

# Luke Chapter 10 v 17 - 25

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Date: 26 May 2019

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[ 0 : 00 ] We have several visitors as well, some well known to us, others new to us, but we trust that together we might know the Lord's presence and blessing as we worship him today.

Today of course is Sunday, so it's the day we remember that Jesus is risen from the dead, but later this week on Thursday there's a very special day, a day often forgotten even by Christians, it's Ascension Day, it's the day when we remember that 40 days after Jesus had been raised from the dead on Easter Sunday, after he had made himself known, spoken with his disciples, been seen by hundreds and hundreds of people we're told, then returned to his home in heaven.

This is how Luke describes what happened. When Jesus had led his disciples out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.

While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken into heaven. Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they stayed continually at the temple praising God.

Praising God with joy, worshipping the Lord Jesus with joy, that's what we're here to do this morning. Our first hymn reminds us that our Jesus is a living Savior, a living Lord.

[ 1 : 24 ] He is the King. Come people of the risen King. I'm going to sing the hymn, it's going to come up on the screen behind me. Let's continue to worship our God in prayer together.

Let us pray. Father in heaven, we bless you and thank you that we have so much to rejoice in this morning. We thank you for the health and strength that you've given us that we can be here.

We thank you that we've had breakfast and we've got clothes to wear and we've come from beds to sleep in, which we take for granted. But Lord, we know that there are many who have so little, much less than us.

We thank you that we have reason to rejoice, O Lord, because you are the God who continues to provide and care for this world and us who live in it. Whether we recognize you, ignore you, reject you, hate you, or love you, thank you that you are a merciful and gracious God that not treating us as our sins deserve.

And especially we thank you that those who have that faith and trust in your son, the Lord Jesus, rejoice today in our multitude of blessings. We are so overwhelmed.

[ 2 : 38 ] We could not begin to list the wonderful things that you've done for us and the wonderful God you are to us. But, O Lord, we thank you especially for Jesus, your son.

We thank you especially that when we were lost and blind and far from you, you came to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Thank you that he is God and man who lived amongst us, who experienced what we experienced, feeling the joys, the pains, the sorrows, the delights.

The one who especially in love for us went to the cross and suffered and died, that we might be forgiven, who was our substitute, who paid the debt that we owe you, who paid and took the punishment that, Lord, we deserve.

God's separation from you. Lord, to be cut off. He was cut off on the cross. That we might never be cut off. That we might be forgiven and restored.

That we might know you and enjoy you in this life and for eternity. And, O Lord, we thank you for your Holy Spirit who quickens and gives us life. Who opens our blind eyes and our deaf ears.

[ 3 : 47 ] who makes us alive again, alive to God and alive to all the blessings that you have poured into our lives and continue to do so day by day. We pray, Lord, for our time this morning, that you would help us, that you would encourage us, that you would speak to us, that, Lord, from our hearts there may come true joy, just as the disciples knew that true joy as they saw you, Lord Jesus, Jesus returning to heaven. We know, Lord, that you've promised that you will come here again, just as you came once before, so you will come back to earth, not as a baby in Bethlehem, not to suffer and to die, but to be the king, to be the judge of the living and the dead, and, Lord, we look for that day, for

we know that that will be the culmination of all of history, when Jesus comes again, when every tear will be dried, when every war will cease, when every sin will be removed, when, Lord, we will stand before you to be judged for life and for eternity. Oh, Lord, make us ready for that day, and may even our time this morning be a time in which we know you near to us, preparing us, giving us that faith, that hope, that joy that comes through Jesus, the Savior of the world, for we ask it all in his name now. Amen.

Turn together in our Bibles, and we're going to read from the Gospel of Luke and Chapter 10. Luke and Chapter 10, if you've got one of the red church Bibles, that's page 1041. Page 1041. Luke Chapter 10, we're not going to read the whole chapter, we're going to read just a section of it. Last week, or rather the week before last, we looked at the mission that Jesus sent 72 of his disciples out on, and we're going to just pick up their return and the events that followed. So they've been out, we don't know how long, maybe a week or so, sharing and speaking about the kingdom of God to people in the villages, and verse 17, we'll pick up from there, they come back. 72 returned with joy and said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name. He, that's Jesus, of course, replied, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I've given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy. Nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. At that time, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father. No one knows who the Father is except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, blessed are the eyes that see what you see.

