

## SHARING YOUR FAITH, PART 7

*How can they hear with someone preaching to them? (Romans 10:14, NIV)*

AS GOLFERS, WE HAVE ALL WITNESSED (and maybe been subject to!) the spontaneous lesson on the practice tee. It's one thing when we ask a friend to take a look at this move or that and give us some feedback on what they see. This is particularly helpful if your friend is a strong player or if she knows your swing well enough to recognize a detrimental difference. Unfortunately, when we experience "the spontaneous lesson," it is also the frequently "the uninvited lesson." With every good intention, one golfer walks up to another and just starts in: "Move your elbow over here. Turn your hips this way. Bring the club more from the inside. Keep your eyes over the ball." It's a mishmash of instruction that winds up being anything but simple.

As we conclude our series on sharing your faith, we can be reminded by this golfing scenario that simple is almost always better than complicated. This is ever true when it comes to presenting the gospel of Christ to men and women who need to hear it.

When it comes down to it, the gospel can be reduced to a single line: *disqualifying sin overcome by redemptive salvation*. By itself, that line doesn't offer enough of the story, but it puts boundaries on our tendencies to get both overly chatty and overly theological. Stick to the line and you won't lose your audience. Now let's flesh it out.

*First*, be certain your hearer is aware of their sin and the gravity of its consequences. You don't have to be preachy; you do best to humbly speak from first-person knowledge of sin's grip on you. But be clear: We don't need a little cleaning up around the edges; we need wholesale newness.

*Second*, establish the wonder of Jesus' work on the cross, where his perfect life ended in a sacrificial death, so that "once and for all" a lasting atonement makes a way to God for us. It is through Jesus that the newness we need is made available.

*Third*, encourage a response. In the first evangelistic message, Peter instructed the people to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus (publicly identifying with him). By this act, newness comes and a person begins their spiritual life in Christ.

Your faith is yours, but it is also meant to be shared. Take up this work today!

**Opening questions** Can you remember, and maybe laugh at, a very unhelpful golf tip you've been given? • What are your concerns about taking up the work of sharing your faith?

**READING** Acts 2:14-41

**Our core message (Acts 2)**  
How does the Holy Spirit in you and the Holy Spirit in your hearer impact your sharing of the gospel?

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What would you consider to be the essential elements of Peter's message?  
How would you employ these in sharing the gospel today?

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How important is it to elicit a response to the gospel from those who hear?

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How would you respond to someone who receives the message with belief in Jesus? How would you respond to someone who puts off making a decision or rejects the message?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International. You will find an introductory video for this study at <https://youtu.be/VcNwI5DozIM>.