



# Links Players

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## Dead Authors

*But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? Man does not know how, and it is not found in the land of the living.” (Job 28: 12-13, RSV)*

With no PGA golf on the television, I recently found myself on YouTube watching Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf. It reminded me of the above verse from Job about wisdom, “Wisdom ... it is not found in the land of the living.”

I love the YouTube versions of Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf. Maybe it is just my old age and sentimental personality. Still, there is nothing more entertaining than Gene Sarazen commenting on Harry Bradshaw beating 32-year-old Billy Casper in 1963 at Portmarnock near Dublin, Ireland.

The portly fifty-year-old Bradshaw’s swing looks more like a thirteen-handicap at your club than a golf champion who was a ten-time winner of the Irish PGA. Google Harry Bradshaw, and you will soon discover he once lost the 1949 British Open to Bobby Locke because his ball rolled into a bottle.

And outside the game of golf, where do we find wisdom? I agree with Job, who tells us plainly that wisdom "cannot be found in the land of the living." (Job 28:13). Wisdom seems extinct among the living in Twenty-Two.

So, then, where is wisdom found? Instead of the ‘living,’ I mostly read dead authors. My search for wisdom and understanding comes from older sources like John Bunyan (1628-1688), E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973), and Oswald Chambers (1874-1917).

Other authors who have gone on to glory and who have greatly influenced me are G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936), C.S. Lewis (1898-1963), A.W. Tozer (1897-1963), Dennis Kinlaw (1922-2017), and more. My father Ford Philpot’s voice (1917-1992) still rings in my ears on most days.

And, of course, even more importantly, the real old-timers—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter—are the ones through whom the Holy Spirit used and uses to impart “wisdom from above.” Not to mention the Old Testament prophets.

So, why do I read ancient words from dead authors like E Stanley Jones? I think I have figured it out. First, these men and women finished the race without tripping before the finish line. They remained steadfast to the end. As we now say, they “finished strong.”

To put a sharper point on it, my choice of reading is based more on respect for life-long character than personality or popularity. I struggle with the moral failures and the high salaries of many mega-church-pastor types. That might sound cynical, but I prefer to see it as discerning.

Second, many 21st-century writers are enamored with the “current news.” It doesn’t take long to figure out whether the author loves this or that President, watches Fox or CNN, or is drawing from this or that political pundit. We are so preoccupied with the present that we’ve forgotten the “ancient path.”

I love the way Jeremiah says it: Thus says the LORD: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”(Jer. 6:16, ESV).

The “ancient path,” the way that leads to life, was hewn from the rocks of destruction long before the world was created. The Father of all wisdom was gracious enough to reveal it to us in Scripture.

Give me Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf and the 1866 hymn by Kate Hankey, where she wrote—  
“the old, old story of Jesus and His love.”

Prayer- Father, you have instructed us to ask for wisdom from above. We ask you to show us the “ancient paths.” \_\_

Tim Philpot

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