For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, but did not see it, to hear what you hear, but didn't hear it. On one occasion, an expert of the law stood up to test Jesus. Teacher, he asked, what must I do to inherit eternal life? We'll stop there.

Please have your Bible open to Luke and chapter 10 and to that passage that we read. We're not going to look at all of it. We're going to continue tonight in thinking about some of the words of Jesus, particularly to his disciples in the first part, but I want us to look particularly at the theme of what's going on here as the disciples return from their mission. I'm certain that all of us, day by day, even if we don't do it consciously, do it subconsciously, ask ourselves the question, will this make me happy? It's something that directs our actions, it directs our lives in every sphere. Will this make me happy? But I wonder, have you ever asked the question, what makes God happy? It's a question that's troubled the minds, men and women throughout time in history.

[ 8 : 47 ] It's a question that's given a rise, given rise to millions of different answers, possible answers, potential answers. In every age, on every continent, men and women have attempted to please the God that they've believed in, all the gods that they believe in, by creating for themselves a religion.

But are they all correct? Are all these different types of religion, all these different ways of answering the question, I want to please God or how is God pleased, can they all be right? Think of the religion of the Aztecs and the Incas, human sacrifice to please their gods. Is that right?

Even up to our very own day, the extremism of IS, who believe that killing non-Muslims pleases God. Can that be correct too? And all that's in between. Every religion that humanity has dreamt up has at its core this quest to please God. The tragedy is, of course, that the very fact that these rituals, these actions are repeated over and over again, points to the inevitable conclusion that none of them can please God. There's nothing that can be done to make God happy.

So does that mean that God is never happy? Does that mean that God can never be satisfied and pleased? Is he really, as some people paint him or imagine him, a God who's miserable, who's bitter, vindictive, a dictator, whose only pleasure is in punishing us, his creation?

Not surprisingly, the Bible reveals that God is the very opposite of that viewpoint. And here in this little section that we have in Luke's biography of the life of Jesus, we have very clear answer to that question. Did you notice, I hope, as I was reading through it a few minutes ago, how often there is the sense of joy, rejoicing, and pleasure spoken of? Do you see that? Verse 17, the 72 returned with joy. Jesus says to them, rejoice that your names are written in heaven. Verse 21, at that time, Jesus, full of joy. And then end of verse 21, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

[ 11 : 33 ] Then later on, in verse 23, blessed are the eyes that see what you see. There's a real flavor, isn't there? There's a real theme that's going on in this passage of pleasure, of joy, of what we might call happiness, blessing. And I hope also, if you were listening and reading through, you noticed that there are three persons who are rejoicing together in Luke, the three persons of the Trinity.

Verse 21, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit. There's Jesus and the Holy Spirit who are both full of joy. There's the Father who, we're told, is pleased to do what he's doing. Each of the three persons of the Godhead has pleasure and has joy. Another element, as it were, in the Bible that points to the reality of the Trinity and the reality of the unity of the Trinity, that amazing mystery, three persons, one God. But that phrase that Jesus is, that we have in our own translations there, Jesus, full of joy, is quite a weak attempt to express what's going on there. The joy that Jesus is feeling is a different word to the rejoicing of the disciples and the rejoicing that Jesus speaks about in verse 20. In the original language, it's a stronger word. It's an exceeding joy. It's the expanse of joy. It's the highest joy. It's abundant joy. It's ecstatic joy that Jesus is experiencing in our own parlance. He's literally jumping for joy. And so we can say for certainty at the very start, God is happy. We've asked the question, what makes God happy? Well, first of all, we recognize and realize from this passage alone, and we can look all over the place as well, God is happy. He is a happy God. He is a joyful God. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit are united in their joy.

And more than that, as we shall see, they are united in joy in the same thing. There's one thing that makes them particularly happy. So what is it? What is it that they rejoice in? What's the cause of the joy of God, the happiness of God? Essential question, surely. Most important question.

Was it perhaps what the 72 disciples had been doing? Remember, they'd been out on this mission. Jesus had commanded them, go into the villages ahead of me, tell people about the kingdom of God, heal the sick, drive out the demon possessed, and tell them that God is near to them. Was it that, their obedience, their faithfulness, or even what we might say, the success or the seeming success of their mission?

