



Links Players

The Decentered Life

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. (1 Peter 2:21, ESV)

Can you imagine a week in the life of one of the world's best golfers? No matter which PGA Tour player you choose, you could easily envisage the crowded space that involves.

If you shadow this superstar for a few days, you will encounter his family, his agent, his swing coach, his strength coach, his close friends, a PGA Tour executive or two, and his fans. What becomes immediately apparent is this—his world revolves around him.

What is often said as a quip is nevertheless true in that setting, “It’s his world, and everyone else is living in it.” That our golfer is the center of his own solar system should not surprise any of us. Clearly, some professionals manage this better than others.

Some of these world-class athletes are mindful of their careers demanding so much time and attention. Therefore, they work hard at carving out significant time to prioritize their wives and their children.

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For those golfers who balance their family and career with a modicum of success, it becomes increasingly apparent that these men have built their identities around something other than their golf prowess.

Of course, this tendency to live as the center of reality is not restricted to PGA players. We are all guilty of this at some level. C. S. Lewis, as usual, nails it when he writes, “Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less.”

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Paul writes, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” (Philippians 2, ESV).

Though Jesus was the Son of God, he chose to suspend his prerogatives as God to become a man so that he could reconcile wayward sinners to the Father. That's the ultimate act of decentering.

His "death on a cross" was the eternally decreed punishment for our rebellion. He was, "the Lamb of God slain before the foundations of the world." A death infinitely indescribable. A death that includes but goes significantly beyond his physical death on a cross. Jesus was no mere martyr. Christ's death was judicial—he bore the wrath of God against sin.

Though this is the heart of the good news, there is more. Much more! Jesus is also the model around which we are to pattern our lives. The sequence is all important.

First, every person must place their faith in Jesus' atoning death and bodily resurrection. For this to happen, the Spirit of God must supernaturally cause that person to be born again. That is, the Spirit of God gives them a new nature.

Only then can anyone hope to re-center their lives around such an infinitely sublime life. Yet, living the decentered life is only possible by the Spirit of Christ. Fascinatingly, Jesus is both the person to emulate and the only power from which one can accomplish such an extraordinary life.

Though it is impossible for any disciple to perfectly emulate the life of Christ, his life is, nevertheless, the standard toward which we strive.

Prayer – Jesus! Intensify our desire to model our life after yours. Teach us to live the decentered life.

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Dennis Darville

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