

Laughter in Heaven

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[0 : 00] Well, 120 years from today, you and me and everyone else who has believed in Jesus Christ are going to be together again in heaven.

! And heaven is a world of joy. We saw last time it's a world without pain or crying or tears or mourning. It's a world where everyone loves each other perfectly.

It's called a banquet. It's called a feast. It's called a wedding party. So, let's go forward. 120 years in the future, we'll say.

And we're up there. And all of our favorite people are up there. And no one is sad at all. There's no hurt feelings.

There's no fear. There's no depression. There's no worries. There's no worries about tomorrow. There's no worries about tomorrow's test. There's no worries about the future at all.

[1 : 07] Actually, the future is looking quite bright for us. Every single one of us. But here we are. Right where we want to be.

Right with the people that we want to be with. And so let's just think about that. We're all sitting down together. Sitting down to eat.

And you and me. And we'll just say that this is a special get-together. It's the Grace Fellowship alumni get-together.

There. And Ann Nietrauer is there. Gladys Wolfgang is there. And Audrey Leydig is there. And some of you are saying, I don't even know who those people are.

But they're Grace Fellowship graduates. They've gone on. They've been there a lot longer than some of our recent graduates. And so there we are.

[2 : 07] All of us. Pastor Bob and Letty are there. And all the rest. And we've all made it. And we're all sitting at the long table together. So you picture it.

Have it in your mind. Now, what I want you to do is listen. Listen. What do you hear? I think you hear talking.

A lot of talking. Animated talking. Maybe at one end they're singing. But what else do you hear? Maybe you're afraid to even think it or say it.

Maybe it doesn't seem quite spiritual to say. But up and down the table, there's laughing. Loud, joyful, hysterical, holy laughing.

And maybe, just in this case, there are a few tears. But not tears of sadness. Tears of joy. Because we've made it.

[3 : 09] Can't believe it. Someone once said, If you're not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there. And it wasn't Mark Twain that said that.

It wasn't someone like that. It was Martin Luther. So, is heaven a world of laughter, Or a world with laughter, Or a world without laughter? Without joy.

Without things that are funny, And just so wonderful. Well, I want to give you a few thoughts To think about as, To just begin.

And then I want to turn to what the Bible says. So here's just a few passing thoughts To get us warmed up about This whole idea of humor, And laughter, And joy. Just to warm us up.

Well, first of all, A quote from John Wesley. He said, Sour godliness is the devil's religion. Sour godliness Is the devil's religion.

[4 : 06] So is heaven going to be a dour, Serious, Oh so serious place, Where all the humor Has been ringed out of us By our sanctification, And now we're these Purely solemn creatures.

Well, no doubt, The evil humor, And the evil joking, And the dirty jokes, All that's going to be ringed out of us at last. But will all laughter and humor Be gone?

Well, I think what John Wesley is saying Is that kind of religion, For all of its appearance of godliness, Is the devil's religion. Some more thoughts.

Some of God's most useful servants Have had wonderful senses of humor. Have loved to laugh. Have loved to make people laugh.

Jim Elliot. Serious. Jim Elliot. Committed. Jim Elliot. He died for Jesus on a beach In the Amazon. [5 : 17] And he said this, God has blessed me With a queer twist That makes me laugh at almost anything. Godliness And laughter.

They didn't seem opposites in his case. Spurgeon once wrote, It always makes me laugh When someone calls me a sour Puritan Because, you know, There's nobody with a quicker eye for fun And with a deeper vein of mirth than I have.

Again, godliness And usefulness And joyful laughter And humor Didn't seem to be opposites In Spurgeon's case. Dwight Moody Loved to get together After his evangelistic services And sit around with his friends And tell jokes And one time a lady asked him How can you be so How can you laugh So soon after dealing So seriously with people's souls?

And he said, If I didn't I'd have a nervous breakdown. Now, it is a very solemn And serious thing to preach.

It draws every man A man's nervous energy. It's something powerful. And yet, at the same time We weren't meant to be Strung that tightly all the time.

[6 : 34] He knew that. And so, let's just think some more. Where did laughter and humor And finding things funny And wonderful originate?

Well, it depends on What we think of it. Is it evil? Is it evil? Is it sinful? Well, the Bible says The evil joking is sinful. It says dirty jokes are bad.

