

General Topics :: Is it a Sin to Have Fun?

Is it a Sin to Have Fun? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/9/20 23:14

I admit, this thread title is rather shallow and weak, spiritually speaking. But that reminds me of Jesus' first miracle, when he changed water into wine at a wedding. It lacked spiritual depth. It was unimpressive, weak. In fact, I can't think of a more "foolish" way to launch his career – by doing something as unimportant as covering up someone's embarrassment and then giving everybody a bunch of fun – in fact, more fun than any of them needed.

Zac Poonen shares some insightful observations of this miracle in his sermon, "The Danger of Pharisaism". He did some calculating and concluded that Jesus may have provided each guest with an extra 5 or 6 glasses of wine. To me, that is just plain indulgence – and sends the wrong message about God! It also insults my righteousness and my entire value system: Christians should not be indulgent or extravagant. They should be careful not to have too much fun. (I still can't come to terms with David dancing naked in the streets, or Mary pouring perfume on Jesus' body.)

Zac Poonen explains why Jesus chose this as his first miracle. He was demolishing the hypocritical religious system of the day. And boy was it a stingy system! – stingy with grace. It was filled with prohibitions, and just left everybody with a lot of guilt. To be honest, I can't imagine the Pharisees cracking too many smiles, or dancing spontaneously in the aisles.

As I was listening to Poonen's sermon, I got a crazy idea: What if Jesus came to ... say... Detroit or Toronto, and went to the wedding of the mayor's daughter – where a few hundred important guests were attending. What if the wine ran out and Jesus decided to make wine come out of the drinking fountains. That would be crazy, wouldn't it!

But, then, might God not possibly do just that with his grace – pour it out lavishly – all over the city, those places where there is nothing good whatsoever? Would that not be just like him?

Our sense of justice would expect God to send judgment ... but just what if he sent grace instead ... what if people started dancing around for joy, pouring out perfume, dancing naked... (oh, no, not that one!)

God's grace can be hard to take:

"I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.... Now, O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live." Jonah 4:2

Just some unimpressive thoughts....

By the way, I highly recommend Zac Poonen's sermon! (the featured sermon, right now)

Diane

Re: Is it a Sin to Have Fun?, on: 2007/9/21 1:10

I'll give you some really good advice:

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these God will bring thee into judgment." Ecc. 11:9

Re: Is it a Sin to Have Fun? - posted by poet (), on: 2007/9/21 4:22

I'd like to comment about the whole wine incident.

If you notice if not for the making of wine, concerning Jesus' ministry, the first thing he did was go into the temple and cleared it with cords. and he also ended his ministry with the same action. it was like book ends to a wonderful career.

Jesus was asked to do something from his mother that was out of sync with the fathers plans.

"it is not my time yet"

Why do we think Jesus complied to Mary's request.

#1 Grace\mercy

#2 Her obvious faith in his ability and Character to comply,

#3 Jesus was possibly still under her authority at that moment, as a guest with her.

but after that he was on to his ministry..

There may be something to that point due to the Jewish custom of the age of independence.

I am quite certain that the wine was not made for people to get drunk on. but unfortunately was a result do to Jesus' obedience to Mary's request.

Ever notice people getting what they pray for, regretting ever asking for it. God's funny that way.

but to answer your question is it a sin to have fun/ no it is not a sin to have fun, but having fun at the expense of the revealed word of God is a sin.

the word of God is clear about what is sinful.

my two cents.

Re: Is it a Sin to Have Fun?, on: 2007/9/21 5:22

Roadsign said

Quote:
-----I admit, this thread title is rather shallow and weak, spiritually speaking. But that reminds me of Jesus' first miracle, when he changed water into wine at a wedding. It lacked spiritual depth. It was unimpressive, weak. In fact, I can't think of a more "foolish" way to launch his career -- by doing something as unimportant as covering up someone's embarrassment and then giving everybody a bunch of fun -- in fact, more fun than any of them needed.

