



# Links Players

## STREET WISE 4: TRUSTING THE BIBLE

*The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever. (Psalm 119:160, ESV)*

**T**HE WORLD OF GOLF DELIVERS A RESERVOIR OF ADVICE. To fresh or undiscerning ears, much of it sounds helpful. But turn the page or flip the dial, and suddenly here comes another word, and one that contradicts the first. How can this be? Can more than one piece of wisdom work at the same time?

While two wrongs won't give you a right, two rights can sometimes coexist, especially when applied to different situations. In golf, I would normally swing down to hit the ball up. Yet if I want to keep the ball low under a tree, I would use a low-to-low swing arc, with the club keeping a path as close to the ground as possible all the way through. No "swing down to hit it up" here!

People often struggle with the Bible—though not so often those who have actually read it. They listen to some criticisms they have heard on the street of life. The Bible, they have been told, is full of contradictions and can't be trusted. This often leads to one of two grave errors. Some abandon the Bible altogether as a source for salvation and life. Others read it, but since they consider it in doubt, they pick and choose the passages they want to adhere to and dismiss the rest.

But there are those—and we at Links Players consider ourselves among them—who agree with Paul that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NIV). Where do we find the confidence to work past supposed contradictions and even possible error?

There is no room in today's devotion to go into the entirety of the matter\*, and our accompanying study will focus on Scripture's own defense of itself, but realize that there is much good scholarship available that examines context, first century writing style, scribal tradition and error, the overwhelming preponderance of manuscript availability and accuracy, and more. The Bible holds up. And where it seems to contradict itself (example: two blind men in this Gospel versus just one in the other), the difference in reporting is incidental; the healing happens and Jesus is exalted. Even the Old Testament holds lasting worth, as the psalmist wrote, giving us a whole book that points in the same direction: to the Savior whose life was given for us, that we might share in his eternal righteousness.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2018 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/sNaPBLftT4>  
A quick review can be found here: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-you-can-trust-your-bible/>, while a rich, multi-part series begins here: <https://bible.org/seriespage/1-historical-reliability-gospels>. Both point to Mark Roberts' book, *Can We Trust the Gospels?*, which we highly recommend.

**Opening questions** What is the worst golf advice you've ever been given? How do you sort out whose golf advice to listen to? • On a scale of 1-10, where would you place your confidence in the veracity of the Bible?

**READING** Genesis 3:1; Psalm 119:160; Proverbs 25:2; Acts 17:11

**Twists and turns (Genesis 3)**  
From the beginning, the devil has sought to undermine our trust in God's word. Where have you recognized doubts creep in for you? Have you had success in combating these and adhering to the Scripture?

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**The whole Bible (Psalm 119)**  
If the sum of God's word is truth, what value should we find in the Old Testament relative to the New Testament? Are you someone who has read both, or have you leaned in one particular direction? How can you round out your reading of Scripture to understand more of God and his work?

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**Reading well (Proverbs 25 & Acts 17)**  
How do these passages encourage you to keep looking at the Scriptures to test their truth, the teaching of their truth, and the application of their truth?

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