But that's just to say That some jokes are not that way. Paul didn't say all joking. He said dirty joking Or dirty laughing. That is evil. And then there's some that isn't. And so, like so many things Sin has taken what was natively And naturally good And twisted it.

But if we think that It is a good gift from God Then, and I think we have to say that Then laughter and joy like that Came from God. Because what does James say? Every good and perfect gift Comes from the Father.

It's very doubtful That if God didn't have Some kind of sense of humor Then we as his image bearers Wouldn't. Or would. Because it's a part of our faculties It's a part of our wills And our emotions And our imaginations And so, since We experience joy And sadness And all the rest We do that as image bearers.

[7 : 53] Now, the Bible himself The Bible itself says That God laughs. Psalm 2 Is just one of those passages The one enthroned laughs. Now, of course, Psalm 2 We see two of God's emotions Happening at the same time.

And sometimes that is the way It happens. And if we have this emotional capacity Certainly we want to think That God even has a greater Emotional capacity. And so we see two of God's emotions As he looks at the kings of the earth And the nations They're taking their stand They're plotting They're saying Let's throw off his fetters And one of his emotions Or one of his reactions Is laughter Is this amusement At the whole operation He's amused At this inane futility That people have done In everything they're doing It's ridiculous It's ridiculous And so at the Tower of Babel We said We're going to build this tower Up to heaven And God must have been thinking I don't think they know How high they're going to have to go It's ridiculous So at the same time And not contradictory to his anger

There's this amusement Laughter It's silly Because of how futile This effort is So Can I tell you something I've been married for 13 years And For 13 years My wife has had it out for me And whenever she thinks I'm not looking When I'm sweetly minding My own business Which I do all the time She As if I'm walking In the bedroom And walking by Doing something And if I'm not paying attention You know what she tries to do She tries to sling me And throw me into the bed And push me down And Wives Do you do that to your husbands?

I don't know But You know Alas For 13 years She Has been the one Who's gone crashing Into the bed Because I am stronger And I am quicker And I am smarter And And I am going to pay for that And And the best part is When she gives the frustrated You know She is foiled again Now I am going to turn I am going to get old Before she does And so my comeuppance Is I am sure coming Now God sees The futility Of man's rebellion And laughs Because the rebellion Of man It scares us That is true It scares us But it doesn't scare God It scares us Because we're in the middle of it And it is so dangerous To us But We don't Properly appreciate

Just how far God is above The plans And the plots And the schemes Of man In the Lord of the Rings The hobbits In the Old Forest They meet A character A very strange character Named Tom Bombadil And he is the only character In the whole All the books The whole book Who doesn't have Any fear about the ring At all The hobbits Are afraid Frodo is afraid When he finds out What it is He says Let's throw it in the fire Gandalf is afraid When it's offered to him Galadriel is afraid Of it The elf queen Is afraid Sauron is afraid When he thinks Someone else Might have found it And is going to Begin to use it But Tom Bombadil He takes the ring And uses it As a prop For a magic trick Everyone else Is afraid But the one Enthroned in heaven Laughs Now those are just Some warm up thoughts

[12 : 05] But what I'm trying To say today Is that heaven Is going to be A place filled With laughter And so when you Think of heaven You should think Of joyous Laughter So where's my proof Well if you turn In your Bibles To Luke chapter 6 Luke chapter 6 And look at verse 20 And we're going to read Verses 20 through 23 And this is sort of Like Luke's version Of the Beatitudes And you'll notice They're kind of similar But they're kind of Different than Matthew's version Luke chapter 6 Verse 20 Looking at his disciples He said Blessed are you Who are poor For yours is the Kingdom of God Blessed are you Who hunger now For you will be Satisfied Blessed are you

Who weep now For you will Laugh Blessed are you When men hate you When they exclude you And insult you And reject you Your name is evil Because of the son of man Rejoice in that day And leave for joy Because great is your Reward in heaven For that is how Their fathers treated The prophets So did you catch Verse 21 Blessed are you Who weep now For you will Laugh You will laugh Now when will we laugh Well when we receive The kingdom of God When we're satisfied When we're done weeping That's when we're Going to laugh And where is all of that Going to happen Where is the place Where that's going to be The place where you Get to laugh Well it's heaven Heaven is where We're satisfied Heaven is the place Where God's rule Is perfectly realized His will is done And it's also A place of laughter Jesus says