[ 14 : 33 ] They said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name. Things have gone really well. Well, that doesn't seem to be. I think it would be, I'm sure you'd agree, that is not the reason that God is happy. Because Jesus tells them not to rejoice in that per se, not to make that their main joy.

He tells them to rejoice that their names are written in heaven. There's something else. It's not what they've done. Actually, the joy that makes Jesus, if I can put it this way, jump up and down with joy, and the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with what the disciples have done, or what other people have done, or even in the people that have believed have done.

As a human race, we have made the mistake constantly, throughout every generation, right up to this own generation, this 21st century, we have made the same mistake.

We have thought that we have to do something to make God happy, or that we can do something to make him happy, to please him. Every religion, as I've already said, in a large part, even Christianity itself, in many ways, has fallen into this same error.

It's the same error that comes out, and that's the reason I read verse 25. It's that error that asks the question, what must I do?

[ 16 : 04 ] And that was clearly the case in Jesus' day. The religious people of Jesus' day often would come up and ask him questions, and other people as well, asking, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

It's the same thing as asking, what must I do for God to be happy with me, to accept me into heaven? Later, in John's gospel, people asked him, what must we do to do the works that God requires? There it is.

What do we do to do the things that God wants, or makes him happy? Another man came up to me and said, Jesus, came up to Jesus and asked him, teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?

That's at the heart of it, isn't it? That's what many people think. I do good things, God is happy with me. I'm sure perhaps you've got your own answer, your own thoughts about what makes God happy, or what pleases him, or you hope, anyway, that what you've done something, or doing the right thing, at least enough to get God to accept you into heaven.

Though there may be very, very few people in our country who believe in Jesus Christ as their saviour, who really have a living faith, there's a vast majority of people who still hope and expect that they've done enough to get them into heaven one day when they die.

[ 17 : 26 ] I think most of us are probably more capable of answering the question, what do I do that makes God unhappy? Joel, that lovely little story with the kids and the egg, yeah, we were all a bit quiet and subdued, being English, of course, we wouldn't shout out, but we could all have shouted out something that we know makes God unhappy, that he's displeased with.

Sorry, that's displeased. Unpleased isn't an English word. Displeased. See, because within us, there's a conscience. Within you and me, we're born with it.

It's like a little alarm that goes off sometimes. When we're younger, it probably goes off a bit more. We learn to handle the alarm as we do our own alarm clock on a Monday morning by shutting it up, by quieting it down, by throwing it against the wall or whatever you have to do.

And we quieten our consciences and we say to our consciences, shut up. I know that's wrong, but I don't want to hear that it's wrong. But then, of course, occasionally, we just can't shut it up.

Occasionally, something will happen and we do something, we say something, and it goes blasting in our heads. Yes. See, the inconvenient truth is that God isn't happy with what we do.

[ 18 : 50 ] God is happy. See that here? But God isn't happy with what we do. And the Bible is absolutely crystal clear about this.

It's absolutely certain. It's one of the things that the Bible does not mince words about or pretend about. It says clearly, we cannot please God.

With all our religion, with all our ideas and philosophies, with all of our rituals and all the things that we do and our good deeds and good works, we cannot please God.

This is what Paul wrote in Romans chapter 3. There is no one who does good. Not even one. Doesn't mean we can't do some good.

Doesn't mean there are things that we never get anything right. Of course, there's lots of loving and caring and thoughtful people in this world and you may be one of them. But when it comes to God and our relationship to Him, not one of us can do what is good and pleasing to Him.

[ 19 : 58 ] It goes on to say the reason why, verse 23 of Romans 3, all of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glorious standards. All of us have fallen short of the mark.

We've all sinned as when Joel says, put your hands up, you've done anything wrong. Every one of us will have put our hands up even though we probably think the person next to us has done more wrong things than we have.

We know it's there. We know our hearts. We know. We can't escape it. We know that it just is the reality and so, of course, we brush it aside and we say, well, of course, everybody's like that.

We've all sinned. We've all fallen short. We're all imperfect. There's none of us. We're all, you know, well, it's just human to air, isn't it? And therefore, surely, God's going to accept me because I know mine bad things aren't as bad as the other person's bad things.

Here's a fair summary, I think, of your life and mine written by, again, the Apostle Paul, this time in Ephesians 1. All of us live to gratify, that means to please, the cravings of our bodies and follow its desires and thoughts.

