

Unspeakable

Occurs Three Times in the KJV Bible:

2Co 9:15 Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

2Co 12:4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

1Pe 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Unspeakable gift... Unspeakable words... Unspeakable joy. Although it is translated as the same word in all three instances, each is a different word in Greek.

FIRST

2Co 9:15 Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance G411

not expounded in full, that is, *indescribable*: - unspeakable.

Paul has just talked to them about their giving of offerings. He reminds them that “he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” and that “God loveth a cheerful giver.” He commends them for their “liberal distribution.” As he was expounding on their giving, he burst forth with praise for God’s indescribable gift, which has not been fully expounded.

SECOND

2Co 12:4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance G731

unsaid, that is, (by implication) *inexpressible*: - unspeakable.

Having been stoned in Lystra (Acts 14:19, 20) and left for dead, Paul was raised from the dead.

What he heard in that short time of death, he described as “not lawful for a man to utter.” In other words, he said it was better or needful to be left unsaid and thus, by implication, was inexpressible.

THIRD

1Pe 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance G412

not spoken out, that is, (by implication) **unutterable**: - unspeakable.

In this epistle, Peter addresses saints who, because of persecution, were as “strangers scattered throughout.” In v. 6, the paradox of gladness and sadness being present simultaneously is seen. Then, in verse 7, their necessary trial of faith is presented as precious and productive. The furnace of affliction removes the impurities and refines the gold. Likewise, through sorrow and trial, the quality of faith increases. When you are not on the mountain top but rather going through the valley, when nights are longer than days, and when songs are more silent than sung, these are times when joy is not spoken out. It is unutterable or unspeakable. Peter understands that circumstances do not determine your relationship with God. Even in times when it seems impossible to get the words out of your mouth, you rejoice internally because this joy, though not spoken out, is still full of glory!

Joy unspeakable is most often thought of as exuberant singing, shouting, dancing, running, and the like. It is usually thought of only as uncontrollable and uncontrollable expressions of delight. Although joy is very often expressed by such expression and demonstration, Peter is truly speaking of something very different and deep here.

RWT