



# Links Players

---

## Just an Old Peach Box

Those who have ears to hear, let them hear (Matthew 11:15, NKJV).

Chasing trophies in my youth, chasing validation, a pattern laid a groove in my psyche. My first trophy meant only there would be a pursuit for another.

Holding silver goblets and plastic golf figurines hot-stamped with metallic foil elicits a nice smile for a newspaper picture. Captured within the bindings of a red scrapbook are the vestiges of those proud smiles coated in sepia, each a Kodachrome reminder I was better than someone else—validated.

Those trophies, destined for an attic and an old peach box, coated with dust particles left from some cosmic event, are but symbols and remnants of a well-intentioned path paved with misguided understanding.

Today, the trophies have no meaning for me. I'm looking for a good place to dispose of them. Fond of the memories and the good times, I do not regret those days. Wins and losses are part of life. How else can someone gain wisdom but from worthy pursuits for the wrong reasons?

Age and injury erode ability and desire, and now that enough erosion has worn them away, what remains for me are chiseled reminders of all those small permissions justifying the pursuit. Validation offers no solace when your time is past. She just thumbs a ride with the next chasing soul.

There is deep within each soul a desire to be counted, to be heard, to be among the worthy and validated. The question must be asked, "Who are we serving and pleasing?" The answer guides behavior. God. Self. Man. Parents. Spouse. Image. Success.

"For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43, NKJV).

Spilling over into every other facet of my life, validation became a theme in all my relationships. I considered worthiness more important than love, and each time I mistook one for the other, those small permissions convinced me I was right.

Self-righteousness is such a benign temptation, unnoticed until emptiness reveals its divide or until the prodigal brother returns home. How should I reconcile and mediate the deficiency I knew so well within me and wished to hide from you?

The problem on this journey was every time I granted myself a small permission, coinciding was the pretense I did not know it was wrong to seek validation.

I was so thoroughly convinced the trophy was a worthy goal. Why couldn't I do what everyone else was doing? Or did I not want to face the knowledge God placed within?

I was the son who stayed at home whose self-righteous permissions led him to be jealous of his prodigal brother. He, too, wanted a trophy for validation. He, too, wanted to be better than someone.

Self-permission takes us to an end where we see ourselves as we are. And there, we face a question. Shall we confess our Lord or become bitter the trophy eluded us? See where self-permission takes us? It took me. Jesus is Lord!

**Prayer: Jesus! Help us to see where pursuing affirmation with wrong motives leads us!**

—

Deck Cheatham

Copyright 2024 Links Players International

The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at [linksplayers.com](https://linksplayers.com).