



Links Players

INEXPRESSIBLE JOY

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory....(1 Peter 1:8, ESV)

"I don't have the words."
"I am speechless."
"I am at a loss for words!"
"I am not sure what to say."

If you have heard it once, you've heard it a million times. A player wins for the first time on the PGA Tour, and the television reporter asks the player to express what he is feeling. Invariably, the player is overcome with emotion and either cries or stammers and stutters to express himself.

There are, as expected, a few surprising exceptions. Justin Leonard's post-round speech after winning The Open Championship in 1997 at Royal Troon was heartfelt and articulate. If nothing else, he was prepared.

Depending on which player attempts to capture their post-championship emotions in words, you might conclude the player has not given it much thought. Maybe, just maybe, he doesn't have a highly developed vocabulary. Or many of these men are simply overwrought with emotion. Perhaps, he simply isn't gifted at public speaking.

It would be unfair to expect all of these great tour players to have the gift of gab. Certainly, our expectation is unjustified to demand that a player wax poetic on the profundity of winning at championship golf, especially in the moments right after holing the final putt.

These post-round moments are always intriguing. When a golfer achieves his or her lifelong dream of winning on the PGA or LPGA Tour, we can hardly expect them to wordsmith twenty years of dreams in a soundbite.

Even if players could speak eloquently and poignantly about their accomplishments in the few moments allotted, something inexpressible remains that outstrips words.

Likewise, when Peter begins to write about the joy of knowing Christ Jesus, his pen cannot keep up with his thoughts and feelings. He simply cannot express in words all that he has received in knowing his Savior.

When Peter says he has, "inexpressible joy," he is saying, at a minimum, that this joy transcends anyone's ability to capture it in words. At least two reasons exist for this awe. On the one hand, we cannot capture all our feelings in words; on the other hand, the joy we've encountered in knowing Christ Jesus infinitely outstrips anyone's ability to grasp it.

The former says something about our inabilities. The latter says something about the joy that exists between the members of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

One of the more fascinating verses in all of Scripture is found in John 17:13, the High Priestly Prayer. As Jesus prepares for Calvary, he gives himself to the Father in prayer.

Among his many petitions, Jesus announces one of his goals for his followers. He prays, "that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." This bliss is neither abstract joy nor merely human joy. Jesus desires that his disciples experience "his joy."

His joy is "joy inexpressible." It is inexpressible, not only because we are finite, fallible, fallen, incapable of giving inadequate expression to this joy. But it's inexpressible because this joy, his joy, will exceed our grasp for all eternity.

Prayer- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, take us deeper and deeper into the "joy of the Lord."

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Dennis Darville

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