

“... my victory was secure on the cross ...”

I planned on writing about something else this month, but I will save it for May. Instead I will do a follow-up to the January tapa this year about professional golfers who are disciples of Christ, and openly profess their faith in Jesus. I will focus on Scottie Scheffler who won his second Masters tournament on Sunday. In the interviews this year I learned some new things about him and his caddie, Ted Scott. They do what all of us as disciples should do in our daily walk with Jesus.

As Scheffler consistently does in all his interviews, he openly talked about the importance of his faith in Jesus throughout the tournament. Sometimes the reporters initiated the conversation, asking him about his faith. Here is the link for full interview with the press following his victory on Sunday:

https://www.masters.com/en_US/watch/2024-04-14/17131416999726318/scottie_scheffler_sunday_interview_2024.html

Scheffler's wife, Meredith, is due to deliver their first child this month, hence the question from the one reporter about leaving the tournament if she went into labor. Earlier in the week he said if she did go into labor he would leave immediately to be with her no matter where he stood in the standings. I think all professional golfers faced with that possibility have said the same.

In the questions about his family, Scheffler said that playing golf now moves from the third priority in his life to number four. Two years ago he said Jesus was first in his life, Meredith is second, and golf third. Their first child moves golf to fourth. So it is for all disciples. Jesus is at the center of our whole life, not our families:

“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:37-38)

In marriage we promise to be faithful to our spouse until death. Marriage in this creation is not eternal. Marriage with Christ the bridegroom is eternal, and all life comes in that marriage.

The new thing I learned this year is that Scheffler's caddie, Ted Scott, is also a faithful disciple of Jesus. Scott, 50 years old (Scheffler is 27), is a veteran caddie. He worked with three other golfers for 21 years before connecting with Scheffler in 2022. They met at a Bible study for the golfers and caddies at one of the PGA tour events. When Ted Scott and golfer Bubba Watson mutually separated after 15 years in 2021, Scheffler asked Scott to be his caddie, explaining, “I really want to work with a Christian. That's how I try to live my life.”

Meredith was not at this year's tournament because of her due date this month. Scheffler had three of his close friends, all disciples, staying with him this year. On Sunday morning, as they were passing the time until his tee time mid-afternoon, Scheffler told his friends how much he hates losing in golf, and how he wishes he didn't want to win so badly. Here's how they responded:

My buddies told me this morning, you know, my victory was secure on the cross, and that's — that's a pretty special feeling. To know that I'm secure forever, and it doesn't matter, you know, whether I win this tournament or if I lose this tournament, you know, my identity is secure for forever.

Jesus' disciples abide in the Word – both in Scripture and in Jesus. They abide not just in their personal relationship with Jesus, but mutually with other disciples – Scheffler with his wife, and also with other golfers and caddies. In those relationships, they hold each other accountable to keep their eyes on Jesus.

Ted Scott had intended in 2021 to step away from caddying to spend more time teaching golf. When Scheffler asked him to caddy for him, Scott did not say yes until first checking with his family. He asked his family “. . . to pray upon it for a week. They came back and said to go caddie for Scottie.”

On Sunday morning, Scheffler had a brief opportunity to face time with Meredith. She asked how she could pray for him. The muscles in his neck were giving him a trouble on Sunday, so he asked her to pray for healing for his neck.

The Scheffler and Scott families practice another essential aspect of discipleship. They pray. The only way to abide in Jesus is to be in daily conversation with him. That is what prayer is all about – listening to Jesus and speaking to Him.