[ 21 : 16 ] That could be the tagline for our generation, couldn't it? But it actually could be the tagline for every generation, everybody. We all live to please, basically, ourselves and follow the desires and thoughts that are our own.

That's the Bible. That's God speaking. That's what he says. The trouble is, although we accept that to a certain degree, we do not like the conclusion that that statement draws.

And that's this, Ephesians 1. Like everyone else, we were, by nature, deserving of God's wrath. By that, it means God's just anger.

So there's nothing we can do, you and I. Nothing we can do to make God happy. Our sinful, our selfish, our thoughtless living, in fact, angers God.

God. So we're really stuck. We're really up the creek without a paddle. We're really no way out, no escape, no hope, is there?

[ 22 : 30 ] Nothing we can do pleases God. And everything we do in our selfishness and sin displeases God. But hold on.

that's only half the story's name. Because we know, as we've said already, that here, in this passage, we have God happy.

We have God rejoicing. We have Jesus jumping up and down with joy. Something has brought him immense delight.

delight. And it's pleasing to God. And the Holy Spirit, too, joins in that delight as well. And we've discovered what it isn't.

But what is it then? If it's not our works, it's not what we do, it's not our religion, it's not our thoughts, it's not our good deeds, it's not our wicked deeds particularly, then what is it? Here we see what Jesus rejoiced in.

[ 23 : 29 ] Verse 21, at that time, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, I praise you, Father, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. What is he rejoicing in? That God has revealed certain things to little children.

It's God's work. And God is happy in his work. I don't know what your work situation is like, whether, I mean, tomorrow's not Monday morning because it's bank holiday, but Tuesday morning, I wonder what your thoughts are as you think about going back to work.

Is it a sense of foreboding or a sense of, oh, a sense of joy? Oh, great, going to work. I don't know many people. Great, I'm going to work on Tuesday morning. It's going to be super.

I'm so looking forward to it. I really don't like being on the weekend and spending time with my family and relaxing and enjoying. I want to be at work. Maybe some people like that. But God is really happy in his work.

[ 24 : 36 ] But what is his work? Well, it's the very same thing that Jesus also does. Remember, the unity of God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They not only are united in their joy, they're united in what they do.

And what is it they do? Well, here's what Jesus does. Verse 22, all things have been committed to me by my Father. God's given me everything. I and him are one in one sense. Everything belongs to me that belongs to him.

No one knows the Son except the Father. No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

There's the two words reveal, isn't there? The Father reveals certain things in 21 to little children.

Jesus reveals what? The Father. Reveals God. God delights to make himself known to us.

His joy is that we know him. We know him as he really is. And we enter into a living relationship with him that is everlasting.

[ 25 : 39 ] That's why Jesus was born. That's why Jesus came down from heaven. That's why he took to himself our human nature, became that child in Bethlehem. That's what the disciples' eyes were blessed at seeing.

They were seeing God in the world, the thing that all the Old Testament kings and prophets longed to see. They knew about God. Many of them had a wonderful relationship with God, but they longed to see him in all of his glory and splendor and majesty, and he is Jesus.

See, from the very days when Adam and Eve sinned and broke that relationship with God that they had, from then on, God has been constantly making himself known throughout time and history to the people he created.

That's what the Old Testament's all about. It's like the rising of the sun, just a beam of light to begin with, but getting gradually brighter and clearer and lighter as we go through the Old Testament until we come to the whole, as it were, the noonday, the sun shining in all of its beauty and glory with the arrival of God himself in the life of Jesus.

One of the writers in the New Testament says, the sun is the radiance, the outshining of the Father's glory. People ask the question, what is God like?

[ 27 : 01 ] The very simple answer is, he's like Jesus. Jesus is God. You want to know what God is like? Read the New Testament, read the history. Why have we got four biographies of the life of Jesus?

Because each one is a viewpoint of God in Jesus. Each one shows us something more, the facets of his loveliness, like the facets on a diamond. And so John at the very start of his gospel says, no one's ever seen God, but God, the one and only Son, who is in the closest relationship to the Father, has made him known.

What is God like? Is he like the philosopher's ideas, or the theologian's ideas, or the spiritualist's ideas, or your ideas? Is God made of your ideas?

