



OVERCOMING
BARRIERS

— TO A —
**JOYFUL
LIFE**

by Kevin Hollinger

Dear Friend,

Many people live their lives never thinking about why they exist. How sad to think that some people die never knowing why their lives began in the first place.

Many people feel worthless and empty. Their lives seem so meaningless. And God? Well, if there is a God, He makes no difference in their everyday life.

Maybe you are struggling to find purpose, peace, and joy in your life. My prayer is that you will come to find purpose, joy, and peace in God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Often before that can happen certain barriers need to be removed. I have been sharing with people the joy of Jesus Christ for over twenty years, and I have found certain barriers come up often. My prayer is that by God's grace this little book will help you overcome those barriers and find meaning and joy in Christ alone.

Maybe you are already a Christian but there seems to be something still missing from your life. The same barriers of doubt that cause some people to stay away from Christianity keep others from rejoicing in Christ. I pray that this little book will help you find the joy that comes from being a fully committed worshiper of God.

For His Glory and By His Grace,

Pastor Kevin Hollinger

I thank God for all the people in my life that have taught me about God and his truth. It would take a book of greater length than this one just to list the names of those who have given so freely and impacted my life so greatly.

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:3-5, ESV).

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A PARTING WORD

QUEST FOR JOY

John Piper - Desiring God Ministries

1. If Christianity is true, why are there so many hypocrites in the church?

How can I love and trust God when so many people call themselves Christians and then are two-faced hypocrites? Many people go to church every Sunday, but it makes no difference in their everyday lives.

Throughout history people have tried to twist the Bible to defend the most horrific actions. Men have beaten and mistreated their wives in the name of the Bible. Parents have abused children in the name of the Bible. Racism has been spread by appealing to a twisted understanding of the Bible.

I will never forget the day my mother and I journeyed into the new book store in town. We had been to the store before, and it was full of wonderful books and music. As we entered into the store, I noticed that we were the only ones

in the store. What I did not know was that the “Christians” in town had started talking a lot about the new store’s owner. Word in the pew was that the owner was a lesbian. All the excitement of the store’s grand opening weeks before was now replaced with judgmental, condescending gossip.

My mom asked for a moment to speak with the lady who owned the store. Mom did not realize that I could hear her conversation, but I did. The memories of that conversation are still with me over two decades later. Mom asked, “I do not mean to pry but there are many rumors going around about you, and so I just wanted to ask, are you a practicing homosexual?” There was a short period of awkward silence, and then the store owner began to cry. She explained through tears that she had been very involved in the homosexual lifestyle in the past, but that she had given her heart to Jesus. She had moved to town for a fresh start. She was so excited about what God had done for her that she wanted to share the grace of God with others. She had started the Christian book store to minister to the community.

I don’t remember all the details about what happened, but I do remember that “Amazing Grace” bookstore went out of business because those who should have known better cared more about the owner’s past than about her future.

If you have been deeply hurt by someone who claimed to be a Christian, I want to apologize on behalf of all true Christians. We should have spoken up sooner and more

frequently. This being said, acts of hypocrisy on the part of “Christians” should neither surprise us nor keep us from Christ for two reasons.

First, Jesus warned us that there would be wolves (those who oppose Christianity and act wickedly) in sheep’s clothing (who pretend to be Christians). Matthew 7:15 says, “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves.” (NLT). In addition, Satan himself used the Scripture quoted out of context when he tempted Christ (Matthew 4:1-11).

Second, even true Christians make mistakes and fall short of the lives they should lead. That is why we need God’s grace.

We should not be kept from a joyful relationship with God by hypocrisy because Christ promised that there would be hypocrites, and He opposed them (see Matthew 23) . In addition, all of us at times sin. Jesus said, “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5: 32, ESV). As Charles Spurgeon wrote, “No one has ever been rejected by God for confessed sin, but many people have been rejected for professed innocence.”

As I John 1:8-9 says, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (ESV).

Great and valuable things are often counterfeited. There is not a great temptation to create counterfeit pennies, but hundred dollar bills are counterfeited. There is nothing as valuable as the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and so it makes sense that many people try to twist and misuse it for their own gain. To be kept from glorifying God because of hypocrites is foolish. The fact that people print counterfeit money does not keep us from using money. Why give the hypocrites of this world that much power? Why let them keep you from the very thing you were created to do? Why let them keep you from finding joy and peace in worshiping God?

