

A GOOD MEDICINE
Prov. 17:22.....

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

"A cheerful heart is a good medicine." American Revised version.

"A cheerful heart helps and heals" is Moffatt's translation.

This verse in the 17th chapter of Proverbs and the 22nd verse with all these translations raises a thought that is of vital interest to all of us.

It is of interest to us because we are all interested in our aches and pains. If you find your conversation lagging, just mention the illness your friend is suffering from and see how soon the ice is broken and the conversation going again.

O Henry has an interesting story that he tells about a thug who was burglarizing a house. He flashed his light on the man in bed and said "Stick up your mitts" The victim raised his right hand. The thug said, "Stick up the other one for you may be able to shoot with either hand." The victim said, "I can not raise it up." "Why?" said the thug. "I have rheumatism in my left shoulder" The thug looked at him and relaxed. "It's a good thing for you that rheumatism and I are good friends." He then went on to discuss with his intended victim the various symptoms of their mutual ailment. They discussed the effect a change in weather has on it etc. They went into details as to the various remedies for the disease such as Rattlesnake oil, Essence of Evergreen, Pott's pain Pulverizer.

This verse is interesting also because all of us have aches and pains. You will hardly find a person who is 100% well. It has improved since I was a boy to the point that some people glory in being almost physically perfect. In my early days you never expected a person to say he was all right. When asked, "How do you feel?" the answer was never more than, "Just tolerable"

From a spiritual standpoint you will hardly find any one who is not just a little below par in his spiritual life. Paul said, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

This text interests us in the third place because all of us want to get rid of our aches and pains. The writer of the text says, "If you want a good medicine try a cheerful heart."

What are some of the merriits of this medicine?

1. It is a remedy easy to take and has no bad after effects. Many of us can remember when calomel and quinine were about all the medicine we had. In those days there were no capsules but you took quinine in coffee. Those after effects. One man exageratingly said that when he went down the street people would stop to listen at the chymes in his ears they were ringing so loud.
2. A cheerful heart involves no risk. When X-Ray first came around I heard of a doctor, who had had but little experience with it burned a person very badly with it. Operations are necessary but many of them are risks and our doctors will tell us so..for instance an exploratory operation. Of course if the patient survives any operation he will have something interesting to talk about all the rest of his life.
3. A cheerful heart is a good medicine because it works. Our doctors are many times aggravated by quacks who make millios of dollars by their ~~flase~~ ^{false} claims to cure anything. One quack you remember was accused by the editor of a leading medical journal and sued for libel but the quack lost of course. He had received millions for pretending to youth back to a bunch of silly old men. There are many remedies that will not work. But here is one that never fails to help. This is true because there is not a fibre of the body that is not effected by the mind. I AM AFFIRMING ONLY WHAT THE WISE MAN OF LONG AGO AFFIRMED THAT A CHEERFUL HEART WILL DO GOOD.

There are thousands of sufferers whose sickness would vanish ~~at the~~ with the coming of a cheerful heart as the

darkness disappears at the coming of the sun. If this prescription is good for the body then surely it is good for the soul. This is a remedy that can:

MINISTER TO A MIND DISHEASED
PLUCK FROM THE MEMORY A ROOTED SORROW
RAZE OUT THE WRITTEN TROUBLES OF THE BRAIN
AND WITH SOME SWEET OBLIVIOUS ANTIDOTE
CLEANSE THE STUFFED BOSOM FROM THAT PERILOUS STUFF
WHICH WEIGHS ON THE HEART.

4. This is a remedy that not only helps the patient but helps others as well. When I take a dose of medicine it helps only me. But if I take the bracing medicine of a cheerful heart the good effects are not confined to me. This some thing is usually what people need most. We live in trying times. We rub elbows with many kill-joys. There are those whose fingers are nimble in stealing away our sunshine. We may steal the blue from our neighbors sky without much effort. Gloom is contagious and we many times have to brace ourselves with the little poem:

GLOOM CAME TO LIVE WITH ME
THE FROMPISH FROWSY THING
BUT ALL MY ROOMS WERE RENTED OUT
TO LOVE AND JOY AND SPRING.

Two ministers went out on a preaching mission. They were whipped, clothes torn off of them and they were thrown in jail but they sang at midnight.

Turn any where most that you will in the O.T. or N.T. and you will find the thrill that meets you from laughing and singing hearts. "Be glad in the Lord, rejoice in the Lord, Be of good cheer. Jesus praying said, "Grant that the joy that is mine may be theirs."

Assuming that you have followed me thus far in proclaiming that a cheerful heart is a good medicine now let's see how we are to avail ourselves of this remedy.

- a. We need to feel that this remedy is within our reach. We are not being offered a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow or a fountain of youth that can not be found. It is not something for the rich and successful and not for the poor and many who have lost their way. It is avaiable to all.

A minister went to visit an actress who had made a great success feeling that he would get an expression of joy from a successful person. But when he congratulated her for her fame saying that he knew her joy was overflowing. But she turned her eyes on him and said, "Don't talk to me about that in spite of it all I am wretched. What I want is rest and peace, peace and rest."

Another day he visited an old maid who was dying with T.B. She was the oldest of a large family of orphans. At the death of her parents she took over. It cost her life. When the minister expressed sympathy she answered joyfully, "Don't pity me. I have had a wonderful life. I would not have missed it for the world." In spite of illness and poverty she had found what her fortunate sister had missed. A cheerful heart is within reach of all because it is independent of things and circumstances.

B. If we are to possess this cheerful heart we need to realize that it comes because of a cause. We do not obtain it by just saying I am going to have a cheerful heart. It comes not by force of will. That mother who told her boy at the circus that she would punish him if he did not have a good time does not appeal to our intelligence. It is a heart condition. We must rid our selves of the civil war in our souls, give up our grudges and hates, I have seen sick people and poor people and rich people who had this cheerful heart but can not recall a cheerful hater.

The SUPREME secret of joy is wholehearted dedication to God.

There is a story of a man who went in quest of a flower called Hearts ease. But upon every road he took he found an obstacle, against which he skinned his shin and bruised his soul. THAT OBSTACLE WAS HIS BROTHER BURDEN. So at last he lifted that burden to his own shoulders. To his amazement he found the wanted flower where the burden had rested.

Even so as you and I go out to lift our brother's burden we shall find blooming in our very path the lovely flower of a CHEERFUL HEART.

"A cheerful heart IS a good medicine."

