



Links Players

LOSSES AND GAINS 6: FAITH

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe... (Hebrews 12:28, NIV)

IN THE ACCOMPANYING VIDEO for today’s devotion, I asked Jeffrey Cranford, who is a PGA professional, whether he has ever seen a foundational shakeup in the game. He named it: TrackMan, the radar device that gives golfers buckets of feedback about their swing path and ball flight. The overall patterns uncovered by TrackMan have revolutionized swing evaluation and instruction, even when the pricey device isn’t available.

On the viewing side, TrackMan’s camera-based counterpart, Toptracer, has allowed us to watch televised golf in a vastly improved way. We can see the flight of the ball! It’s even more fun to follow your own shots with Toptracer, which you can do at Topgolf’s popular driving ranges. Toptracer’s president says of the device’s inventor, Daniel Forsgren, “He’s invented something that has changed the industry.” A true shakeup.

Shakeups of this kind don’t come along very often. Technologies are always adding to our experiences in life, but many are just adornments, like going from a rotary to a push button phone. The true revolution came when we all started carrying our phones wherever we went.

The real shakeups in life are far greater than any of these examples, though. They are events that strike us personally and force us to respond. The spread of the coronavirus and the public restrictions that followed initiated changes for many of us, particularly in our routines and relationships. Some suffered greatly in emotional and psychological ways due to the lack of human connection. This was especially true for older people and those with compromised health; suddenly their infrequent contact with others was reduced to almost nothing.

Alongside the shaking of emotional frameworks, people found their faith put to the test. *Should I trust the doctors or God, or both? The time I spend with others in prayer and fellowship is being robbed—what can I do to keep growing when I can’t grow with others?* Big questions, and rightly asked, because rather than giving up on God when trouble comes, such questions keep us looking for him in the midst of it. Where else can we turn? He alone cannot be shaken; his kingdom is sure. And nothing that happens on earth should turn us from worshiping him.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. An accompanying introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/D-RBrwR6s8k>

Opening questions Have you had the opportunity to work with TrackMan or a similar swing monitor? What helpful information did it give you? Did you make changes because of what you learned?

READING Psalm 18:1-19; Hebrews 12:25-29; 2 Corinthians 4:8-11

A sure deliverer (Psalm 18)

What images of trouble and rescue did David present in this psalm? How does it increase your honor and worship of God when you openly acknowledge the trouble in your life?

Shaken/Unshaken (Hebrews 12)

How do you know when your world has been shaken? What are your usual responses when you get knocked off your mark? How would worship make a difference at times like these?

Trouble and life (2 Corinthians 4)

Paul wrote here of harsh trouble, but also pointed to the life believers have in Christ. What helps you remember to turn to Jesus when your back is against a wall? Do you sense his life sustaining you in these times?
