



Links Players

6 WHO AM I?: WITNESS FOR CHRIST

“... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8, NIV)

WHEN YOU TELL OTHERS ABOUT THE GAME, what are some of your best words of encouragement to interest them in getting started? Probably, you start with the things you love most about getting out to play. For me, it would be the variety of challenges a round can present, as well as the time outdoors.

At the same time, we have to be careful not to overwhelm others with our enthusiasm. A tempered approach recognizes that it may take more than one go-around to convince a friend to give golf a try. We can tell others what we love about the game, but we can't make them love it.

Now if I turned this coin to the other side and began to consider how we talk about Jesus, you might pitch in with any number of resources and methods you've seen employed, from door-to-door witnessing, to a showing of the Jesus Film, to an invitation to church, to the Four Spiritual Laws. Our list could go on and on, but none of these approaches—no matter how well-formed or how well-presented—replace the power of relationship and conversation. When you've taken the time to know someone and they've gotten to know you, the doors to meaningful interaction about life's most important matters swing open more freely.

In this way, we can say that being a witness for Jesus is one part befriending, one part engaging, and one part expressing. Without relationship, few people will bother to listen. Without engagement, they won't have interest. And without expression, they won't be given a message to hear.

The good news is that you don't need any new skills to “do the work of an evangelist” (words Paul wrote to Timothy). You simply need to do what you've done in so many other contexts. Talk about what you know, with energy and with clarity. When the disciples first interacted with Jesus, he encouraged them to do what they already had interest in doing: “Follow me.” Those who were serious took up this elementary instruction and from there they began learning.

You don't need to hide the fullness of what you've been gaining as you've walked with Jesus, but you don't need to bring the whole inventory either. Start with what's happened to you: “Jesus has changed me.” Then go forward from there, little by little, as you are asked. And enjoy the chance to answer!

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2019 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/5dX4nvJmt30>.

Opening questions Have you ever tried to get non-golfing friends interested in the game? Was it easy or hard? What hooks did you use to encourage them to give it a shot?

READING Isaiah 43:10-13; Acts 22:14-15; 2 Timothy 4:5

What we have seen (Isaiah 43)

To be a witness first of all means to see and/or hear something. What have you seen and heard of God that resonates with your soul and causes you to say, “I truly know him”?

Testifying (Acts 22)

Secondly, witnesses testify to what they have seen and heard, as Paul was compelled by God to do. What would you emphasize in testifying to others about what Jesus has done in your life?

The work of an evangelist (1 Timothy 4:5)

Paul urged Timothy to do the work of an evangelist, a title that means “publisher of glad tidings.” Where do you see yourself best positioned to bring the good news of Jesus? How soon can you start?