2. If God is so good, why is there so much evil in the world?

If there is a loving God then why is there rape, murder, child abuse, and famine? At one point in my life these questions almost overwhelmed me. One night after watching a movie about gang violence, I wrote a poem called “Tell Me Why?”. Six months later I wrote another piece entitled “Doubts.” I would like to share both of these writings with you. “Tell Me Why?” I will share now and “Doubts” I will share later in the chapter.

Tell Me Why?

My mind is filled with intellectual pollution.
And to the questions I ask there are no solutions.
I do not know exactly what it is I am trying to find
If this is reality I see then let me be blind.

From hope to despair this cancer it grows.
The man inside me nobody knows.
In the playground of my mind innocence still plays.
While destruction and violence try to teach it their ways.

I hope I am dreaming and soon will awake.
What is it that makes me tremble and shake.
This poignant paradox we call life.
To my soul is the cutting edge of a knife.

Give me some hope of a brighter day.
Lord Jesus give me a word or something to say.
To the mother whose children have nothing to eat.
To the father whose son with a baseball bat was just beat.

If you can relate to this poem, I pray that you will discover the great truth that God is both loving and powerful. After much prayer and reading the message of the book of Job in the Bible, I came to the conclusion that the existence of evil does not deny the existence of an all-powerful, loving God. I recommend that you read the book of Job.

In the book of Job, Job was a very good person compared to the others around him, and yet he went through a great deal of suffering. Why? Job asked this same question. His friends tried to tell him that his suffering was the result of his own personal sin. Although Job was not perfect, his suffering was not because he was a greater sinner than those who were not suffering.

In the New Testament, Jesus makes some interesting comments about suffering that can help us understand what Job's friends did not. The following passages from the New Testament show how Jesus countered some of the misconceptions about suffering that were still common in His day.

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.' (Luke 13: 1-3, ESV).

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him. ‘Rabbi, who sinned this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.’ (John 9:1-3, ESV).

Perhaps you feel that your suffering in life has been unfair. You know people who do all kinds of terrible sins and yet they never seem to suffer. This is exactly the feeling that the Psalmist was facing when he wrote Psalm 73.

Psalm 73

A psalm of Asaph

Truly God is good to Israel,
to those whose hearts are pure.

For I envied the proud
when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness

They seem to live such a painless life;
their bodies are so healthy and strong.

They aren’t troubled like other people
or plagued with the problems like everyone else

They wear pride like a jeweled necklace,
and their clothing is woven of cruelty.

These fat cats have everything
their hearts could ever wish for!

They scoff and speak only evil;
in their pride they seek to crush others.

They boast against the very heavens,
and their words strut throughout the earth.

And so the people are dismayed and confused,
drinking all their words.

“Does God realize what is going on?” they ask.
“Is the Most High even aware of what is happening?”

Look at these arrogant people --
enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply.

Was it nothing that I kept my heart pure
and kept myself from doing wrong?

All I get is trouble all day long;
every morning brings me pain.

If I had really spoken this way,
I would have been a traitor to your people.

So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper.
But what a difficult task it is!

Then one day I went into your sanctuary, O God,
and I thought about the destiny of the wicked.

Truly, you put them on a slippery path
and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction.

In an instant they are destroyed,
swept away by terrors.

Their present life is only a dream
that is gone when they awake.

When you arise, O Lord,
you will make them vanish from this life.

Then I realized how bitter I had become,
how pained I had been by all I had seen.

I was so foolish and ignorant --
I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you.

Yet I still belong to you;
you are holding my right hand.

You will keep on guiding me with your counsel,
leading me to a glorious destiny.

Whom have I in heaven but you?
I desire you more than anything on earth.

My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak,
but God remains the strength of my heart;
he is mine forever.

But those who desert him will perish,
for you destroy those who abandon you.

But as for me, how good it is to be near God!
I have made the Sovereign LORD my shelter,
and I will tell everyone about the wonderful things you do.

Life is not fair. Sometimes the wicked prosper for a season, but it is important to remember that this life is brief compared to all eternity. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “This is the reason we do not give up. Our human body is wearing out. But our spirits are getting stronger every day. The little troubles we suffer now for a short time are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever.” (2 Corinthians 4:16-17, NLT).

Paul understood suffering. In 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, he wrote, “ For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.” (ESV). 2 Corinthians 11:24-27 explains some of the sufferings that Paul experienced in his life.

Five times I received the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, dangers from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers in toil and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. (ESV)

In spite of all his suffering, Paul called his suffering light and momentary compared to the glory that they were preparing him for in eternity.

We need to get an eternal perspective on our suffering. We should take our doubt and questions to God, remembering that we know very little compared to Him.

