

A Merry Heart

Proverbs 17:22 In recent years some medical doctors have used “laugh therapy” with their patients. I heard a story about a lady who was healed through laughter. Her doctor prescribed a steady diet of “The Three Stooges.” She was instructed to watch the videos of their old films as much as possible. It worked. She actually laughed her way to health. This secret was known by Solomon, who writes, “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.”

Medical research has discovered that healing enzymes are sent throughout the body when we laugh. Over the years I have learned that God has a sense of humor. He loves to rejoice.

You’ve heard the expression, “An apple a day will keep the doctor away.” I believe “a laugh a day will keep the doctor away.” A great healing comes to us when we are able to laugh at ourselves. When we take ourselves too seriously, we are just no fun to be around. My pappy was a great storyteller, and he had a dry wit. He had lots of friends who always wanted to take him on fishing trips because they enjoyed his stories, humor and company. I believe the disciples felt the same way about Jesus. One of my favorite pictures of Jesus is the one that portrays Him laughing.

In contrast, a broken spirit causes dry bones. This condition in modern terms would be called osteoporosis. The bones naturally become more brittle with old age, but we can hasten this condition if we have a broken spirit. A broken spirit is usually caused by rejection. In counseling many brokenhearted people, I have seen the toll rejection has had on their bodies. It is hard to have a merry heart if we live with an abusive husband or a rebellious child. Yet it is a merry heart that will get us through even oppressive situations.

What can a person who is trapped in an oppressive situation do

to maintain a merry heart?

I gave the answer to this question to a friend who called me today. Her husband emotionally abuses her with his critical, judgmental spirit. In his eyes she can do nothing right. I told her to fill her house with praise when he is at work. Keep praise music on all day and sing songs to her children. All the day long she can sing hymns, psalms, spiritual songs and make melody in her heart to the Lord.

God has given us the garment of praise that lifts the spirit of heaviness. I know if this dear lady will fill her house with praise, she will charge the atmosphere with the presence of the Lord, and her husband will be affected. So many that are oppressed or depressed seek to self-medicate themselves with alcohol, over-the-counter drugs or other drugs. We have God's medicine bottle, and the directions read: Take seven praise pills a day and rejoice in the Lord.

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS, AND AGAIN I SAY, REJOICE!

**READ: 2 Kings 3:1-4:17; Acts 14:8-28; Psalm 140:1-13; Proverbs
17:22**