



# Links Players

## KINGDOM INVESTMENTS 7: FRIENDSHIPS

*“I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.” (Luke 16:9, NIV)*

THE INSIDE JOKE, OF COURSE, is that guys—and yes, this is mostly a guy thing—can spend hours together on the golf course and talk about almost nothing personal. The inside truth is that it’s not a joke. When guys get focused, they’ll talk about what they’re focused on and not much else. So when they’re playing golf, they’re talking golf.

Thank goodness for clubhouses, then. Here, after the round, when we take time to sit down together and hold back on the drinks, a little more comes out. *What upcoming travel plans do you have? What are you doing around the house? How’s business?* Such questions don’t always dig deep into the personal side of another’s life, but they get the conversation started. And if, as Links Players, we’re going to change the conversation, we do well to get it started in a lively, well-rounded fashion.

Golfers, it is often assumed, have money. This doesn’t have to be the case. There are ways to play the game cheaply. But what avid golfers all have is time. The game is not like a 30-minute workout at the gym. Each time you put a peg in the ground at the first tee, you’re making a commitment to devote several hours to this. Much of this time, though, is spent in between shots, walking to your ball or riding in a cart. Here we have the opportunity to make mention of things other than golf. Talk sports if you must, but get your friend talking. A few words here and a few words there can add up, sending the message that you are available to talk about most anything.

Why is all this important? Because it’s a kingdom investment. Jesus used a parable to establish the point that the currency of this world should be spent on building relationships for the next. In his story, he commended even an unrighteous manager for shrewdly setting himself up for his next job. Then he urged his followers to be thinking not only of this life but the next one. Whom do you know here? How can you lead these connections toward everlasting friendships?

We’ve spent seven weeks considering the ways we can invest in God’s kingdom, like the faithful servants in Jesus’ Parable of the Talents. This activity is never passive. Rather, we are more like day traders, ever keeping an eye on how we can enlarge our “holdings” in our lives with Christ.

**Opening questions** How important are the friendships you’ve built around golf? In what ways have these friendships extended beyond time on the course?

**READING** Luke 16:1-9; Luke 16:10-12

### Forward thinking (Luke 16:1-9)

What surprises you about this parable? How did Jesus draw out his key principle? Do you look at life (including friendships) with an eternal perspective, or is this something you need to begin doing?

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### Entrusted with riches (Luke 16:10-12)

How do we show integrity in our lives? What “little things” has God given you to do? Are you faithful in these, or do you think you should be allowed to do more now?

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### Networking friends

The N in the LINKS acrostic speaks of “networking friends together in Christ.” How can you do this more intentionally? Which friends or acquaintances need your eternity-minded attention right now?

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