We are just one of six billion, on one small planet, in one solar system, in one galaxy, in a vast universe. He is the creator of all things. If all we know is all there is to know, then God is unjust at times, but we do not know all there is to know, nor can we.

That is the conclusion I came to in the second of the writings I wrote during my period of struggle with severe doubts.

Doubts

I enter this church with eyes that glow with hate. There I see the altar, but today I did not come to bow but to curse. In a voice torn with anger I scream, "I hate this world, O God how I hate this world. All this talk of free will and sovereignty I can't understand. All I know is that I have been on the streets; I've seen the rape, the murder, and the children with nothing to eat, and it makes me wonder.

Just then I feel a tender hand upon my shoulder, and He whispers, "O my son, I hate the evil of this world too. I would like to give you all the answers and explain it all to you, but your mind would never comprehend it. Why I let evil still remain, and why so many must suffer is a question love will only answer. You know you'll never see the whole picture when you look through glasses made of sin. So for now take this cross as a symbol of my love. Let it remind you that I too have suffered. When you cry, I cry and long for the day when you will be home, and I can explain it all to you. Then I will wipe away your tears and you will be with me forever.

Remember what I have said, ‘These things have I spoken to you that you might have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer for I have overcome the world.’” (John 16:33).

His words linger in the air and then come to rest upon my ear. They bring with them a peace that washes away all my doubt and fear. I am driven to my knees with tears of joy and repentance. Just a lifetime to fight this war, and then I am going home.

The Bible never promises that Christians will not suffer, but there are three great promises that the scripture does make about suffering.

First, we are promised that Jesus will be with us through every trial and time of suffering (Matthew 28:20). Not only will He be with us, but he understands our suffering and trials (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Second, we are promised that God will work out everything for our good and His glory. Romans 8:28 says, “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” (NLT).

Third, we are promised that when this life ends we will spend eternity with God in a world without pain or suffering (Revelation 21:1-4).

I pray that God will work in a mighty way in every one of us so that we can echo the words of Job.

Job 42:1-6: Then Job replied to the LORD: “I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you. You ask, ‘Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?’ It is I. And I was talking about things I did not understand, things far too wonderful for me. “You said, ‘Listen and I will speak! I have some questions for you, and you must answer them.’ “I had heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes. I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.” (NLT)

3. If Christianity is true, why didn't it work for me?

Many people go to church on Sunday morning and walk away more depressed than before they came. They see Christianity as a long list of dos and don'ts. Church attendance is either shallow and superficial, or it is legalistic and boring. They walk away with either a false sense of hope based on an optimistic, but inaccurate, view of themselves or a strong sense of condemnation. If all people get from church is flattery or a feeling of guilt, why should they go?

The reason that Christianity has not worked for some people is because they have not really tried it. What they have tried is a counterfeit form of Christianity that emphasizes what we do instead of what Christ has done for

those who have or will by grace put their faith and trust in Him. Any religion that teaches you can earn your way to heaven by your own good deeds is not Christianity.

Ephesians 2:8-10 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (ESV)

Romans 8:1-2 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (ESV)

The laws in the Bible are like a mirror showing us what we look like compared to God’s perfect standard. Grace is like the washcloth that washes our face clean. Without the mirror, we would not know that we were dirty. Without the washcloth, we would be unable to get clean. Without the truth of God’s law, we see no need for the gift of salvation. Without the grace of God, we have no hope of salvation (Paraphrased from Randy Alcorn, *Grace and Truth Paradox*).

As others have said, “Good works are the fruit not the roots of salvation.” We are forgiven not because of our good works, but because of the work done by Christ on the cross. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NLT).

Part of the reason that people say they have tried Christianity and it has not worked is because of their misunderstanding of the salvation process.

Salvation is the process by which God takes hopeless sinners and makes them into holy and complete saints. Salvation involves the following:

1. Justification is the act of God declaring us righteous when we, by His grace, acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We confess that we are hopeless sinners and turn our lives wholly over to Christ. (Romans 3:23-28, Galatians 3:13, Col 2:13, Ephesians 2:8-9, I Peter 3:18)

2. Sanctification is the process by which God makes us holy and complete. This is a process that happens throughout the Christian's life and will not be complete until we reach heaven. (It should be noted that Sanctification is both a process and an event. We are being made into what we already are in Christ). (Philippians 3:12-14, Philippians 1:6, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 10:14, 13:12, I Peter 2:4)

3. Glorification is the last stage of salvation; through it the individual is made perfect. The Christian also at the resurrection will receive a glorified body and live in a perfect environment. (Romans 6:5, 8:18-30, Hebrews 9:28, Eph. 1:13-14, I John 3:2)

4. If Christianity is true, why does it seem to rob people of pleasure?

Many Christians simply don't seem like a lot of fun. Doesn't Christianity keep people from a lot of really fun activities?

