

Health and Wellness

Provided by Bethany Care Ministry Outreach Program

Laughter is Good Medicine

Life has become a very serious matter for most people these days. We work long stressful hours, if we are lucky enough to still have employment. We try to take care of our families and manage our households. We shop and cook in ways that may help us stretch the dollars so we can give a few gifts. We all know that laughter makes us feel better. So it is more important today than ever to share these positive emotions with our family and friends. Our attitudes may not make a huge difference in the outcome of circumstances, but our smiles or laughter may make it easier for our families to get through these tough times.



So, did Jesus laugh? Spiritual song writer, John Bell, says, "To believe that Jesus was humorless would be to deny part of his humanity." God made us in His image and we have a sense of humor, so it makes sense that God does, too. I guess I don't like the idea of turning God into a stoic savior. So what does the Bible say about laughter? Proverbs 17:22 says, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Laughter is

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infectious, and it is good medicine. Sometimes we laugh because someone else is laughing and we don't even know why. There is growing evidence that laughter is one of the simplest and most powerful immune health builders. According to writer, Jocelyn Hodgson, laughter also

lowers blood pressure, reduces stress hormones, triggers endorphins (our natural painkillers), protects the heart, and even burns calories. Laughter distracts us from our anger, guilt, stress and other negative

emotions. It raises the level of T-cells that fight infection. It helps us relax and recharge.

Laughter also connects us with other people. If you grew up in a family that was all serious work and no play, you have the power to change that family trait now. Learn to laugh with your children or grandchildren. Families that play together become closer. The new trend in parenting is to have a family game night. What a wonderful way to create great family closeness and good memories. Your cheerfulness may also help the rest of your family when they have a less than cheerful attitude. "Happiness breeds happiness."

So in the coming holidays, let us all practice some good clean laughter. Laugh out loud together! We are drawn to cheerful believers. We wonder what they know that we may have missed. So in this season that celebrates the birth of our Savior, there is no better reason to give the gift of a joyous smile. Our smiles and laughter are not only powerful relationship tools but they are also are a great way to show the world the pure joy of our faith.

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