

JOYFUL

isn't that just like God?

God is happy when
He thinks about me

FOCUS:

Our culture routinely depicts God as serious, stoic and distant. Even Jesus is characterized as anything but happy. Surprising to some, the scripture reveals that Jesus and Father God are joyful.



Relevant Verses (pick one or two)

Hebrews 1:9 - You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

Isaiah 62:5(b) - as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

Luke 15:24 - For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

Luke 15:32 - But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

Zephaniah 3:17 -
The Lord your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.
He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing."

John 15:11 - I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

John 17:13 - "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

NOTE: Paul talks about his own personal joy, something that he most likely got from God. He refers to "my joy" indicating that joy was something he personally experienced from God.

Hebrews 1:9 - You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

Hebrews 1:9

Bible Stories (pick one)

1. PRODIGAL SON - Luke 15:11-32

Key Verse: But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” (Luke 15:32)

Story Take-Away: The father in the parable throws a party for his son who has returned. Jesus taught this parable to show us what God is like. God celebrates us. Some people expect the father in the parable (and God in our lives) to say, “It’s about time you came home.” God is not condescending. He celebrates our return.

2. NEHEMIAH - Nehemiah 8:4-12

Key Verse: Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10)

Story Take-Away: When Ezra read from the Bible, the people understood how far they had strayed from the Lord. They were sad and crying. Nehemiah explained to the people that they need to be happy about what they were learning in the Bible and not sad about how far they had strayed. The “joy of the Lord” comes from God and Nehemiah tells the people that they need God’s joy.

3. PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN - Luke 15:8-10

Key Verse: In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:10)

Story Take-Away: Heaven rejoices when someone accepts Jesus. There is celebration going on amongst the angels and God when a sinner repents.

Schuman Skit

Schuman comes in. The teacher says, “Hi Schuman. What have you been doing?” Schuman replies, “Oh, I’ve been practicing praying. See...” Schuman shows the Director his new prayer face (a frown). “I’ve been thinking; I should be more like God. He’s serious, all business...like Mrs. Winfrey my English teacher. Not very happy. Not very happy with me I’m sure. Yeah, I need to be like Him.” (Frowns.) The teacher explains that the Bible doesn’t say that about God at all. “In fact, Schuman, the Bible says that God celebrates over us. That’s what God is like.” The teacher shares today’s Bible story.

Games

1. 2 Headed Hoopster

You will need 2 sets of XXL sweat suits and 2 hula hoops.

Select four players, two teams of two. Have two players get into the same sweatsuit. Let them decide how they want to get into the suits. (Teams should be of the same gender.)

Give each team a hula hoop.

Begin the music, and see how many times they can rotate the hoop around their bodies.

2. Makeover Blitz

You will need: canned whipped cream, confetti, spaghetti noodles, cookies, miscellaneous fruits and veggies.

Select two workers to come to the front and sit in two chairs facing the crowd.

Select four players, and assign two players to each worker.

Instruct the players to apply the whipped cream to their worker, and then give him/her a makeover using the rest of the props.

Let the audience select the best makeover by clapping for each worker. Loudest applause wins.

3. Fly on the Wall

Select six players, three for each team.

Place the 2 stools against the wall, and have the two smallest players on each team stand on the stools with their backs against the wall.

Give the other two players on each team a roll of duct tape and have them begin to tape the players on the stools to the wall. When the top part of the player's body is taped to the wall, remove the stool and continue to tape the rest of the body.

Continue on with your other activities, and see which player stays taped to the wall the longest.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Do you think God is happy? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Jesus was happy? Do you think Jesus smiled? Why or why not? Do you think Jesus laughed? Why or why not?
3. Do you think Christians are happy? Should they be happy? Why or why not? Do you think it is ok to be happy?
4. Are your friends happy? Are you happy?

Prayer With the Kids

Lord, help the kids to understand that You are a happy God and that You rejoice over them because they are Your children.

Notes: