



# Links Players

## Advent Fridays, 2023 - A Supreme Joy

*Taste and see that the LORD is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in Him! (Psalm 34:8)*

There are very few joys that compare with making a hole-in-one. No doubt you have either experienced or been with another player when the ball rolls into the cup for a one. It's electric! High Fives are flying! Hugs are abundant! Heck, even your opponent is grinning like a "mule eat'in briars."

As we prepare for Christmas, we would do well to remember that we serve the festive God of all joys. Contrary to a widely accepted caricature, "God is not a cosmic killjoy. In fact, he is the Cosmic Merrymaker!"

He is the one who invented taste buds and laughter; music and dancing were His ideas. In truth, everything good that we enjoy – from sports to sunsets- ultimately finds its origin in the mind of God.

Far from being opposed to our joy, God is the source of our joy. He is not only the source of the joy we derive from sports and sunsets. He, himself, is humanity's supreme joy.

In other words, God is the one joy that makes every other joy complete. Apart from a living and loving relationship with God, we cannot truly or fully enjoy his world.

Why? For the same reason, we find sleep less restful or food less satisfying when we have relationship troubles with our significant other or a close friend: relational estrangement diminishes creational enjoyment.

Only when we are in the right relationship with Him can we find proper satisfaction in our relationships with each other and the world. Loving and being loved by God makes everything better: food tastes better, music sounds better, work is more fulfilling, etc.

Everything is better because we are no longer looking to food, success, or our spouse to do what only God can do for us in Christ: make us whole and complete, give us an objective identity and purpose, forgive us our sins, and fill us with life.

Everything in life takes its proper place and purpose when we realize that God is the center around which everything else is intended to orbit. Indeed, if we place anything other than God at the center of our lives, we will sabotage our own joy.

C. S. Lewis writes, "God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."

In other words, he invites us to make him our deepest joy. In doing so, we discover our highest good and superlative joy—life with God. Remember, the joys we experience in this life are small samplings of an infinite and eternal joy in the life to come.

**Prayer: Lord, strengthen our lives with joy!**

### READING

Luke 2:10; Ecclesiastes 2:24-26; Psalm 16:11

1. Remember and discuss a moment when you experienced a rare joy in golf.

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2. According to Ecclesiastes 2: 24-26, how does one find "real joy?" Where does Solomon place the emphasis on finding and knowing joy?

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3. This Christmas, how might I/we at Links spread the "joy of the Lord" to others?

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