



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

The Joy of Twelve

The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lord. (Revelation 21:14, NLT).

What do Rory McIlroy, Tommy Fleetwood, Justin Rose, and Jon Rahm all have in common?

They all LOST on Sunday at the Ryder Cup. They failed. On the biggest stage of golf, they lost their singles matches. They should have been weeping and explaining to the gathered press what went wrong.

But no, Rory said he would party like there was no tomorrow. The champagne was flowing.

Why? His team of twelve won.

And even on the American 'losing' side, there seemed to be more joy and love in losing as a team of twelve than in winning alone.

Scottie Scheffler was in tears, but not because his team lost. And not tears of joy at beating McIlroy on Sunday. It was tears of love that came from being one of the beloved 'twelve.' The tears of the team room. Oh, to be a bug on that wall.

Golf is normally a one-man show. You lose or win on your own. Winning is wonderful, but also empty without friends and family to share the joy.

It shows up in the language of modern-day professional golfers. They talk about their 'team.' They all seem to have a 'team' of about 12 people helping them. Physio. Swing coach. Mental coach. Chef. Caddie. Manager. Gofer. Driver. Wife. Best friend from high school, even if he is useless. And on and on.

This power of twelve all started with the Bible. You know all about the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses saw the value of twelve. "I chose twelve scouts, one from each of your tribes." (Deut. 1:23 NLT).

Jesus prayed all night and "at daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles." (Luke 6:13, NLT).

About three years later, the Upper Room was the opening act for the massive loss and pain of Friday's Crucifixion. Jesus wanted to be with his beloved twelve on the night before the Cross. The conversation in the "team room" is found in John 13-17.

My experience is that twelve is the perfect number for real-life change. Many years ago, I started a monthly gathering for lawyers. My original hope for thirty lawyers turned into twelve, and it was perfect. “Do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer.” (Titus 3:13).

We met for over two years, and twelve was the ideal number. It allows smaller groups of two to four to naturally bond. It allows room for older men to mentor younger men.

The genius of twelve is found in our modern jury system. Our founding fathers agreed that twelve was a good number for our peers to judge us. Eleven was not enough.

And just as twelve is perfect, eleven is perhaps the saddest word in the Bible, reminding us that one of the twelve left the Upper Room, out into a dark night of despair.

All alone, Judas died with his thirty pieces of silver. He and the ‘rich young ruler’ had one thing in common- they didn’t want to be one of the twelve. The money was too shiny for them.

Twelve is a perfect number for a Links Players meeting in your golf club locker room or bar. Don’t be discouraged if your group has plateaued at twelve golfers. Jesus says, “Perfect.”

PRAYER: Almighty God, thank you for the joys of a team that protects us from the sorrows of losing.

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Tim Philpot

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