

WISDOM UNIVERSITY

PROVERBS 8

QUADRUPLE JOY



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

What's the hardest thing for people to believe? For those who have no consciousness of sin, it's hard for them to believe that God could not love them. Such people need to be convicted of their sin to seek mercy. However, for those of us who have some awareness of our sinfulness and folly, the hardest thing for us to believe is

that God could love us, want to be with us, and desires relationship with us. Such doubting unbelief can severely hamper spiritual life and joy. Proverbs 8 reveals God's love in an amazingly reassuring way, encouraging us to receive God's love in enjoy assurance of it in Christ.

CONTEXT

Throughout chapters 1-7, Wisdom and Folly have been competing for our attention. God's Wisdom has called the foolish and ignorant away from sin, and to God's wise ways.

Many of the arguments have been based upon what Folly and Wisdom do for people, with the stress being on the advantages and benefits of Wisdom over Folly. Here, though, the argument is based more on who Wisdom is.

In Proverbs 8, God's Wisdom assumes personality and calls men away from darkness and death to light and life (1-21, 32-36) and does so on the basis of His existence before the creation, and his delighted involvement in creation (22-31).

I. Wisdom Existed Before the Creation of the World (22-26)

- A. God possessed Wisdom before the creation (22)
- B. God established Wisdom before the creation (23)
- C. God brought forward Wisdom before the creation (24-26)

II. Wisdom Delighted in the Creation of the World (27-31)

- A. Wisdom was present when God made everything (27-29)
- B. Wisdom delighted in the creation (30-31)

I want to just take a moment to address an important translation issue in verse 22.

"The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth" (22) [NKJV & ESV similar].

"The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began" (22) [NIV].

The Hebrew verb can be translated both ways. But the context clearly indicates that it's not merely a demonstration of Wisdom here but the Son of God who is eternal. It is best to use the translation "possess" (each belonged to the other) rather than "brought forth first" which suggests one was there before the other, and one created the other.



**How do we see God's love in these verses?
It starts with God the Father's love for his Son.**



1. THE FATHER'S DELIGHT IN THE SON (30A)

*"Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight" [NKJV, ESV similar].
"Then I was the craftsman at his side, I was filled with delight day after day" [NIV].*

I was beside him. There are two distinct persons in this relationship. There's an "I" and a "him." "Beside" indicates unity, harmony, and nearness. The evident equality of the "I" and the "him" confirms that both persons are equally God.

I was a master craftsman. This can be translated "skillful artist" and refers to the Son's works of creation in which he made something good out of nothing (John 1:3), and his planned work of redemption in which he would make something glorious out of ruin.

I was daily his delight. We know this was the case during the Son's earthly life (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Col. 1:13), but here we're given an insight into his pre-earthly life in heaven. The Father and the Son were wrapped up in one another.

We cannot overstate the greatness of the Father's delight in his Son (Jn. 3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 15:9, 10; 17:24). This love for the Son is not self-denying, sacrificial, and merciful, but a self-satisfying, fulfilling, and deserved love of delight and pleasure. When the Father looked at the Son, he enjoyed him, admired him, cherished him, prized him, relished him, and was thrilled with him (Prov. 10:1; 15:20). In contrast to normal fatherhood where the delight is sometimes mixed with disappointment, this was all delight, unmixed delight.

APPLICATION

God so loved his Son. Take some time to envisage this joyful, happy scene of perfect love. Think of how much joy you take in your children. You are happy when they are happy. Their happiness makes you happy. No Father has ever delighted in his Son as much as this Father delighted in his Son.

God so loved his sons and daughters. Then take time and eternity to think about how "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Can you doubt the father's love if he gave you his own Son? (Rom. 8:32).

GOD SO LOVED HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS
THAT HE SPARED NOT HIS SON FROM SLAUGHTER



Was that love one way or two way?
It was two-way.



2. THE SON'S DELIGHT IN THE FATHER (30B)

"Rejoicing always before him" [NKJV & ESV]. "Rejoicing always in his presence" (NIV).

The root of the word for "rejoice" here means "to laugh, to play." It's a word that means intense celebration or jubilation. It's the picture of a delightful child playing before his delighted father. The Son cannot imagine anyone he'd rather be with and spend time with. There is more pleasure and delight here than has ever been enjoyed by anyone upon earth or in heaven. Why was the Son so happy?

Negatively

- It was because he was not yet abased and debased in his earthly state of humiliation.
- He was not yet a battered, bruised, and besieged creature.
- He had not yet experienced sorrow, poverty, frowns, pain, and temptation.

Positively

- It was holy happiness. There's nothing so happy as holy happiness.
- It was intimate happiness. The nearer the union, the closer the communion.
- It was divine happiness: Great persons have great pleasures. This was greater than any pleasure that could be experienced between a creature and a creature, God and a creature, a creature and God. It was God and God, infinite delight in infinite delight

APPLICATION

Banish the thought that God is a miserable spoilsport out to destroy your happiness and fun. Destroy the caricature that God is an angry tyrannical dictator who just demands and demands and commands.

