

Can (and Should) the Bible Make You Laugh?

I love to laugh. There's something spirit-cleansing about a good, unbridled belly laugh. And when you laugh so hard that tears roll down your cheeks—what a blessing to the soul!

So the other day, when I followed a friend's Facebook link and found absolutely hilarious results that made me laugh until I cried, my soul was abundantly blessed. My kids came up beside me as I watched, and they laughed too. Laughing together with my children—what a blessing, indeed!

What was it that we thought was so funny? Well ... it was a set of photos of Pinterest fails. In case you're not familiar with Pinterest, I'll tell you what I told my kids: Pinterest is a site where people post pictures of things they think are special in some way. The idea is to make those things yourself. A Pinterest fail, therefore, is when someone tries to make something but it doesn't come out right. Sometimes, in fact, it comes out very wrong.

Lest you think we were being cruel by laughing at people's mistakes, let me assure you that the creators of these fails had submitted the pictures themselves as a fail. In other words, they were saying, "Hey, I know this didn't come out quite right. Laugh with me!"

And we did. We laughed in empathy (we've all had things turn out not like we hoped) and outright hilarity.

That time of being together and laughing together was a gift. And, like all good gifts, it came from God (see James 1:17). Too often, without even realizing it, we buy into the mistaken notion that being a Christian is nothing but serious business. While it's true that we must take our relationship with Jesus seriously, it's also true that it's OK to laugh and enjoy the

good gift of humor that God gave us, and even to look for opportunities to laugh.

Did you realize that there's humor all throughout the Bible? For example, in the book of Genesis, when Rebekah is riding a camel on her way to meet her future husband Isaac, most translations state that she "got off" her camel, or something similar. But in fact, the Hebrew word can be translated "fell off" her camel. In other words, it's possible that she looks up, sees Isaac, and is so stunned that she falls right off the camel (see Gen. 24.)

Another example of humor is found in 1 Kings 18. The prophets of Baal and the prophet of God, Elijah, are having a little contest. They have made an altar and laid a sacrifice upon it. Each "side" is supposed to call upon its God to come down and consume the offering. The prophets of Baal called out repeatedly, but with (obviously) no answer. Then Elijah starts a little trash talking. "Cry out louder," he suggests. "Maybe your god is busy. Maybe he's sleeping and can't hear you. Or maybe he's in the bathroom!" (Yes, the Hebrew phrase used there is a euphemism for using the toilet.)

I could go on and on, because there are many equally humorous examples found in Scripture. You see, you and I are not the inventors of humor. God is. He's given us a wonderful gift to use.

Yes, sometimes we use it wrongly. We laugh at someone else's expense, or we laugh at inappropriate things. But humor, properly used, is a blessing from God meant to be enjoyed. In fact, He has promised that humor will benefit us—as much as medicine, sometimes.

Why not thank God for this incredible blessing? (Not convinced it's an incredible blessing? Try to imagine a world where there was no humor.)

Then find something funny and appropriate to laugh at—and

rejoice at this good and perfect gift.

Proverbs 17:22—"A merry heart does good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones."

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. Megan is the author of *Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy* and *Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure* (Regal Books.) She is also a blogger and a stay-at-home mom with five children.*