No, he's not. He's the God who is Jesus Christ. It's like you going onto your media page, or your Facebook, or whatever it is, you tell people what you are like, you are making yourself known to them.

Now, somebody adds a comment and says, no, no, they're not like that. They're not, they're not generous and kind, they're grumpy and miserable, they're bitter people. No, I'm not like that.

[ 28 : 11 ] Many of us have been influenced by what other people have told us about God. We've taken on board what the media tells us God is like, or how it portrays him in comedy sketches, or in whatever it may be, and we've taken on that view.

Why? We wouldn't do that about somebody else. We wouldn't do that about the person in our family, or about ourselves. Why do we do it about God? Go back to the Bible, go back to what God has said about himself, go back to what he's shown about himself in Jesus.

Then you'll see the real picture. Then you'll know the real person. But here's the problem, isn't it? Though Jesus is God who lived in this world and walked amongst these people, and we have a record, a historic record of exactly what he's like, why was it that so many people who saw Jesus in his day did not see God?

There's thousands, wasn't there? There was the 5,000 he fed with bread and fish. There were thousands who crowded around on Palm Sundays as he rode the donkey in Jerusalem. Thousands upon thousands saw this Jesus.

They saw him raise the dead. They saw him heal the sick. They saw him give sight to the blind. They never saw God. Otherwise, why would they have rejected him?

[ 29 : 25 ] Why would they have murdered him? Well, this is really where we get to the nub of the matter with Jesus' joy. There in verse 21, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you've hidden these things from the wise and learned.

and revealed them to little children. People of Jesus' day on the whole were certain of their own understanding of God.

They had their own picture of God. They had their own thoughts about God. They'd been influenced by some of the religious leaders of their day and some of the thoughts and ideas that were going around in the popular media, as it were, of the day.

And they decided that Jesus wasn't God. They didn't like this God that was represented in Jesus. And so they rejected him. That's why many people reject him today.

Perhaps why you've rejected him as well, because I don't like this picture of God. I don't like this God in Jesus. People of Jesus' day were wise and learned in their own eyes.

[ 30 : 27 ] Is there ever an age like our 21st century where people are more certain how wise and learned they are than ever before? We don't need Christianity. It's for those people who were superstitious in the past.

They were a bit thick, weren't they, in the Victorian period? They didn't have the science we have. We're wiser than them. We're more learned than them. So we don't need God and we don't need Jesus. That's how the people thought of him even in his day.

Jesus had healed a man who'd been born blind and this man was being interrogated by the religious people of the day who hated Jesus. And they said to this man, we know this, Jesus is a sinner.

And elsewhere, this man's not from God, but there's a man who's blind from birth who's now seeing and talking with them. They did not see because they did not want to see.

Elsewhere, they called Jesus demon-possessed, they called him a troublemaker, they called him a blasphemer, they did everything they could to excuse themselves from seeing God.

[ 31 : 32 ] You see, the reality is this, that if we consider our understanding of God to be the correct view of God above all others and above what God has said, then actually we are blinding ourselves.

That's why Jesus rejoices. Those who think they're so clever, Lord, the reality of who you are is hidden from them. They're going around with such presuppositions and such arrogance but they don't see because they're blind.

But, what God has hidden in one sense or rather we have hidden from ourselves by our sin and our pride and our arrogance, God is pleased to reveal to all those who will make themselves like little children.

Now, when Jesus speaks to little children it doesn't mean physically little children. He means people who've got that childlike attitude. And we know what a childlike attitude is. Even though we've lost it a long time ago, many of us because of the harshness of life.

But there's an innocence there in the sense of accepting, isn't there? An acceptance of what people say to us. An acceptance which is unpretentious, humble, not opinionated, teachable, willing, willing to believe what God says.

[ 32 : 54 ] And this is the wonderful thing. God is happy to make you happy.

Jesus is overjoyed that God shows himself in all of his loving kindness to those who are thought of as foolish. He loves to show himself and make himself known to those who are humble.

people. Here's Paul again. This time he writes to the church in Corinth. And he chokes about the day in which he lives in which many people thought themselves clever like our own day.

And he says this, Where's the wise person? Where's the teacher of the law? Where's the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

How? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased to the foolishness of what was preached to save those who do believe.