I don't believe Jesus' first miracle "lacked spiritual depth". Consider:

1. He honoured his mother's request to perform the miracle *even though it was not the right time to reveal Himself*. Though He may have desired to wait a while longer to reveal Himself, by submitting His will to hers He fulfilled the Fifth Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (EXO 20:12). By obeying the Commandment to obey His mother, He also honoured The Lord, His Father.

2. The transubstantiation from water to wine helps us identify Him with "Melchizedek king of Salem" who "brought forth bread and wine" (GEN 14:18); as did the breaking of the seven loaves to feed the multitude, "And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full" (MATT 15:37).

As David prophesied, "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek..." (PSA 110:4)

The author of Hebrews affirms, "...the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec..." (HEB 6:20)

3. It helps affirm another of David's prophecies:

"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; And *wine that maketh glad the heart of man*, and *oil* to make his face to shine, and *bread* which strengtheneth man's heart." (PSA 104:14-15)

Jesus transmuted water into wine, brake seven loaves of bread into a feast for a multitude, and we know He was anointed in perfume and oil from head to foot...

...and, as you observed, wine can make the heart glad.

4. And, as you observed, He not only saved the host embarrassment, but earned the man honour as well, as the ruler said, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: thou hast kept the good wine until now." (JOHN 2:10)

Thus, Jesus honoured God, His mother, and the bridegroom before His own honour.

Quote:
-----As I was listening to Poonen's sermon, I got a crazy idea: What if Jesus came to ... say... Detroit or Toronto, and went to the wedding of the mayor's daughter - where a few hundred important guests were attending. What if the wine ran out and Jesus decided to make wine come out of the drinking fountains. That would be crazy, wouldn't it!

I'm wary of the phrase "important guests".

"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons... If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But *if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*" (JAM 2:1-9)

I'm also wary of imagining Jesus performing parlour tricks for the rich; like making fountains spout wine:

"And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." (MATT 4:6)

Here, Satan tempts our Lord to "show off" by jumping off the ledge and flying around the Temple. Jesus doesn't do anything for vain glory.

Quote:
-----But, then, might God not possibly do just that with his grace - pour it out lavishly - all over the city, those places where there is nothing good whatsoever? Would that not be just like him?

God pours out grace upon grace to the tortured Earth and sinful Man every day - that's why the Earth's not a cinderblock ... yet...

The very fact that we exist at all, and time continues marching forward, is immense proof of God's Good Grace.

Quote:
-----Our sense of justice would expect God to send judgment ... but just what if he sent grace instead ... what if people started dancing a round for joy, pouring out perfume, dancing naked... (oh, no, not that one!)

Justice, in the name of Jesus Christ, is on the way with ten thousands of His saints. We are still in the "Grace period" before His arrival. There are two witnesses/prophets yet to come. On the one hand, they will be mourning for the world in sackcloth and ashes. On the other, they will consume and annihilate their enemies with the Holy Fire of The Word...

There is "a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance," (ECC 3:4). Looking around at the state of men and women, families, communities, cities, nations, and the world... what time do you think it is?

One last thing; David was *not* naked. He wore an ephod - a religious apron-like thing - alone, in view of everyone, to display his complete reliance on God, and God alone (as opposed to the ephod and shorts, or the ephod and a three-piece suit - he needed everyone to know it was God alone that sustained him).

"The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (PSA 18:2)

Sorry, didn't mean to take the fun out of your post >:')

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/9/21 9:05

Quote:

----- David was not naked. He wore an ephod...

Whew! I can handle that better! I sure don't want to go overboard and get unreasonable.

But still, the question lurks in my mind: "Just how much joy is reasonable, how much is sheer indulgence and improper. Is it wrong to actually experience joy in the flowers, the blue sky, a beautiful musical composition, a steak, a glass of wine, or should joy be carefully guarded and controlled these days, lest it draw me away from my calling to be burdened for the troubles of the world. Should all joy that is not a direct response from a Jesus-thought be discarded?

