



Links Players

A Big Career Change

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ. (Philippians 3:7-8)

Cary Middlecoff was born in 1921, the son of a Memphis dentist and one who always planned to follow his father in that profession. He received his Degree in Dentistry in 1944, but with World War II in process, he enlisted in the U.S. Army.

Over the next two years, Dr. Middlecoff kept busy, reportedly filling 2,093 teeth. When he was discharged, he joined his father's practice, but he soon realized he'd seen enough teeth during the service to consider a career change.

Cary had always been a pretty good golfer, having won the Tennessee State Amateur Championship four straight years in the early 1940's. He decided to turn pro on a part-time basis while continuing to practice dentistry, but soon had enough success in golf to leave his first profession and join the PGA Tour.

During his playing career, Middlecoff won 39 PGA Tour tournaments, tying Tom Watson for 10th most in PGA Tour history. During the 1950s, he won 28 tour titles, more than any other golfer during that span. He captured three majors over his career and played on three winning Ryder Cup teams.

After ending his playing career, Cary became a golf commentator in the 1960's and 70's, employed at various times by all three major networks. Dr. Cary Middlecoff provides a great example of how a significant career change can be a very good move.

In the New Testament, we read about another man who made a dramatic career change. Saul of Tarsus had a threefold background. He was a Roman citizen, of Greek culture, and a Jew descended from the tribe of Benjamin.

Saul followed his father as a Pharisee and, in his late 20s, traveled to Jerusalem to study under the famous teacher Gamaliel, an esteemed member of the Sanhedrin. Around the same time, members of The Way (followers of Jesus) were growing in number, and Saul took it as his personal mission to persecute them.

But God had a different path in mind for Saul. After his dramatic encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, Saul's life shifted from opposing Jesus to advancing the gospel as the Apostle Paul.

The impact of Paul's career change is remarkable. He's credited with authoring thirteen books in the New Testament, and most scholars agree that he traveled more than 10,000 miles on his missionary journeys, continually putting his life at risk to proclaim Christ crucified boldly.

You may or may not be considering a career change, but remember, you don't need one to serve the Lord. No matter what you are doing or what stage of life you are in, you need to be obedient to his calling.

It reminds me of a great quote I heard years ago: "Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours are long, and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world!"

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us always to be open to serving you in whatever way you call us, bringing glory to your name and your Kingdom. Amen

John Bown

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