LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Changing the Conversation: Guarding Our Tongues Against Gossip

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (Col. 3:2)

One of mission statements of Links Players is “Changing the Conversation at Your Club.” But what do we mean by changing the conversation?

We mean moving beyond surface-level talk to deeper conversations about life, faith, God, and things eternal rather than temporal. As Colossians 3:2 reminds us, we are to set our minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Yet, I imagine we have all found ourselves on the golf course with friends, even our Links Players friends, when the conversation takes a turn toward gossip. Perhaps it begins innocently enough.

We may have good intentions, but before we know it, we are discussing someone else's private circumstances, repeating something we have heard, or sharing information that was never ours to share.

Our mission is to point people in our golf clubs and communities toward Jesus Christ. We are called to be His light, His hands, and His feet. One of the most important ways we reflect Christ is through the words we speak about others.

What does God's Word say about gossip?

Proverbs 16:28 warns that gossip separates close friends. Proverbs 17:9 teaches that covering an offense demonstrates love, while repeating a matter can destroy relationships. And Proverbs 26:20 offers a powerful picture: without wood, a fire goes out; without a gossip, quarrels eventually cease.

These passages remind us that our words have consequences. What we repeat can fuel division, damage trust, and wound relationships. I have seen this, even in ministry.

Gossip often disguises itself as concern, and sometimes it even enters our fellowships through prayer requests. We must ask ourselves an important question: Do we have permission to share another person's private circumstances under the guise of prayer?

If we do not have permission, we should not share the details. We can pray faithfully for someone in private without disclosing their personal struggles to a group.

Confidentiality is one of the things that makes our fellowships so special. We want every person, including those who do not yet know Christ, to feel safe enough to come, share, ask questions, and grow. When people trust us with their lives, we have a responsibility to protect that trust.

Also, there is a distinction between gossip and slander. Gossip spreads information that should have remained private; slander involves speaking falsely or damaging someone's reputation.

Both can cause tremendous harm. Ephesians 4:31 calls believers to put away bitterness, wrath, anger, and slander. We cannot be intentional about building Christ-centered community while carelessly tearing one another down with our words.

None of us is exempt from this challenge. We have all failed in this area at some point. The answer is not condemnation, but repentance, greater awareness, and a renewed commitment to honor Christ in our conversations on and off the course.

Here is a simple standard we can practice: If it is not kind, loving, necessary, or ours to share, we should think carefully before speaking. We can bless others rather than criticize them, protect confidences rather than repeat them, and speak words that build up rather than tear down.

Let us continue changing the conversation at our clubs. Let us set a high standard, not only for what we talk about, but for how we speak about people when they are not present. May our conversations reflect the character of Christ and direct others toward things eternal.

Prayer: Lord, guard our hearts and our tongues. Forgive us for the times we have spoken carelessly about others. Help us protect the trust placed in us, pray for others with wisdom, and speak words filled with grace, truth, and love. May our fellowships be places of safety, encouragement, and spiritual growth. Help us change the conversation by becoming more like You. Amen.

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