



Links Players

WHAT ARE YOU ADVERTISING?

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16 NIV)

Arnold Palmer was the original commercial advertiser on the PGA Tour. His name, image, and likeness were associated with everything from Cadillac and Pennzoil to Hertz rental cars and Paine Webber brokerage services. He single-handedly brought corporate sponsorship to the game of golf.

For decades now, we have associated players with the brands they advertise—whether it is Tom Watson and Ram, Greg Norman and Reebok, Tiger Woods and Nike, Jordan Spieth and Under Armour, or just about every tour player of recent decades advertising something.

Did you know that you too are advertising something?

You may not be aware of it because nobody is paying you to put their logo on your hat or to star in their tv commercial. Nonetheless, imagine that your life is a commercial. What are you advertising?

I am sure that those answers could vary across many spectrums, but let's try to keep your answer spiritually related. What do you want people who know you to think you represent as it pertains to your faith?

Surprisingly, you might find it odd that I am hoping your answer is not really about your beliefs or doctrine. Consider what "John [the Baptist] said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.' And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham" (Luke 3:7-8).

The emphasis John is making while preparing for the way of Jesus is that God's children would be known for producing fruit as a consequence of what they believe. This theme is the same that we find throughout Jesus' teachings, especially in the Sermon on the Mount. "So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter" (Matthew 7:19-21 NASB). Belief is merely our starting point when it comes to following Jesus.

Christians would do much better if we were known for what we do as an expression of what we believe. What we believe means nothing if we are not putting our faith into action. We cannot do simply what we can justify or get away with and profess our belief in Jesus. "You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless" (James 2:19-20)?

Belief alone didn't change the world, doers did! During the First Century, those who called themselves disciples or followers of the Way were not admired exclusively for what they believed; rather, numerous historians (including Jewish and Roman ones) documented Christians' love for one another and compassion for the poor, widows, orphans, infirmed, and outcast.

What version of faith are you advertising?

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Josh Nelson

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