



Links Players

Happiness

I think it was Greg Norman who first said, “Happiness is a long walk with a putter.” Many golfers, professionals, and amateurs alike have subsequently repeated this truism. Ponder that fact for a moment. Golfers resonate with the wealth of information and emotion behind that sentence.

For instance, we instinctively know that Greg is not talking about walking around the office with a putter in hand. An effect like Linus with his blanket accompanies those walks too.

Without conscious effort, we know Greg is talking about that sensation that every golfer feels after hitting a four iron to twelve feet. I know he wishes he could’ve felt that in 1986. That missed four iron on the eighteenth at Augusta cost him yet another chance at the Masters.

To walk to the green with a putter in hand is to know a sense of accomplishment. Approaching a green with your putter twirling is, indeed, happiness. Even if this feeling is a fleeting moment of raw joy, you tasted it nevertheless.

We play this great game because if for only intermittent moments, we know real happiness. The game of golf played, watched, read about, and wrestled with has brought some intensely happy moments in our lives.

Perhaps it was your first hole-in-one. Maybe it was a string of birdies. Perhaps it was winning two and one in your club championship. Whatever it was, most golfers have enjoyed some delightful moments on the course, not to mention the many memories that subsequently follow.

Socrates once said, “Mankind is like a leaky bucket.” What he meant by that was that the moment we encounter happiness, it seems to leak out. That’s the truth and then some. C.S. Lewis called this fleeting sense of happiness “joy.”

What he meant by “joy” is significantly different from what it first appears. When Lewis discussed joy, he meant that all humans have a sense of longing, a yearning for more. C. S. Lewis borrowed a word from the German language to explain his idea of joy; it was the word “Sehnsucht.” Simply put, Sehnsucht is that moment that flashes in and out, creating inexplicable happiness while also leaving you longing for more.

Lewis captured this idea best when he wrote in *Mere Christianity*, “If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.”

This experience is, without a doubt, the human condition. We taste moments of genuine happiness only to end up back in the valley, waiting for another encounter with this elusive experience.

Volumes have been written on this alluring, teasing, and often misleading pursuit. Some argue that humans should make every effort to extinguish the desire for happiness. Others have resigned themselves to agnosticism on the matter. That is, they have thrown up their hands at any attempt to harness happiness.

Others have pursued happiness in all the wrong ways, ending up in despair. The biblical approach, however, is different—pursuing happiness with all one’s might by pursuing the King of Glory first. This pursuit allows him to flood your souls with a “joy inexpressible” (1 Peter 1:8).

This biblical joy does not suggest that life won’t have dark moments, nor does it suggest life won’t be filled with difficult seasons. But a life filled with Christ will produce joy now and a never-ending, ever-increasing joy in eternity.

Prayer- Jesus, fill us with the joy of your kingdom.

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Dennis Darville
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