No and Yes! Christians do turn down the temporary pleasure of sin, but they replace it with a greater pleasure. If the source of your pleasure is temporary things, your pleasure will be fleeting. If your source of joy is the eternal and unchanging God of the Bible, then your joy will be eternal. You might wonder if God and joy can go together. The truth is that God is the giver of all real joy. He made food that tastes good. Music that sounds good. Sex that feels

good. Christ died so that we could know even greater joy through a personal relationship with Him. The rules that He has given us are for His glory and our good.

The Bible tells us to “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4, ESV). Jesus said that He came to bring abundant life (John 10:10).

David Swartz in his book *Dancing With Broken Bones*, tells a wonderful story to try to help us understand the joy of knowing God.

“Arlie and Tommy would eat lunch together every day. Tommy’s father owned the general store, which made them one of the richer families around. Nowhere was the gap between these two boys more evident than when they ate together. Arlie brought the same thing every day: flour biscuits covered with pork rind gravy, long grown cold. Tommy always had something different.

As Christmas approached, Tommy started bringing large navel oranges his father put in holiday fruit baskets. Arlie had never seen one – or tasted one. He sat fascinated as he watched Tommy peel it. Tommy felt Arlie’s eyes fasten on him, and asked if Arlie would like some. After all, they were friends, weren’t they? So Tommy let Arlie eat the peels.

Day after day this went on. The teacher stood by the window every day at noon watching Arlie chew and swallow those bitter orange rinds as if they were

the greatest thing in the world. 'Please,' the teacher silently pleaded. 'Just let him have one real slice – just one.' But it never happened.

Then the teacher made the decision to take things into his own hands. On the last day of school before Christmas vacation, he went to the store and bought a sack full of candy, small toys, and fruit, especially oranges...

Arlie sure was surprised to see his teacher at the door. And his eyes were wide and bright when the bag was dumped on the table. Immediately he grabbed an orange and tore off a chunk of the peel. Before the boy could get the peel to his mouth, the teacher took Arlie's hand and said, 'Wait! Stop! It's like this.' And with that the teacher took the orange and peeled it. As he did, the room filled with the fragrance of the fruit. Everyone in the room was in awe.

Then the teacher broke the orange in two and all of the children 'ooohed' over the misting orange spraying in the air. Tearing off a single slice the teacher said to Arlie, 'here'. As he told me about this years later the teacher said, 'I will never forget looking into Arlie's eyes when he bit down and the juice and the flavor of that orange exploded on his tongue.'" (Swartz, p. 120-122).

A lot of people are like Arlie when it comes to God. Just like Arlie thought he had tasted an orange, when in fact he had only eaten the peels, people think that they have tasted of Christianity when they really have only tasted of empty, bitter legalism.

The reason that many people do not believe in the God of the Bible is because they think they will have more fun sinning against God than they would living in harmony with Him. This is foolishness. It reminds me of a little kid who can't imagine how anyone could enjoy their honeymoon if they weren't allowed to bring their "X-Box." The fact is he won't be able to see the joy of a honeymoon until his body has gone through certain changes. In a similar way, sinners cannot see the joy of worshiping God until they are changed by the grace of God. Sinners simply have no desire to worship God (see John 3:18-20, Romans 1:18, Romans 3:1-23).

When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was He said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." (Matthew 22:37-38, NLT).

Jesus came not only to change what we do, but also what we want to do. He came to make us lovers of God.

If you are feeling a desire to know God, it is the work of the Holy Spirit. I encourage you to ask God to forgive your sins and ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. The scripture teaches that you can know for sure that you are going to heaven. John 5:12-13 says, "So whoever has God's Son has

life; whoever does not have his Son does not have life. I write this to you who believe in the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.” (NLT).

The Scripture teaches that God forgives us and then He transforms us. If you wait to get your life right before you come to God, you never will come. We need to be forgiven so that we can have God’s help to change the way we live. The great hope of the Christian is that the God who has forgiven us will finish the work of making us holy. Philippians 1:6 says, “And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.” (NLT). Asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior is the beginning of the Christian life. If you have not already done it, I encourage you to ask God to forgive your sins and ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior.

