

## **Esther and Emmett on 'God, Jesus and washing our hands'!**

Esther: Happy Birthday to me,  
Happy Birthday to me,  
Happy birthday dear Esther  
Happy birthday to me.  
Happy birthday to me,  
Happy birthday to me,  
Happy dear Esther,...

Emmett: Hi Esther.

Esther: Oh, hi Emmett.

Emmett: Gee, Esther, I'm sorry. I totally forgot that it was your birthday today!

Esther: It's not my birthday today.

Emmett: Whew! Then I didn't forget it! ...but, if it's not your birthday, why were you singing Happy Birthday to yourself?

Esther: Oh, I was just practicing.

Emmett Practicing for you birthday?

Esther: No, practicing for washing my hands!

Emmett: You're practicing for washing your hands on your birthday?

Esther: No, I'm practicing for every time I wash my hands, because that's one of the things I have learned during this COVID pandemic.

Emmett: Oh, I get it. We're supposed to wash our hands often, and we can tell how long it should take to wash our hands because...

Esther: ...we should wash our hands for the length of time it takes us to sing the happy birthday song through twice.

Emmett: 'Happy birthday to me' – I love that song. Say, I wonder if they sang Happy Birthday in the time of Jesus?

Esther: I don't think they did, but if Jesus' disciples had sung it while washing their hands it would have saved them from being criticized on one occasion.

Emmett: Someone complained about Jesus?

Esther: Oh yes. In the stories we have about Jesus, we are told that there were two

groups who often complained. One group was called the Pharisees and one was called the scribes. They were groups who were wanting to protect and preserve the Jewish faith by encouraging people to follow the teachings and laws that had been passed on through generations and through the writings of scripture.

Emmett: So , they complained that Jesus' disciples didn't sing 'Happy Birthday'?

Esther: No, but one time some of Jesus's disciples were eating and they hadn't washed their hands before eating.

Emmett: Well, I always wash my hands before I eat. That's a good thing to do. They probably should have said that the disciples should have washed their hands.

Esther: It is good to wash our hands before we eat. I think that what bothered Jesus was that the Pharisees and scribes were 'always' complaining to him about something.

Emmett: What else did they complain about?

Esther: Well, when Jesus told a person who couldn't walk that he could stand up and walk because his sins were forgiven, the scribes complained that only God should be forgiving sins!

Emmett: But the person was now able to walk, right?

Esther: Right. And once they complained that Jesus was eating with the wrong kind of people – people they called sinners and tax-collectors – rather than eating with the people they thought God approved of.

Emmett: But doesn't God love everyone?

Esther: Right. And once Jesus healed a man's hand, but he did so on the sabbath day when no one was supposed to do any work?

Emmett: But he healed the guy, right?

Esther: Right. And they said they thought Jesus was nutty and that he was working with demons.

Emmett: Were 'they' nutty? Jesus was working with God!

Esther: Yep.

Emmett: They sure did complain about a lot of things Jesus did!

Esther: Yes, they did. I think that's why, when they complained about the disciples not washing their hands, Jesus complained about their complaining!

Emmett: Good for Jesus.

Esther: Jesus said that healing people and eating with people and loving people the way God loves people were what they should be paying attention to, rather than always looking for something to complain about or criticize.

Emmett: I think all those things are important too...but I'm still going to wash my hands lots and always before I eat...and sing 'Happy Birthday to me!'

Esther: I don't think Jesus would complain about that, because keeping our hands clean also keeps other people safe, so it's a way of loving other people.

Emmett: Which is what Jesus did, and what God does!

Esther: I'll say 'AMEN' to that.

Emmett: Amen!