You will laugh And then later he says Rejoice in that day And leap for joy Because great is your Reward in heaven Great is your Reward in heaven You will laugh Laughter isn't some Sort of unholy Relic from the fall Laughter is God's Reward to the Righteous It's the reward For those who Weep and mourn Now See God won't Wipe away all Of our tears Now in this day But one day He will And see it's not That he just Will wipe away Our tears He will fill Our hearts with joy And our mouths With laughter And that's why Someone said Joy is the Serious business Of heaven It's the most Important thing We will work And we will worship And we will serve And we will love And the whole time We will be Laughing and

Enjoying ourselves We will laugh We will laugh That we're there We will laugh That we're there And that's as Ridiculous as anything Is brothers and Sisters That we should be There That we This such wonderful Good thing has Happened to us This is for me That's We're going to say That is crazy It's crazy good Crazy glorious God is so good And our laughter Will echo down For all of eternity To do the glory Of God That he has been So kind to us Again listen to Psalm 126 When the Lord Brought back The captives To Zion We were like Men who dreamed Our mouths Were filled With laughter And our tongues With songs of joy Then it was said Among the nations The Lord has done Great things for them The Lord has done Great things for us And we are filled With joy Now if Psalm 126 Could be written

In those words About our mouths Being filled With laughter And our tongues With songs of joy If God filled The mouths Of the exiles Who are coming back Who get to go home From Babylon Think of the laughter That we are going to have When we come home To heaven Because we weren't In Babylon We were here In this earth In this world Of sin and death And now Here we are in life We're home at last And you will be there And I will be there And Jesus will be there And the great family reunion Will happen And all of God's children Will be home For the holidays And the wonderful thing is Is school's out Forever And the holidays Is all there is And so Now you are weeping But then you will laugh Now you are mourning Mourning for sin Mourning for sin In the world Jesus says Blessed are you Who weep

[17 : 09] For you will laugh And you are discouraged And there may be Precious little To laugh about Now It doesn't say You will laugh here And Jesus didn't say It's going to get All better here But he did say You will laugh Your joy will Overflow And so keep swimming Brothers and sisters Keep swimming brother Keep swimming sister We're closer to that Golden shore Than we were Last month Last week And now Just let me draw this To an end One of Satan's Great lies Is that

God Is a killjoy That he is Joyless And humorless That he is This holy Majestic Pure Tyrant Satan says That you can't Be with God And be happy At the same time And so If that's your choice Then you better Just choose To be happy But you know There is Just think about it There is someone In the Bible Who is never shown Having a good time He's never seen To be happy He's never laughs He's always angry He's always afraid He's always miserable He's always furious Who is that person?

It's the devil The devil is the sour one Sin didn't bring him Any joy It robbed him forever Of all of his joy And what did God do To rescue him And all of the people And all the angels That followed him He didn't do anything Nothing But not so You Not so you He sent his own Beloved son To be your savior To be your righteousness And your holiness And your wisdom To be everything you need And so when you have Jesus You have the complete package You have the fullness Of God in the flesh You have everything you need For life and godliness You have everything for heaven And you have everything In Jesus To be happy And you can have him But you have to leave Your futile attempts Of joy without him behind Futile attempts

That aren't working They're not working I know they're not working I've been there So how many dead comedians Does it take to tell us That the laughter Of this world It doesn't work And more than that It's nothing but a very sad And small bandaid On a hideous wound Jesus is the savior He can make you whole And he can make you happy Let's pray Heavenly Father We do thank you That we are going To that world And all of your people Will be there Because you have committed Yourself to that end That we all Should be together We shall be like Jesus And we shall rejoice In that world We shall laugh And sing And praise you And work And we will do All these things To your glory And your honor And you will delight In your people And we will delight

In you We thank you For this glorious Inheritance That is ours In Jesus Christ Give us Courage then To keep Swimming Give us courage To keep advancing Give us courage To keep facing Our sorrows To weep now So that we might Rejoice later Continue to do us Good Father We love you Help us to love you And to obey you More and more Out of the happy hearts That have found fullness And overflowing grace In Jesus Christ We ask this in his name Amen Amen