

Links Players

NICKNAMES

...To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it. (Revelation 2:17, ESV)

Mention “Boom Boom” in a conversation, and we know it refers to Fred Couples. PGA professionals are frequently referred to by their nicknames. We know Eldrick Woods as “Tiger,” Gene Sarazen as “The Squire,” and everyone knows “The Hawk” is Ben Hogan.

Some nicknames are funny, like “The Walrus” for Craig Stadler. Some nicknames refer to lifestyles, like calling Tony Lema “Champagne Tony.” Still other nicknames refer to a player’s prowess, like “Boss of the Moss” for Loren Roberts. I still chuckle when I hear Louis Oosthuizen referred to as “Shrek” because the resemblance is uncanny.

Some nicknames connote respect like “Lord Byron” for Byron Nelson. Other monikers accurately describe behavior as in the case of Tommy Bolt, aka “Thunder Bolt.” Recently, some spectators were heard referring to Viktor Hovland as “Magoo.” From one angle, they seem to be onto something.

Growing up, we had nicknames for everyone at our club. Our golf professional, Joe, was “Jose.” One of our closest friends was so skinny he got tagged with “Pencil.” One guy became “Goose” after accidentally driving a relatively new Toro mower off a bridge into a concrete ditch. Jose was not happy.

Nicknames can describe someone’s mannerisms, looks, behavior, attitudes, or even a person’s shot shape. Bruce Lietzke was “Leaky” due to his preference for a left-to-right ball flight.

It might be anachronistic to say Jesus gave his disciples nicknames. However, he gave his disciples new names besides the ones their parents gave them. Simon-Peter was “The Rock.” James and John were “Sons of Thunder.” There are examples from the Old Testament as well. Abram was called “Abraham,” and Jacob was renamed “Israel.”

If you were given a nickname based solely on your behavior on the course, what would it be? Grumpy Gary? Tantrum Tommy? Expletive Eddie? Banging Billy? Boisterous Bobby? Slingshot Sammy?

Behaving a certain way over a sustained period of time will typically result in a nickname being assigned to you. Once that naming happens, it is virtually impossible to shed.

Rather than have a name given to you based on poor etiquette or deplorable behavior, why not spend time developing virtuous behavior that corresponds to your confession—Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior.

Parts of the Book of Revelation are notoriously difficult to interpret. However, if we follow the Reformation principle that “Scripture interprets Scripture,” we will get closer to a right understanding. The prophet Isaiah announces that the “faithful will receive a new name” (Isaiah 62:2). Revelation 3:12 promises that the one who overcomes [Jesus] will write the name of his God, the name of the city of God, and his [Jesus’] own new name.

In Revelation 22:3-4, we are told, “...his [Jesus’] servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads.” I could dig deeper, but having a new name indicates having a whole new status. As a bride takes the name of her husband, we, too, have a new name. As such, we are invited to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19).

Prayer- Lord, infuse our hearts with a deeper understanding of our future so that we might honor you with our behavior in the present.

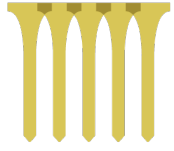
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Dennis Darville

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