

LAUGHTER

-Ryan Parsons-

I've been spending a lot of time recently with tiny humans who can count their age in months rather than years. I love singing with them in the morning to greet the day. Of course, smiles and snuggles are top priorities. But my all-time favorite is belly laughter. Some of us (a certain 10-year-old) are experts at engaging a child with love and silliness that creates laughter that cannot be contained even by the most stoic child. Laughter is not something we appreciate randomly. It is something we actively pursue. We love to laugh.

It is a special moment when a child for the first time gets so tickled in their soul that a laugh pours out of them like pure joy. It's contagious, and I am reminded that I seldomly see laughter in people apart from relationships. It's not spontaneous but comes from a joyful movement in the soul. Real laughter can't be fabricated. It is designed.

"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!"

Psalm 32:11 ESV

This calls to mind biblical joy. It is a movement of the soul that produces rejoicing and shouting. But, like laughter, it isn't produced apart from a relationship. The psalmist repeatedly talks about this exuding joy from a relationship with the Lord. So likewise, as Christ's disciples, joy cannot become a fruit in our life apart from the Holy Spirit dwelling in us (Gal. 5:22).

Psalm 126

- 1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
- 3 The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.

May God bless you as you spend time with him this week. May you be filled with a joyful soul and laughter as you reflect on the great things he has done for you and us.

Hesed,
Ryan