



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Ultimate Joy of Praise

Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. (Psalm 103:1-2)

As Alexander Victor Schauffele's putt rolled in for a birdie on the 18th hole to win the PGA Championship, shooting the lowest recorded score in a major tournament, I leaped out of my chair, fists in the air and yelled, "Yes!"

Replays of that putt from different angles showed fans in the grandstand and surrounding the green with raised arms, cheering in appreciation for what they witnessed.

Competing in league play recently, my opponent chipped in from 75 yards for a birdie, and I immediately dropped my club and started to applaud.

My teammate ran over and gave him a high five. Even the foursome on the tee box next to the green began to cheer. Someone yelled, "U da Man," and another even bowed down as if to worship the guy.

On the drive home, I thought about the elation I felt at someone else's achievement. Then I wondered why my praise for God doesn't come close to the celebration level we experienced on the course.

In Psalm 103, the coordination of 'praise the Lord' and 'don't forget his benefits' expresses a profound truth. Only those who praise do not forget. Forgetting God and turning away from God begins when praise has been silenced.

This is part of why praise is so fundamental in every worship service. Have you ever wondered why God wants to be praised? Does He have ego needs for people to sit around and tell Him how great He is? Not at all.

C. S. Lewis writes, "There's something about life and human nature that when you see something that's praiseworthy or admirable, our instinct is to express adoration." In other words, our experience is incomplete until we're able to give voice to the wonder in our hearts.

That's why people went berserk when Xander's ball rolled into the cup or when my opponent chipped in. When you see someone do amazing things, it's just an inevitable response.

You want to praise; you want to applaud. When we can't do that, when that gets short-circuited, our experience is lessened.

Take it to another level. When I first met my wife I was filled with admiration for her beauty. Who did I want to express that admiration to? The correct answer would be, "Her."

When it's a person, you want to express praise not just generally, but you want to express it to that person. If that person receives the praise and delights in it, then that means you're in a relationship, and there is this reciprocal giving and receiving of joy together.

Lewis would say that when a human being encounters God... an all-wise, infinitely powerful, eternal, utterly holy, all-loving, completely merciful, inexhaustibly patient, ceaselessly creative, beautiful, joy-filled God... our experience of Him will never be complete unless we can express the praise and the wonder and the adoration of our heart, and not just express it, but express it directly to Him.

When we know that He receives and delights in our praise, then we know we're in a relationship with Him of reciprocal joy, giving and receiving delight.

Prayer: Lord, I want to ascribe to You the glory due Your name and worship You in the splendor of Your holiness.

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Bill Crawford

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