

A LIFE LIVED IN FELLOWSHIP, PART 2

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2, NIV)

THE PROPERTY MANAGER AT THE LINKS PLAYERS OFFICE doesn't play golf. He told me so himself. He is semi-retired and glad for the projects that keep him busy around the property, because he doesn't have enough else to occupy his time. This is how golf came up in the conversation. It's also where he dropped a decidedly golf-associated word: foursome.

You might guess how he used the term. He said that in retirement, the difficulty for him was that he had worked in social environments, and as much as he likes his wife and his pets, their presence alone can get pretty repetitive. What's good about golf, he recognized, is that "you have your foursome you can interact with every time you play." For a non-golfer, this guy is sharp!

It is true that a good many of our readers don't play golf, but what they have told me is that the associations with the game that we write about often make sense all the same. I am sure that is especially true today, for everyone knows the value of intentional fellowship.

Or *does* everyone know this?

My guest on the videos accompanying this new series on fellowship is Tim Philpot, a family court judge in Lexington, Kentucky. In today's video, Judge Philpot admits quite openly that as a young man he was "dying" because of his lack of meaningful fellowship. Fortunately, he knew well enough from his time around the Scriptures and the church that God had created an avenue for this fellowship. It is the time spent with our brothers and sisters in the faith, talking about who God is and how we are to work out the instructions he has given us in his Word. Tim desperately sought such interaction.

The central passage that Tim relies on for his own motivation and the inspiration of others to get purposefully connected is today's verse, 2 Timothy 2:2. There are several twos in that reference, but the verse itself reveals an important four: *I* said it, *you* heard it, entrust it to *faithful men*, who will teach *others* too. That's four spiritual generations, you might say—people talking to people for the sake of their salvation (spiritual rescue) and sanctification (spiritual growth). If we are to grow ourselves, we can't miss the significant role that true fellowship plays for us.

Opening questions Who makes up your regular group of playing partners? How far do your friendships extend beyond the golf course? • Where else do you have meaningful friendship or fellowship in your life?

READING 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 2:42-47; Luke 9:18-20

Responding to the call (2 Timothy 2)

Carefully consider this verse. Where would you say you fit into the spiritual generations? How can you maintain a fellowship where there are both those above you and below in the generational structure?

Traits of fellowship among believers (Acts 2)

What traits or activities marked the early fellowship of believers? Which of these do you need to strengthen in your own fellowship?

Killer questions (Luke 9)

How important is your answer to Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" What other questions can help keep us spiritually accountable to our fellowship partners? (Extra resource: www.linksplayers.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Central-Question-of-Accountability.pdf, or bit.ly/2iVS55U)

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available at <https://youtu.be/jCAGTH8wNjY>.