



## Picturing God

How do you picture God? As a grumpy grandpa? A prude who raises his hackles if he sees a smile? A stern Superman who damns us to hell for slight miscues? Or do you think that the Lord grins on occasion? Enjoys a clean story? Is glad when you and your spouse have good sex?

Some think of God as humorless and sitting in somber silence. He does get angry. Our hate, greed, and neglect of the poor can't please Him. But he created us to enjoy life. He gave us far more smile muscles than frown ones. He likely delighted in your child's first steps.

Do you doubt that God smiles? The Lord must have a sense of humor. Why else would he create platypuses and porpoises, camels and pigs, baboons and human beings?

Consider three more proofs of the Lord's good nature. First, Jesus received invitations to weddings, but not to perform ceremonies draped in a sad, black robe. People enjoyed his company. Second, little children loved Jesus. Mothers brought kids so he could bless them. What good mother wants a scowling parson touching her tyke?

Third, the Bible describes some people who were genuinely sorry for mistakes. Arriving with dejected looks, they prepared for penitential worship. But the Lord didn't want crestfallen faces. Rather, he instructed. **"Do not grieve for the joy of the Lord is your strength . . .celebrate with great joy," (Nehemiah 8: see verses 9-12).** Read on and smile. God has a sense of humor.

He loves gratitude and smiles: **"Rejoice in the Lord always," (Philippians 4:24).**

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