



Links Players

What's At Stake?

For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23, NASB)

Sports, and golf in particular, are so dramatic. Who is the G.O.A.T. (Greatest of all time)? What about legendary status? Hall of fame? When Rory won the Masters, the announcers elevated his status to legendary for winning the career Grand Slam, joining Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus, and Tiger Woods.

They said, "These men will be remembered forever!" Really? Forever? That is a long time. I am sure the first Olympic winners in Greece in 776 BCE thought the same thing.

The Olympic games were held in honor of Zeus, the king of the Greek gods. How about the legendary Olympic winners in 1936 in Germany? You get my point. Being remembered forever is a long time, and yet the least in God's Kingdom will be remembered forever and will be with Jesus for eternity. The least and the greatest of all time will all be together.

The trajectory of Rory and Scottie and other Hall of Famers will certainly change who they are becoming now, but only one thing changes your life forever. Jesus said so, "You must be born again" (John 3:7, NASB), and "For God so loved ___your name here___ that He gave his only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB).

That is great news! But what about those who refuse God and reject His offer to be born again? This weighty choice results in eternal separation from God and an eternity of anguish. Please, Lord, help me reach them now.

This is a truth told us by God Himself. How do we handle this eternal dilemma? It overwhelms me to even think about this. Do we realize what is at stake and the consequences of poor choices?

A young man who gave up on his dream of becoming a professional golfer attends a local Links Fellowship. Some of his friends who party the night away and pursue the fleeting things of this world are headed the wrong way, just as he was a few years ago.

This young man was emotional when he said, "Do they even know what is at stake? How can I reach them with the eternal message of salvation?" Eternal glorification or eternal separation? Life or death? A starker contrast cannot be made.

A final story. I have a friend who attends another Links Fellowship who has volunteered to preach at a local assisted living facility every Sunday morning.

He is an evangelist at heart and knows what is at stake. I recently visited this facility and saw him conclude the service with a passionate and tearful call to repentance and faith.

He got down on one knee and pleaded with those who had not yet put their faith in the Cross of Jesus. He knows and loves a 92-year-old man who lives there who has yet to cross the line to eternal life, and he was in the audience that Sunday. "Now is the time. Don't wait. Life and death are at stake."

If we believe in Jesus, we should be willing to do anything to see one man or woman come to Christ Jesus. Jeff Cranford said these words to a packed sanctuary at Susan Hamilton's celebration of life service, "If you are born twice, you only die once. If you are born once, you will die twice."

Our eternal life is at stake.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we pray for all those who have not yet accepted your perfect gift. Invade their life and make yourself known.

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Randy Wolff

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