In the early days of my "awakening" - ie new birth in the Spirit, I became deeply sensitive to the deeper problem of sin at work in those around me, and beyond. That included sin that was finely-packaged (ie, no evidence of the "wicked" stuff), I would get so burdened by the sin problem that I would be literally doubled over in pain. I couldn't even stand up straight.

During those days a friend and I would pray together for revival. I remember my friend saying to my pastor, "I am praying that God gives me HIS burden for all the sin of the world." The pastor said, "That's not a good idea". Later I understood what he meant. I realized that if I were to peer more deeply into evil and let my mind dwell there, I would surely be consumed by it.

How do we keep protected from sinking into the pit of despondency over the troubles of the world? (Which is where Satan is forever luring us)

Perhaps a good place to gain insight is to examine the experience of Jesus himself, and the apostles. After all, they all talk about joy. What gave them joy, and how deeply did they experience it?

"Taste and see that the Lord is good." Ps. 34:8

Diane

Re: David Brainerd: He knew how to have joy - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/9/22 10:33

It seems strange to go to the (<http://www.eternallifeministries.org/brainerd.htm>) Diary of David Brainerd to gain insight on the topic of positive emotions. Yet, I'd say, he is our expert!

David's life was anything but fun! It was filled with suffering – illness, rejection, loneliness, poverty, deprivation, and grief. He suffered from melancholy (archaism for depression). And yet, as I read through his OWN words about his OWN experience, I see nothing remotely similar to the clinical depression that would be described in our psychiatry texts, or the kind the psychiatrist encounters in his office – those with flat affect, repressed anger, intense sadness, chronic despair, deadened emotions, eating and sleeping irregularities, etc. Brainerd did not need Prozac and he did not need a therapist to uncover his buried anger and past woundings.

What struck me was Brainerd's powerful raw expressions of joy and delight – intermingled with intense negative emotions, ex complaints about his utter failure to measure up to God's standards, loneliness etc. (In the Psalms we also see this intermingling of strong positive and negative emotions.)

I remember discussions back in 70's among our church peers. We would ask, "Shouldn't we be allowed to see just some movies? have just one glass of wine? etc. We were trying to break free from the glum and gloom of pharisaism but were really still being very stingy with ourselves. We could not comprehend the intense pleasure (of soul) that we could experience through our union with Christ. (God forbid that you'd be too happy.. you might get indulgent!)

In more recent years I have discovered a different phenomenon in church circles – the other side of the same coin, I'd say. Now we try super hard to muster up positive emotion and experience – so hard that we repress the negative. Spiritual Christians aren't supposed to ever be glum (like the Pharisees). But by heading in that direction, we merely become Pharisees all over again. It's living a lie.

We can never accuse Brainerd of living a lie. Nor can we accuse him of having "unfair" circumstantial advantages. He had none! So what made him write something like this:

"...my soul was filled with light and love, so that I was almost in an ecstasy; my body was so weak I could scarcely stand."

"I felt at the same time an exceeding tenderness..."

Cont'd
Diane

Re: Is it a Sin to Have Fun? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/9/22 11:53

Quote:
-----To me, that is just plain indulgence – and sends the wrong message about God! It also insults my righteousness and my entire value system: Christians should not be indulgent or extravagant.

Ah yes ... Those 'little schemes' we cook up in our heads to paraphrase Philologos. Love what you have presented here sister. What this reminds me of is something that I have stuck up in the cobwebs from Oswald Chambers, it presents a 'wiggle' and if I am to understand that it is that paradoxical thing that leaves one with 'what can you say?' Or might even makes us uncomfortable depending on how rigid our dispositions are. We can take the didactic route and over do it, surely the scriptures are evident on drunkenness and indulgence all these things ... I don't know, but I just absolutely love the thwarting of these rigid constructs that leave us with no wonder and mystery of what God might do in any given situation. Rather than pitting one against another or proving things out, another that came quickly to mind is the plucking of heads of wheat on the Sabbath, sure He explained it but still ... How many other things did the Lord do without giving any explanation as to why?

