

## LAUNCH

Can you think of a recent time where you received a small gift or benefit that you were not expecting? What was it and how did it make you feel?

In his book – *'The life you've always wanted'* John Ortberg writes this:

Mallory was out of the water, but was doing what has come to be known in our family as the Dee Dah Day dance. This consists of her running around and around in circles, singing over and over again, "Dee dah day, dee day day." It is a relatively simple dance expressing great joy. When she is too happy to hold it in any longer, when words are inadequate to give voice to her euphoria, she has to dance to release her joy. So she does the Dee Dah Day.

On this particular occasion, I was irritated. "Mallory, hurry!" I prodded. So she did — she began running in circles faster and faster and chanting "dee dah day" more rapidly. "No, Mallory, that's not what I mean! Stop with the dee dah day stuff, and get over here so I can dry you off. Hurry!"

Then she asked a profound question: "Why?"

I had no answer. I had nowhere to go, nothing to do, no meetings to attend, no sermons to write. I was just so used to hurrying, so preoccupied with my own little agenda, so trapped in this rut of moving from one task to another, that here was life, here was joy, here was an invitation to the dance right in front of me — and I was missing it.

So I got up, and Mallory and I did the Dee Dah Day dance together.

In what ways does this little story challenge you?

## DISCOVERY & UNDERSTANDING

In verses 2-11 of Romans 5, what reasons does Paul give for rejoicing (or boasting, depending on the translation)?

What are the key benefits of having 'peace with God'? Are you experiencing this peace at the moment and if not, what might be hindering it?

How might peace with God affect our relationships with others?

What exactly is 'the hope of the glory of God'? how do we rejoice in it or indeed boast about it (v2)?

How does suffering for Christ's sake produce the character changes mentioned in verses 3-4?

Can you think of any examples or situations where this was true for you?

What qualities were developed as a result?

Can you think of a time when someone made a significant sacrifice for you (v5-8)? What was the sacrifice and how did it benefit you? In what ways is Christ's sacrifice of a higher order to the examples that you gave?

## APPLICATION

Spend time thanking Jesus for his amazing sacrifice

You may want to worship and sing songs that speak of his sacrifice (try *Revelation song* – Kari Jobe sings it beautifully)

CS Lewis writes 'joy is the serious business of heaven'. What can we put into place to make our lives more joyful?