



Links Players

A DIFFERENT SEASON?

Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." (Acts 17:32, ESV)

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR EASTER?" That's not a question we're used to hearing this far out. It's common to think well ahead at Christmas, but not so much at Easter. If you makes plans for the Easter week, they usually have to do with "spring break" more than the day itself.

In this past year of adjustments and reschedules, we've grown used to things being different. But this is one item where things probably haven't changed so much. Easter is when? April 4? It's not just procrastinators who say, "Ah, it can wait."

But to the men and women who call Christ King, it doesn't seem right to let Easter sneak up on us just because there aren't presents to buy or extended family gatherings to be planned. This is why Lent has a prominent place in many church traditions; it's an intentional season of preparation, the dark stretch leading to the glorious revelation of life.

Whether or not you participate in Lent, the weeks leading to Easter do not need to be dark, as we sometimes think when we consider the events of Christ's Passion. This is because we hold the beginning and the end of the story in the same hand. We may think soberly and seriously, but we do not fall into despair. If a seer met you on the first tee and told you that you would shoot even par today, you would not be deeply disturbed at a double bogey on the first hole—but you would still commit to every shot, wanting to see that 72 on your card at the end of the day. That's how we can approach the Easter season, with solemnity but not hopelessness. Easter's miracle addresses what many do not want to face: death. But it addresses it with life.

Here is another thing that is no different between Christmas and Easter: We have a wonderful story to tell. A message. A truth. God came in human flesh, born like all men and bearing the name Jesus. Though always the Son of God, he grew in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52) and learned obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8), then worked the signs and miracles that would accredit him to us (Acts 2:22) and went to the cross bearing our sins—all of us and every sin. If our discouragement lies anywhere, it must be there: that our sin required such a sacrifice. But Jesus did the Father's will and loved us to the end. Then up from the grave he arose! This is the "old, old story," the one we have to proclaim in every season. Let's pray that our audience, like Paul's, will ask to hear it again, until they come to believe.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. A video introduction for this study may be found here: <https://youtu.be/jAPZjgWGh-4>.

Opening questions Does your golf year have seasons? When do you find yourself playing more or less? Do you like this rhythm, or would you change it up if you could?

READING Philippians 2:5-11; Acts 17:22-34

Christ's work and life (Philippians 2)

What form did Christ's work on earth take? In what spirit was it lived out?

Verse 9 begins with the hinge word *therefore*. What occurs on each side of that hinge? How does this help us understand the fullness of who Christ is?

Paul's message and ours (Acts 17)

How did Paul leverage the Athenians' own reference points to change the conversation to God's plan for our lives? Does it surprise you that his public discourse included no direct naming of Christ?

What do you think Paul included in his follow-up sessions with those who wanted to hear more? How much of Christ's story would you tell them?