[ 33 : 57 ] Jews demanded signs, Greeks looked for wisdom, we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews, foolishness to Greeks. But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you believed.

Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many of you were influential, not many were of noble birth, but God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

God chose the lowly things of the world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.

God loves to show himself to people. But for so many of us and for so many of those around about us, the reason that they do not know God and enjoy God and have a relationship with God is simply because they think that they are wise in their own eyes.

[ 35 : 09 ] They think that they are cleverer than everybody else. And the reason that somebody becomes a Christian is not because they have some special intellect and knowledge that they can see things, but because God has made himself known to them.

He takes pleasure in surprising us with himself. God doesn't want your religion. He doesn't want your rituals. He doesn't want your good works. He wants you to know and enjoy him.

And he spent all of eternity doing that. And more than that, when we come to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, we come to the divine amongst us.

We come to the God living in our place and we come to see what God is really like. And where do we see God as he's really like? Is it in the miracles? Is it in the raising of the dead? We see what God is really like when we look at the cross.

Amazingly, the Bible tells us in Hebrews in chapter 12, that for the joy that was set before him, Jesus endured the cross, its shame, and died.

[ 36 : 28 ] For the joy. What joy? Why would he go to a cross and suffer and die the most hideous and vile, painful death? How can there be any joy in that?

The joy was this, that in going there he knew that he was paying for your sin and mine. He was paying the debt that we owe God by our wickedness and our sin. He was taking upon himself what we deserve so that we might know God.

God. So that broken relationship that all of time and history has, as it were, increased as we've continually pushed God away, that relationship may be reconciled and brought back.

That you may know the God who made you and loves you. That you may know the joy and the happiness that is God's himself. He wants you to share in it. What a topsy-turvy world we live in, isn't it?

Where people look at Christianity and say, it's God pouring the joy out of life. He's taking away all the pleasure. He's taking away all the interesting parts of life, like getting drunk out of your head.

[ 37 : 37 ] Taking away all the pleasure of having multiple sexual partners and sleeping around. He's taking the joy out of life, letting me do exactly what I want and then crying because my life is such a mess.

joy and the happiness that men and women are looking for, perhaps even yourself, are only found in knowing the God who made you for himself. He made you to know him.

He made you because in his amazing mystery, which is the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are constantly full of joy and delight in themselves, God created us that that joy may be shared with others.

happiness. That joy, that happiness may be yours. What a sadness it is, isn't it, that we spend all of our lives looking for happiness in every possible conceivable way and yet it's right under our noses. If only we would see it. Let me ask you this as we close. Will you give up your pretentious ideas about God? Will you give up your pride and your arrogance that says, I can please God.

[ 38 : 53 ] He's going to accept me just the way I am. Sins and warts and all. Will you let him reveal himself to you? Will you open your heart and your mind to him and say, Lord, I've got it all wrong for so long about who you are.

And my life, I've been searching and seeking after happiness in all the wrong places. And yet you want me to know you. You, the God of heaven, want me to enjoy you.

You want me to be your friend, your child. And all I've done is run away from you all this time.

Please forgive me.

Please forgive me. Thank you that Jesus died for me. Because such is your love. You're not a God who is a taker, but a giver. You're not a God who is miserable, but joyful.

Surely this is a God that you want to know. Surely this is a God you can't live without. How will you respond?

[ 40 : 01 ] What will you do? But simply open your heart in faith. Oh Lord, our God, you blow our minds.

You're not at all like we expected or we were taught or told. You're so much more. You're so much better. Oh Lord, forgive us for having small thoughts of you.

Forgive us for putting you in the box of our own understanding. Thank you that you came in Jesus that we might know you. That we might enjoy you.

We thank you that it makes you happy to make yourself known to us. We want to be like little children. We don't want to be arrogant. We don't want to be proud.

We don't want to be hard eggs. We want to be soft boiled. We pray, Lord, that you would soften our hearts and our minds and our thoughts that you would cause us to delight in you and rejoice in you and find you as a source of our happiness.

[ 41 : 20 ] Thank you, Lord, for the wonderful love that you've shown in the cross. Thank you for the price that you were willing to pay that we might be rescued from our ignorance and foolishness and brought into your grace.

Help us, Lord, as we live out the gospel, the good news of Jesus day by day, to live it out with joy in our God. For we ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.