



# Links Players

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## The Master's Testimony

*...my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going... (John 8:14 ESV)*

I am trying to write a book to help reluctant “evangelists” around the golf course.

The book is entitled “The Master Plan of Evangelism (For Golfers)”, with the title borrowed with permission from theologian and author Robert Coleman, whose 1964 classic “The Master Plan of Evangelism” sold over four million copies and was translated into over one hundred languages. Dr. Coleman is alive and well at age 97. He has lived what he preached.

Part of my writing process is spending Monday mornings on a Zoom call with a few followers of the Master, letting Jesus teach us through the words of the Red Letters.

Last week, we found Jesus talking to the Pharisees, an easy group to dislike. These ‘religious unbelievers’ (now there is an oxymoron) are a major problem.

Jesus answered one of their complaints with a profound formula for witnessing:

“Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going.” (John 8: 14).

Jesus had a testimony. He had a story to tell. This story was about His Father who sent Him.

So, golf course evangelism, the kind that happens on a golf cart, or sitting in the clubhouse after 18 holes, or hanging out in the locker room during a rain delay, starts with a testimony, and then it continues with two friendly questions.

Jesus said, “I know where I came from...,” so we too can ask our friends, “So where are you from?” Most people love to talk about where they came from.

After gathering some of their stories, we can tell a small bit of our own story. Following the example of Jesus, I often find myself telling “where I came from.” Just like Jesus, they will hear about my father. He and my mom were two thoroughly “lost balls” at age thirty. But in 1947, Jesus found my alcoholic father.

I would never have been born in 1951 if my father had continued his rotten ways. My parents’ story affirms that “I know where I came from.”

And once the story of origins has been covered, it all leads naturally into the second part of Jesus’ formula. Jesus said, “I know where I am going.” We can gently ask, “So Joe, now I know where you are from. Where are you going?”

Depending on their age, the answers are all over the place. That question gets some serious face scrunching and muttering. No one seems to be sure.

This conversation happened in real time, five days later. A young businessman wandered into the Men's Locker room during one of our small Links groups. He showed up with five energy drinks and two laptops, ready to work all day.

When he saw three of us sitting there, he accepted our friendly gesture and joined the conversation. We learned where he was from, and he learned where we were from.

And then he learned that we meet in the locker room on Saturday mornings because we are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, and like Jesus, we go where the Father tells us to go. He discovered three sinners saved by grace who play golf and are on their way to heaven.

As the hour ended, his head was bowed and his eyes were full of tears. He had begun to understand where he came from and where he might be going—if he places his hope in this Jesus of the Red Letters.

**PRAYER: Oh Father, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us to boldly share your Story—your Testimony! Amen.**

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Tim Philpot

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