

## **GOD IS HAPPY — HE IS FULL OF JOY AND THOROUGHLY BLESSED**

God the Father is happy — see 1 Timothy 1:11 and 6:15 (blessed means happy in the richest way)

Jesus the Son is happy — John 15:11 and 17:13

The Holy Spirit is happy — 1 Thess. 1:6

Isn't God grieved about evil and sickness and suffering? Yes, he is — but all that evil was poured out onto Jesus on the cross. It was all dealt with — for evil past present and future — in one go on the cross on the first Good Friday. Read Hebrews 9:24-28 and 10:11-13 to be assured of this.

Christ endured this suffering for the joy set before him – as explained in Hebrews 12:2.

One of the reasons that God is sad and angry about evil, sin, sickness, suffering and Satan, is that all these things seek to attack and undermine our true joy in Christ.

### **What makes God happy?**

- Make a list of what makes God happy based on these texts: Psalm 45:7; Psalm 72:17; Psalm 104:31; Isaiah 42:1; Jeremiah 9:24; Zephaniah 3:17; Matthew 3:17, 17:5; Luke 10:21, 12:32; 1 Cor. 1:21, 13:6; Galatians 1:15-16; Colossians 1:19; Ephesians 1:4-10
- A lot of religious art shows Jesus with his eyes cast down, looking miserable. They might be wonderful examples of an artist's work — but are they a truthful representation of Christ? Christ was crucified over the space of a few hours, and his physical body was separated from his spirit (i.e. dead) for three nights. The rest of eternity Jesus exists in joyful victory!

### **Are we to know God's joy ourselves, or just to look at it from afar?**

- Re-read John 15:11 and 17:13. What does this tell us?
- Read Luke 2:10, 6:23, 24:41; John 16:24; Acts 8:8, 16:34; Romans 12:12, 14:17, 15:13; 2 Cor. 1:24, 8:2; 1 Thess. 1:6; Philippians 4:4; James 1:2; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Jude 1:24. This is a small selection. Are we truly and fully convinced that God wants us to be happy in the Lord?
- "We have, through the goodness of the Lord, been permitted to enter upon another year—and the minds of many among us will no doubt be occupied with plans for the future, and the various fears of our work and service for the Lord. If our lives are spared we shall be engaged in those: the welfare of our families; the prosperity of our business; our work and service for Christ; [these] may be considered the most important matters to be attended to; but according to my judgement the most important point to be attended to is this: above all things see to it that your souls are happy in the Lord. Other things may press upon you, the Lord's work may even have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme and paramount importance that you should seek above all things to have your souls truly happy in God Himself! Day by day seek to make this the most important business of your life. This has been my firm and settled condition for the last five and thirty years. For the first four years after my conversion I knew not its vast importance, but now after much experience I specially commend this point to the notice of my younger brethren and sisters in Christ: the secret of all true effectual service is joy in God, having experimental acquaintance and fellowship with God Himself." George Mueller (1805-1898). Discuss.

### **Life Explored course**

- Pray about who we could invite along to be on our Connect Group's table. Let's share the joy.

Andrew Ryland