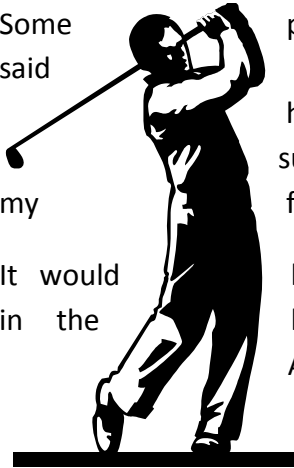
Moving Forward?...asks Colin



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people know that I enjoy playing golf, notice I didn't say GOOD at playing golf! Having that, if you look at my facebook profile, you will spot a photograph of me proudly holding two trophies I won in a recent golfing tournament! So, it will come as no surprise how much I enjoyed reading of the incredible victory of a young man from my father's homeland. Northern Ireland.

It would have been a wonderful victory in its own right, but was made all the more gratifying in the light of a catastrophic defeat only weeks before at the USA Masters Tournament, Augusta, Ga. Something like 'snatching defeat from the jaws of victory' comes to mind! Most pundits believed an adverse effect would haunt him for a long time, yet only two months later Rory McIlroy is holding aloft the prized trophy for a runaway

win at the U.S Open.

'What has this to do with us?' I hear some saying! Well, I was personally challenged by this young man's words and actions both after losing at the Masters and winning the U.S. Open. On that basis let me challenge as well as encourage you with what I recollect.

He Made A Decision – a past sermon of mine entitled 'Life Is A Decision' based around Paul's encouragement 'clothe yourself', 'put on' (Col. 3: 12-14) in other words, make a decision. Rory McIlroy decided not to allow the mistakes of the past (Masters) dictate his future game of golf. A Biblical principle in Philippians 4:13-14 springs to mind; leave the past behind and press forward to what is the future. Many people seem to carry the regrets and failures of the past, but Paul is clear about the way forward by not allowing those things, once correctly dealt with, to hinder us from pressing into all that God has in store for us. Loved ones, it is time...never been a better time...to deal with those issues that hold us back in order to pursue God's plans for us. The Lord lovingly waits to help us.

He Was Determined – Rory McIlroy determined to deal with what went wrong at the Masters. I love how Paul in 1 Cor. 2:2 speaks of his determination to know Christ even though he was clearly feeling weak and fearful. He had a spiritual resolve to break through and actively pursue Christ. Another dictionary term for this activity is 'perseverance' with the Greek meaning 'to patiently endure'; I am still growing this one, especially the patience element! Perseverance in the active sense is to overcome difficulties; it is facing pressures and trials that call for a steadfast commitment and maintaining a Godly life. Hebrews 10: 35-36 (Holman C S B) puts it this way 'don't throw away your confidence which has a great reward. For you need endurance so that after you have done God's will, you may receive what is promised.'

Moving Forward – finally, Rory McIlroy understood something about his golfing destiny. Yes, you guessed correctly, we need reminding from time to time that immense truth in Jeremiah 29:11 'For I know the plans I have for you...remember this is the Lord's declaration... 'a future and a hope'. Let your 'destiny hope' fill you with eager expectation. No one who learns to hope in the Biblical way will ever be overcome by disappointment. They will be filled with patience, encouragement and enthusiasm and move forward.

So, thank you Rory McIlroy for reminding me of these Godly principles. Now my prayer is that you find a greater destiny through salvation and the love of Christ.