



Links Players

A MISSION IN LIFE 2: MINISTRY & MISSION

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. (Ephesians 6:19-20, NIV)

ONE OF THE APPEALS OF GOLF is that it can be played in so many different settings. That is, this course is not like that one. As an activity, it shares this aspect of variety with cycling or hiking.

But golf is different from those activities in that it's nearly always competitive. Even if you are not playing a game with the others in your group, you're challenged by par as it is set for the course you are playing. And while the range of par is typically small (between 69 and 73), your ability to reach that number—or your own average number against such a standard—depends on the obstacles a course presents, both the obvious ones and those that are hidden.

This is why most golfers settle on a single home course. Here they can more easily measure their on-course improvement, as they again and again manage familiar terrain.

You might recognize that your home church or Fellowship provides the same comfortable milieu. It's a social environment where you all speak a similar language and share common understandings. Even if you don't agree on every matter, you agree on how these will be discussed, with each person being heard and honored. But if we send you somewhere else, watch out! You may not be sure whether the people you're meeting have the same commitment to their faith that you do. And we're only talking about people who call themselves "believers." What if you have to carry Jesus to a place where he is unknown or dismissed?

The apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesian church that he was an ambassador in chains. He had been locked up to discourage him from preaching about this God who was not Caesar. Yet even here his mission was unchanged. He wanted prayer for fearlessness in speaking of Jesus. Paul's example is so helpful, because he was admitting that even with all his experience he needed an extra dose of God's courage to speak to others. Paul knew his places in life, the comfortable ones and the uncomfortable ones. He knew where he would meet up with disdain and persecution. But through listening to others and finding out about them, his desire to share would be realized when he opened his mouth to tell them what Jesus could do for them in a way they could understand.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2019 Links Players International. An introductory video for this Bible study is available here: <https://youtu.be/mhGriKuh15fw>.

Opening questions What are features you like about your home course compared to other courses? Do you have a "second favorite," and what makes it so? • What makes you most uncomfortable when you play at a new course?

READING Exodus 4:10-13; Luke 12:11-12; Acts 17:22-28

Moses' trepidation (Exodus 4)

On what grounds did Moses resist God's direction to approach Pharaoh with a demand for freedom? How does weakness in such a leader address your own fears?

In verse 12, what promise did God give to Moses? *Read Luke 12:11-12.* Do you take courage from the fact that Jesus made a similar promise to the disciples? What reservations do you still have about talking about Jesus?

Knowing your audience (Acts 17)

In Athens, Paul addressed the people according to their worldview. How can listening and observing equip us to share who Jesus is and what he has done for us? What else can make you better at speaking of Jesus?
