



**2** You can see the outside, not the Inside

You've got to admit: it's hard to see someone wearing a sad face while dancing in a carnival parade. But the occasion could very well be helping to mask a great empty feeling behind a large smile. And while you can see that smile on the outside, who can tell what's on the inside? Are you trying to hide or forget something during this carnival season? Maybe a heartache, a frustration, a big disappointment or disillusionment with life itself?

Please open (unfold) and read inside.



**1** Happy yet?

It's carnival time. Time for everyone to put away their worries, forget their personal debts, leave their loneliness behind... and party on.

Carnival's happiness comes from the fantasy of imagining one's self to be free, uninhibited by limits or censorship and doing all that one wishes. The dictionary defines carnival as "being characterized by unbridled happiness, by the elimination of repression and censorship, by the liberty of critical and erotic attitudes." That is how it has been since its beginning in the Middle Ages.

**7** Now it's up to you

Why don't you pause right now and do something you'll never regret: give your life to God. Tell Him that from now on you want to live according to His will. Your prayer can be like this:

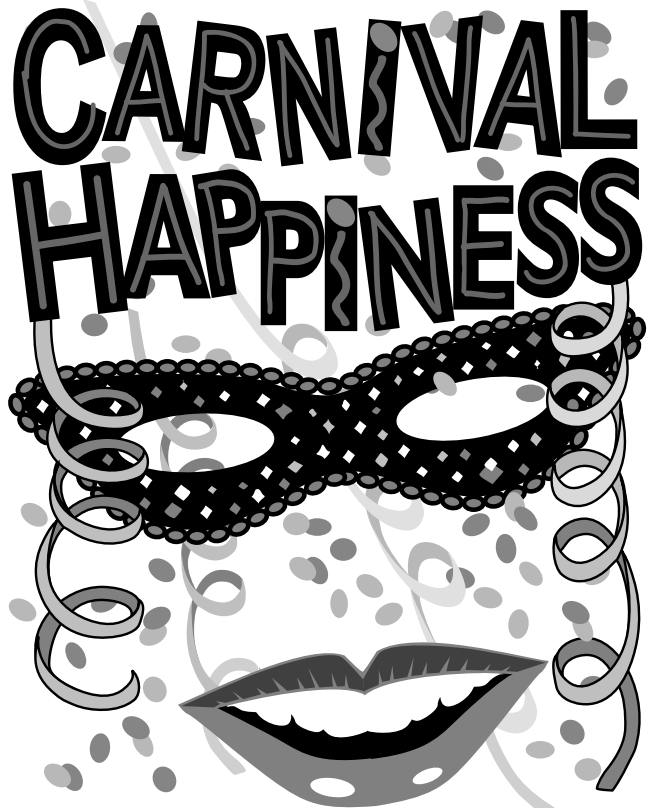
*Lord, thank you for loving me so much that you sent your Son to die for me. I know that only through Jesus can I encounter the true peace and joy that I need so much. I repent of my sins and accept your forgiveness. From now on I invite you to direct my life. Please enter my life right now. In Jesus' name, amen.*

Congratulations! If you asked God for this with all your heart He has forgiven and saved you. And you can be certain that now He has become your Father and your best Friend. The Bible promises: "yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in his name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

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Scripture quotations from the NIV

Read the Bible. Pray. Join a Christian church that teaches Jesus as the only way to God.



Are happiness and joy the same thing?

3

### Playing with fire

The happiness that carnival brings lasts but a few days. The pain caused by promiscuity, excesses, unbridled passion, drinking (with resulting accidents), violence and crime bring consequences that can last a lifetime. Play with fire and you will end up getting burned.

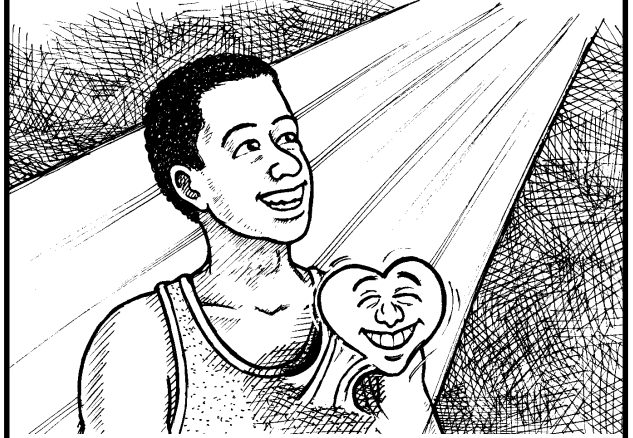
The Bible warns us: "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19 - 21).



4

### Are happiness and joy the same thing?

Happiness and joy are **not** synonymous. It is possible to *feel* very happy and yet *be* very sad, empty and lonely. Happiness is a temporary sensation; joy is a state of mind. Happiness can be prompted by parties, music and colors; joy is the result of real relationships, right decisions and correct actions. That's why carnival can generate happiness but will never lead you to joy.



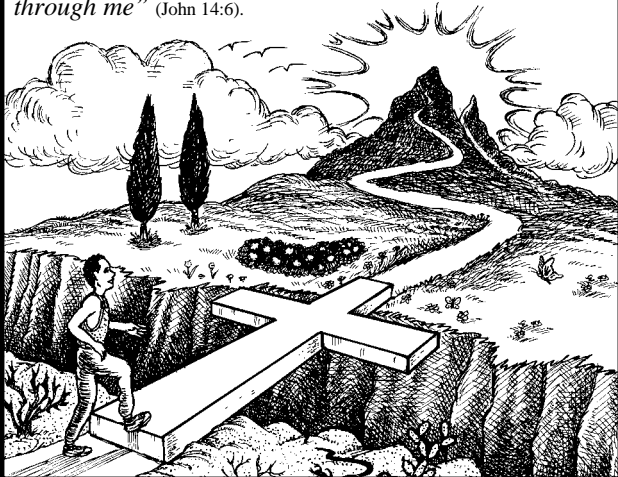
To be happy is to feel the emotion of the moment. To be joyful is to know your life has a purpose and a destiny. It's to being in peace with yourself and your Creator.

5

### The road to joy

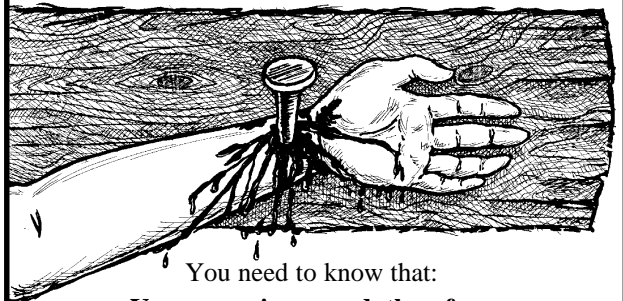
God loves you! And more than anyone He is interested in a true and permanent joyful life for you. Jesus explained that *"the thief (the devil) comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10:10). This *life to the full* is also called *eternal life* in the Bible:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). So: Jesus is the Way to the real joyous life. He Himself said: *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6).



6

### The basic steps



You need to know that:

- **You are a sinner and, therefore, are separated from God.** "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).
- **Only Jesus can pay the penalty for your sins:** "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9).
- **All you have to do is repent, believe and accept Jesus as your personal Saviour:** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

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