Rather, use this passage to enter into the holy of holies, and there you will find the joy of joys. Do you see the possibility, prospect, and even promise that other sons and also daughters may rejoice in God's presence?

ENTER THE HOLY OF HOLIES
AND YOU'LL FIND JOY OF JOYS.



This seems a bit self-centered. Does God love anyone outside of himself?
Yes, God also delights in the world.



3. THE SON'S DELIGHT IN THE WORLD (31)

*"Rejoicing in his inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men " [NKJV & ESV].
Rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind" [NIV].*

The Son rejoiced in the world.

- **The scene of his work:** He delighted in making the world, filling it with inhabitants, sustaining and providing for it, because it would be the scene of his saving work.
- **The instrument of his work:** It could be translated, "Rejoicing in what he would inhabit" referring to his human nature.
- **The objects of his work:** Using the translation of "rejoicing in what he would inhabit" could refer to the people he would save and take up residence in.

The Son rejoiced in humanity

He went from "Let us make man" to "Let us save man." The Son's delight in the Father spilled over into the world and the sinners in it. Here he embraces lost humanity and longs to redeem them. He did not just endure his work of salvation, he enjoyed it. He longed to be with us and anticipated it with happy readiness.

APPLICATION

Although the Son had supreme joy in the Father, and was totally satisfied in that, he chose to "look over the Father's shoulder" and delight in lost sinners like us as well. When the Son came to save, he did not come reluctantly but happily.

Believer, he did not save you because he had to but because he wanted to. Unbeliever, your unsaved state is not the result of Christ's reluctance and hesitation, but of yours. Heaven is waiting to bust into happiness if you would repent.

CHRIST SAVES NOT WITH RELUCTANCE
BUT WITH REJOICING



That's an incredible offer of love and happiness.
How do I respond?



4. OUR DELIGHT IN GOD?

Are you rejoicing in God the Father?

The Father parted with the best of Sons for the worst of sinners. Who would deliver a child, the child of our greatest delight, our only child, to death, for even the greatest inheritance in the world? And God did that for us!

How does the Father feel when he sees his beloved Son despised, slighted, neglected, and even used as a swear?

Are you rejoicing in the Son?

He left divine joys to come to a human jungle. He left a world of love and joy to come to a world of hate and sorrow. He delighted in lost humanity. He looked forward to coming to save his lost and perishing people. It thrilled him and excited him. What's our response? Hostility, disinterest, 1% happiness, or 110% happiness. What does your relationship with Jesus look like? Is it all one-sided? How weird is that?

Are you rejoicing in the salvation of sinners?

What would make you happiest person in this world? We're all pursuing happiness, but most of us are just pursuing it like everyone else is trying to pursue it. We've not really asked, "What would make me doubly, triply, quadruply happy? The salvation of my children, brothers, sisters, friends, neighbors, colleagues. That will give you a joy like no other, yet how many of us are dedicated to that pursuit of happiness?

DELIGHTING IN GOD WILL MAKE US
MORE DELIGHTED IN THE LOST

CONCLUSION



PRAYER: Ever-happy God, share your happiness in me with me, so that I can be happy in you and others. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

Online Articles

- [How God made me happy in him](#) by John Piper
- [Good News: God is Happy](#) by John Piper
- [Gospel of the Happy God](#) by Fred Sanders
- [8 Lessons on Evangelism from Proverbs](#) by David Murray

Books

- [The Pleasures of God](#) by John Piper
- [The Wisdom of God: Seeing Jesus in the Psalms and Wisdom Books](#) by Nancy Guthrie

Discussion Questions

1. To what degree do you doubt God's love for you and how does it affect your spiritual life?
2. What makes you happy about the person you love most in the world? What made God happy about the Son of his love?
3. How conscious was the Son of his Father's love when he was in the world? Was there any time when this changed?
4. How did this sermon change your view of God and therefore your view of yourself?
5. In what ways can you increase your joy in God the Father, your joy in Christ, and your joy in the salvation of sinners?
6. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned here. What role did the Spirit have in this scene?

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QUADRUPLE JOY



Use God's delight in himself and sinners to delight in God and increase your assurance and evangelism.



Hard to believe God's love

- Hampers spiritual life
- Hinders spiritual joy

Biblical answer?



Father's delight in the Son

- I was beside him
- I was a master craftsman
- I was daily his delight

GOD SO LOVED HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS THAT HE SPARED NOT HIS SON FROM SLAUGHTER

Only one-way?



Son's delight in the Father

- Holy happiness
- Intimate happiness
- Divine happiness

ENTER THE HOLY OF HOLIES, YOU'LL FIND JOY OF JOYS

Only himself?



Son's delight in the world

- Son rejoiced in the world
- Son rejoiced in humanity

CHRIST SAVES NOT WITH RELUCTANCE, BUT WITH REJOICING

How do I respond?



Our delight in God?

- Rejoicing in the Father
- Rejoicing in the Son
- Rejoicing in sinners?

DELIGHTING IN GOD WILL MAKE US MORE DELIGHTED IN THE LOST.

Action?