

THE JOY OF CREATION

In Genesis 1:31, God - as in several other places in the creation story - *“saw all that he had made, and it was very good”*. Creation was a joyous act. It was God’s delight in the goodness of what He was doing. Isn’t that how being creative often is for us too?

Very often our most joyous moment is a creative moment. When we look back at it we see “the radiance of that moment,” it doesn’t matter what it might be – planting a garden, painting a picture or a house. And you want to go back and look at it over and over again.

- Have you ever created something you feel that way about?
- Describe what you’ve made and how it made you feel.

In the book *Living in Christ’s Presence: Final Words on Heaven and God’s Kingdom*, author Dallas Willard said the “creation was play for God, and so when we play, we can experience it [God’s kingdom].” We can experience joy as He did and does. When we’re able to create, we see God. We see what is good in the play. In the kingdom of God, we are set free to play. Pure play is abandoning ourselves to God. God sets us free to play.

A very neat thing Willard says is this, “It’s a joyous God that fills the universe.”

- Do you see that? Do you see God’s joy? Can you describe what gives him joy?
- Do you feel you can join God in His joy?
- Or do you have trouble with this?

But what about what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 6:10? He talks about being *“sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.”*

Willard: “Joy is consistent with sorrow because it is a realization of what’s really going on in the world under God [in God’s kingdom]. It’s joy.”

- How is that possible?

Dallas Willard says that it's tied to our pervasive sense of well-being, knowing that even through difficulties we're okay, we're blessed. That's a reason for joy. It's a feeling that you're okay, even when things are not so good.

- Can you understand this? Does it make sense?

In many situations we face we will see difficulties and joys. God's grace can influence us and encourage us in all situations. We need His grace, whether we fail or succeed. Whether we're in pain or joyful, God is involved in them all. He is with everyone and He loves everyone. We will be okay.

*Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

Habakkuk 3:17-18