Weddings, baptism ... (*His baptism*), *Grand* occasions in their very essence. They thrill the heart, or at least this one. My

own wedding, some of the snapshots etched in the memory;

Quote:
-----Is it wrong to actually experience joy in the flowers, the blue sky, a beautiful musical composition, a steak, a glass of wine, or should joy be carefully guarded and controlled these days, lest it draw me away from my calling to be burdened for the troubles of the world. Should all joy that is not a direct response from a Jesus-thought be discarded?

You touched something right there, *the blue sky*. We were married at the Ponderosa Ranch in Nevada (The site of the old TV show) in the old, white, steeple top church with pews. There was a precious moment outside after praying with the old pastor and my best man where I was left alone just before the ceremony ... Was praying silently, so assured, no, more assured of what was to take place as I have ever been in my life to that point. My heart was filled with gratitude and thankfulness to the Lord and ... I looked up to the cross on that steeple top against the most sheerest, clear blue sky I had ever seen ... Joy, peace ... the sense of the Lord's presence, the wonder at His working to bring this all to pass ... *so incredibly thankful!*

And to think the next moment would almost ... As I stood awaiting my bride, my wife to be forever with this peace that passes all understanding ... When the doors opened, two things simultaneous occurred, the position of the sun was such that as she entered it just *flooded* the church with light almost blinding me and with herself shrouded with this ... glory and the beauty of her whole person, it literally and physically took my breath away.

A little digression there, but I think you are on to something here sister.

Re:, on: 2007/9/22 17:34

Jesus had (has) a terrific sense of humour, which is obscured by the reverential interpretation of some of the parables for example. He also enjoyed things that ordinary people enjoy (the Pharisees accused Him of being a glutton and a drunkard because He went to parties) - yet without sin.

I remember going to a birthday party of one of the folks in work. I'm not really into parties (unlike Jesus!) and would rather have stayed at home. Although I usually enjoy myself quite well when I do make the effort.

Someone took photos and one of them was of me, next to three of the others sitting down in a row. I was the only Christian, the only one not drinking alcohol, and the only one in the photo looking happy. The three seated seemed really miserable, while I was going playfully after someone with a view to hitting them with a balloon!

Apparently in Luke 10:21, "rejoiced" literally means that Jesus *jumped for joy!*

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Blessings

Be joyful!

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/9/22 17:45

Quote:

Jesus had (has) a terrific sense of humour, which is obscured by the reverential interpretation of some of the parables for example.

Dorothy Sayers in "Man Born to be King" (plays about the life of Christ) has Jesus telling the story of the unjust steward in a rather humorous way (also giving a possible interpretation of why He said that the master commended the man). Matthew, as an ex tax-collector and knowing all the tricks, roars with laughter when the master in the story says to the steward

ward, "Fellow, you're a thorough scoundrel! ...But I do admire your thoroughness!"

Blessings

Jeannette

Re: Worship: appreciating our Creator - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/9/22 19:28

Quote:
----- ... As I stood awaiting my bride, my wife to be forever with this peace that passes all understanding ... When the doors opened, two things simultaneous occurred, the position of the sun was such that as she entered it just flooded the church with light almost blinding me and with her self shrouded with this ... glory and the beauty of her whole person, it literally and physically took my breath away.

Is this not what it means to worship our Lord: to delight in such precious moments, in beauty, in his creation, in his hand at work in our lives?

No working up of anything.. nothing contrived, forced... just taking it in and enjoying, a compliment to the Creator.

Diane

Re: Is it a Sin to Have Fun? - posted by caldwell1 (), on: 2007/9/22 22:57

Question: Is it a sin to have fun?

Answer: No

May you enjoy Jesus tonight
Brian :-)