

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Philippians 4:4

1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
 2. All Thy works with joy sur-round Thee, earth and heav'n re - flect Thy rays;
 3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
 4. Mor - tals, join the might - y cho - rus, which the morn - ing stars be - gan;

hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, op - 'ning to the sun a - bove.
 stars and an - gels sing a - round Thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!
 Fa - ther love is reign - ing o'er us, broth - er love binds man to man.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way;
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - 'ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our Broth - er— all who live in love are Thine;
 Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife,

Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day!
 sing - ing bird and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in Thee!
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!
 joy - ful mu - sic leads us on - ward in the tri - umph song of life.

TEXT: Henry van Dyke, 1907
 MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee is a powerful example of how music and poetry can work together to engender meaningful emotion. Such power can be destructive, as when good music amplifies bad theology or when accurate theology is obscured or even disrespected by unlovely, careless adornment. Nevertheless, as the poetry of Scripture itself proves, beautiful lyricism rooted in God's truth proclaimed by faithful believers generates real worship.

This was Henry Van Dyke's goal in writing this hymn. He specifically set out to compose joy-inspiring lyrics to Beethoven's exuberant melody from his Ninth Symphony (aptly named "Ode to Joy"). Van Dyke was inspired by the beauty of the nearby Berkshire hills in Massachusetts, the joy of unity within his church where he served as a pastor, and the glory of Christ. It is no wonder that the hymn lyrics boldly aim to "melt the clouds of sin and sadness" and "drive the dark of doubt away."

Certainly, this does not happen by avoiding or downplaying the reality of darkness in our world because of sin. Van Dyke himself knew this firsthand as he worked tirelessly as a United States ambassador in the heart of Europe during the first World War. But through his ministry as a pastor and his other areas of work and leadership, he sought to "live in love" and lift others to the "joy divine" found in Christ alone, the only hope for a broken world.

Van Dyke's son remembers how his father told him this hymn should celebrate "the joy to be found in nature and by the one who finds his *first* joy in living his own life in Jesus Christ." In that sense, Van Dyke simply echoes the words of Psalm 66: "Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name. All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name."

Scripture to consider:

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| Psalm 66 | Jeremiah 31 | Philippians 4:4-9 |
| Psalm 104 | Luke 1:46-55 | |
| Isaiah 12 | Romans 15:13 | |