If you just received Christ as your Savior and Lord, or if you did it years ago, you need to be actively involved in a local, Bible-believing church. It is important that you get in fellowship with other followers of Jesus. It is also important to read the Bible and pray.

A Parting Word

Writing this book has been frustrating at times. There are so many wonderful things about God I would like to share. This little book could never answer all your questions. God can. We need to remember that some questions are beyond our ability to understand. There are probably many questions that still remain unanswered for you. My prayer is that this book will be used to help you find a fresh start with Jesus. I pray that if you have not yet found a good church, you will let us help you find one. We would also love to help you work through the many questions that you might have. Please feel free to contact us. Please email, write, or call with your questions.

Love in Christ,
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Quest For Joy

Six Biblical Truths

By John Piper

Did you know that God commands us to be glad?

“Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

1) God created us for his glory.

“Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth,... whom I created for my glory”

(Isaiah 43:6-7)

God made us to magnify his greatness - the way telescopes magnify stars. He created us to put his goodness and truth and beauty and wisdom and justice on display. The greatest display of God's glory comes from deep delight in all that he is. This means that God gets the praise and we get the pleasure. God created us so that he is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

2) Every human should live for God's glory.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God”

(1 Corinthians 10:31).

If God made us for his glory, it is clear that we should live for his glory. Our duty comes from his design. So our first obligation is to show God's value by being satisfied with all that he is for us. This is the essence of loving God (Matthew 22:37) and trusting him

(1 John 5:3-4) and being thankful to him (Psalm 100:2-4) It is the root of all true obedience, especially loving others (Colossians 1:4-5).

3) All of us have failed to glorify God as we should.

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Romans 3:23).

What does it mean to “fall short of the glory of God?” It means that none of us has trusted and treasured God the way we should. We have not been satisfied with his greatness and walked in his ways. We have sought our satisfaction in other things, and treated them as more valuable than God, which is the essence of idolatry (Romans 1:21-23). Since sin came into the world we have all been deeply resistant to having God as our all-satisfying treasure (Ephesians 2:3). This is an appalling offense to the greatness of God (Jeremiah 2:12-13).

4) All of us are subject to God’s just Condemnation.

“The wages of sin is death...”
(Romans 6:23).

We have all belittled the glory of God. How? By preferring other things above him. By our ingratitude, distrust and disobedience. So God is just in shutting us out from the enjoyment of his glory forever. “They will suffer the

punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might” (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

The word “hell” is used in the New Testament twelve times - eleven times by Jesus himself. It is not a myth created by dismal and angry preachers. It is a solemn warning from the Son of God who died to deliver sinners from its curse. We ignore it at great

risk. If the Bible stopped here in its analysis of the human condition, we would be doomed to a hopeless future. However, this is not where it stops.

5) God sent his only son Jesus to provide eternal life and joy.

“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...”
(1 Timothy 1:15)

The good news is that Christ died for sinners like us. And he rose physically from the dead to validate the saving power of his death and to open the gates of eternal life and joy (1 Corinthians 15:20). This means God can acquit guilty sinners and still be just. (Romans 3:25-26). “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). Coming home to God is where all deep and lasting satisfaction is found.

6) The benefits purchased by the death of Christ belong to those who repent and trust him.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out”
(Acts 3:19).

“Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved”
(Acts 16:31).

“Repent” means to turn from all the deceitful promises of sin. “Faith” means being satisfied with all that God promises to be for us in Jesus. “He who believes in me,” Jesus says, “shall never thirst” (John 6:35). We do not earn our salvation. We cannot merit it (Romans 4:4-5). It is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is a free gift (Romans 3:24). We will have it if we cherish it above all things (Matthew 13:44). When we do that, God’s aim in creation is accomplished: He is glorified in us and we are satisfied in him - forever.

Does this make sense to you?

Do you desire the kind of gladness that comes from being satisfied with all that God is for you in Jesus? If so, then God is at work in your life.

What should you do?

Turn from the deceitful promises of sin. Call upon Jesus to save you from the guilt and punishment and bondage. “All who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

Start banking your hope on all that God is for you in Jesus. Break the power of sin’s promises by faith in the superior satisfaction of God’s promises. Begin reading the Bible to find his precious and very great promises, which can set you free (2 Peter 1:3-4). Find a Bible-believing church and begin to worship and grow together with other people who treasure Christ above all things (Philippians 3:7).

The best news in the world is that there is no necessary conflict between our happiness and God’s holiness. Being satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus magnifies him as a great Treasure.

“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (Psalm 16:11)

