

The Laughter of God

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God is a laughing God. I'm convinced of it! Our Father's laughter fills the universe—a laugh of exuberance, of triumphant joy, of sheer pleasure in the works of his hands. It is the laugh of a Creator who delights in his creation more than we can possibly comprehend, and who wants us to share in his delight.

God weeps over sin. He is enraged over injustice. He feels deeply our grief and suffering. God knows the full scope of emotion in a way only he can. He is eternal, and tears and joy dwell together in his heart. But we focus so much on the lostness of this world that I wonder whether we at all understand and embrace the implications of redemption. Laughter—God's laughter—reigned in the beginning; in the end, it will swallow up all sorrow and darkness. And mark this: In these times between, God is still the Laughing God.

Every time a baby's face creases in a smile that fills our own heart with laughter and love, somewhere out of sight but very, very close at hand, our Father is laughing, too—tenderly, joyously. He simply loves to laugh. It is what he is about. And all the grim realities of life in this fallen world ultimately will not win out over the laughter of God.

The first sentence of the Bible declares, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

God created.

What was that like for him? Can you imagine what lay in his heart at that first moment of creation? Can you picture his thrill?

When the character of God spilled out of the realm of spirit in one great, joyous, irrepressible rush of inventiveness to express itself in things that can be seen, touched, heard, felt, tasted—can you hear behind it all the wild, passionate, exuberant laughter of the Creator?

"Light—BE!" says God. And it is. Out of the darkness, brilliance—there at his command. "Yes!" God says. "YES! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I approve! It is good, good indeed!" And in that moment, the very light waves become the joy dance of the King.

What in the heart of God was released through the act of creation? What eternal thoughts and emotions burst forth in powerful, purposeful laughter from the bosom of the Almighty into time's domain, materializing into atoms and galaxies, thunderstorms and fireflies, orchids and ostriches, oceans and whales and the toy boats of children?

Only one Person truly knows. But he has left us myriad clues, scattered throughout our everyday existence like parables waiting to be heard.

And there are the Scriptures, filled with insights that shine forth in unexpected places. The thirty-eighth chapter of the book of Job, for instance, hints at the rapture that first formed and then filled the universe.

“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth,” God demands of Job, “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” Certainly the question suggests Job’s finiteness. But look again. There’s more to see here than one man’s limitations. The Scripture pulls back a veil to give us a glimpse, however faint, of unfettered celebration. The morning stars sing. The angels shout in ecstasies of praise. From top to bottom, from expanse to expanse, creation rings with jubilation.

Yet one sound pervades and dominates all others. Swelling above every other sonority, clear, glorious, thunderous, exultant, can you not hear the laughter of the Almighty?

Listen! He speaks again: “Suns, planets, moons, meteors, nebulae, comets—BE!”

BOOM!—and his Word explodes through the void, dancing for gladness, scattering galaxies like silver dust across the vast, empty reaches. “Ha, ha, ha!” roars the Father. “YES! It is good. Yes, it is good indeed!”

Still today, even in this fallen world, can you not detect the profound, subtle, relentless undercurrent of his laughter, persisting in the face of sin and suffering, permeating the fabric of creation? For God has never stopped laughing. Every sunset is ablaze with his smile, every thunder clap throbs with his untamed, boisterous mirth. He is the Too-Big God, and his laughter is too big to be kept silent. Listen for it. Look for it. Taste it, smell it, feel it. For it surrounds you, and is ready to break through into your humble life at any moment if you will let it.

Yes, God’s laughter resounded through the act of creation—for the Lord is the Creator, and he delights with childlike abandon in the act of creating. When he made the universe, it wasn’t with a sober face—it was with a full-hearted, planet-rocking *YAHOO!*

But here is a mystery: God’s richest, most jubilant laughter is reserved for *you*. For you are his masterpiece, the crown jewel of his efforts. Listen to what the Bible says about *you*:

“[You] are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. . .” (Eph. 2:10)

“Behold what manner of love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the sons of God!” (1 John 3:1)

“Whom he foreknew (that’s you!), he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son (wow!), that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he predestinated, he also called; and whom he called, he also justified; and whom he justified, he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? . . .” (Rom. 8:29–31)

Do you realize how much God is for you? Are you aware that the King of Creation is head-over-heels in love with you? Do you know how much pleasure you give him? Can you begin to conceive of the honor he bestows upon you?

Son of God, daughter of the Most High—have you any idea who you really are?

Do you realize that the One whose command sends the fiery suns spinning through space; who holds the universe in the palm of his hand like a mote of dust; who descends into the remotest cracks of the atoms and there, in the infinite smallness, proclaims with undiminished identity and authority, “I AM!”—do you realize that this God dances over you with joy and rejoices over you with singing? Can you grasp that you are his child, begotten of his seed, bearing his spiritual genetic code—and when he looks at you, he beams with pride and sheer delight?

“Mine!” God says of you with laughter. “Child, you are mine!”

Imagine!

His . . . because he wants you.

Loved . . . just because you’re you.

Cherished . . . simply because you walk this green earth. For all your failures, all your sins, all your struggles, no one can make your Father smile like you can.

You are more than you ever dreamed of. Dare to believe it, for it is written all over the Bible. God has ascribed you incredible value, astonishing dignity, and given you an inheritance in Christ Jesus that surpasses your wildest dreams. One day you will see, truly see. One day we all will see, face to face. Our doubts will vanish. Our questions will find their resolution when, in one single and enduring burst of revelation, Jesus himself becomes all the answer we’ve ever sought. And our laughter will find its completeness as it joins with his for time beyond measure.

For now, though, child of God, dare to think more highly of yourself than ever before. Dare to think better about your significance than your circumstances, life experiences, and this world system’s warping effect have led you to believe. Be kind to yourself, for your Heavenly Father is. And dare to laugh with wonder and gladness at this world of living color that bears the impress of a generous, laughing, loving Creator. For he is indeed your Father—and he wants to draw very close to you, to open your eyes to the manifold expressions of his creativity, and to share with you the joy he takes in them.

All of them.

Especially you.