



Links Players

PEOPLE WHO HELP 3: TRUTHFUL WORDS

Speaking the truth in love, we will grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ. (Ephesians 4:15, NIV)

A WEEK AGO WE “LISTENED IN” ON THE WAY TOUR CADDIES encourage the players who employ them. But if you are one those fans who like to listen to the conversations between caddies and players, you know that there can be more to the exchange than words of optimism.

On tour, the players may be boss, but they aren’t always right. Their distance calculations may be off or their green reading askew. Seasoned players know what they know and what their caddies may know better. So they give their caddies permission to assist, even if that means challenging the boss. As it turns out, some of the world’s best modern companies do the same thing. They establish a culture with flatter lines of hierarchy and commensurate opportunity for everyone to offer big ideas and even speak into the way things are run.

When we see all this pragmatic functionality going on, we do well to ask whether we find similar examples in Scripture. Often we do. This makes perfect sense because God, the author of the universe, certainly understands the way things work.

What this means for us is that we, too, should be welcoming words of excellence and especially truth in our lives, as Scripture instructs.

The main requirement for allowing and receiving such input is humility. We have to admit to ourselves and others that we don’t have every answer and we can’t solve every problem. For a lot of people, that’s tough to do. Partly this is the result of pride. But it can also be the consequence of having been hurt by those who have spoken truth to us harshly.

So the next step in the process is to give permission for truth-speaking to those who love you and care for the state of your soul. This doesn’t mean their words will be easy; it means their words will be helpful. These are people who are kind as the Holy Spirit is kind—with our long-term spiritual health, and not just our passing fancies, in mind.

Finally, we must view this all in context. Truth spoken in love will grow us up. As believers in Jesus, we should desire to mature in following him. This is accomplished with the truthful help of others who let us see what we can become.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2018 Links Players International. An introductory video for this Bible study is available here: <https://youtu.be/SM0IOSoNqM4>.

Opening questions Do you prefer a golf instructor who eases you along or confronts your weaknesses? • Have you intentionally given permission for certain others to speak truth into your life? How has this worked out?

READING 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; Psalm 51:1-12

Apart from truth (2 Timothy 4)
Considering Paul’s words to Timothy, do you think we live in such a time? How do we prevent ourselves from falling into this trap?

Good words (Ephesians 4)
What common ideas arise from these three verses in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians? What do you learn here about speaking? about listening?

A right response to hard truth (Psalm 51)
This psalm was written by David after the prophet Nathan confronted the king about his adultery. What do we learn from David’s words about receiving the truth? What end result did David ask for from the Lord?
