

LOL Laughter Is The Best Medicine

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C. Elijah Bronner: If you can't change something, even when hard times come, if you can't change something, learn to laugh at it. Laughter breeds resilience.

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(Music Playing)

And now for "LOL Laughter Is The Best Medicine."

C. Elijah Bronner: Thank you for joining Brothers of The Word, because brother, you need the Word.

We welcome all of you joining us by television and those of you joining us online at brothersoftheword.com or Facebook live. Welcome to today's service. Always a wonderful joy and delight to have you to join us.

Well, we'd like to share just a little humor. Three pastors were having lunch at a diner and the first pastor said, "You know, since summer started, I've been having trouble with mice in my church. I've tried everything. Noise, spray, cats, nothing seem to scare them away." The second pastor then said, "Yeah, me too. I've got hundreds living in the basement of the church. I've set traps and even called an expert to get rid of them, yet, they still won't go away." And with a grin on his face, the third pastor said, "I had the same problem. So, I baptized all of mine, made them members of the church and haven't seen one back since."

Well, we are looking at some scriptures. Today, I want to talk from the subject LOL, Laughter Is The Best Medicine. I've been wanting to teach on this for a minute and I don't know, I think someone had asked me for some material about the benefits of laughter and I came across an article and I sent it to the lady and it was such an impact for article that, I said, man I really want to teach this one day, so I've held off on it for, I don't know, a couple of months, but I really wanted to teach this. But anyway, we're talking about LOL, Laughter Is The Best Medicine.

Let's look at a few scriptures over in Proverbs Chapter 15. Proverbs Chapter 15 Verse 13 says, "That a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart, the spirit is broken." The New Living Translation, Proverbs 15:13 says, "That a glad heart makes a happy face, a broken heart crushes the spirit." And also, Proverbs 15:15, King James says, "All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." In the New Living Translation, it says, "For the despondent, every day brings trouble. For the happy heart, life is a continual feast." And then our central verse, which everyone is very familiar with is Proverbs 17:22 which says, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones." The Message Bible says, "A cheerful disposition is good for your health; gloom and doom leave you bone-tired."

I like something that John Maxwell said about laughter, we're talking about laughter is the best medicine. John Maxwell, he said, he who laughs, last. He who laughs, last. Laughter breeds resilience. Laughter breeds resilience. Laughter is good for the soul. Laughter can heal any wounds, brighten a person's day, lighten a person's heart. Laughter can also be contagious. Milton Berle said that laughter is an instant vacation. So, if you can't get out of town, you know, you don't have the money to go out of town, just have a good laugh, have a laugh. Laughter is an instant vacation. You don't have to wait until once a year or twice a year. No, you can have a vacation at any time, just a quick laugh is an instant vacation.

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I like a quote that says that, "There's nothing that a good laugh and a long sleep won't cure." Good laugh and a long sleep, man can cure anything. Charlie Chaplin, he said, a day without laughter is a day wasted." A day without laughter is a day wasted.

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Andrew Carnegie said, "There is little success where there is little laughter." If there's not a lot of laughter, there is little success there. So, where there is little success, there is little laughter. Someone said that laughter is a smile with the volume turned up. Laughter is the voice of joy. If joy could speak, its voice would be laughter. Laughter is the voice of joy. Laughter is simply a smile with the volume turned up.

Someone said that just 15 to 20 seconds of laughter increases your lifespan by a few days. So, if you're going to die on Monday, if you just laugh 15 to 20 seconds, you would die on Thursday. Now, that's just 15 to 20 seconds. But think if you laugh for a few minutes a day, if you laugh for a few minutes a day, now it extends your life for weeks and for months and if you laugh for 30 minutes a day, now you're talking about extending your life for years. So, laughter extends longevity of life. And so, we don't stop laughing because we get old. We get old because we stopped laughing. If you notice kids, kids laugh all the time. Kids laugh all the time.

Avie, if you could show the video, I forgot which number it is, but the one with the babies laughing, the one with the babies laughing. I just wanted you to be reminded of how often and how regular kids laugh and I want you to see this little video. The kids laugh hundreds of times a day and they say adults only laugh, you know, maybe a few times.

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Okay, you could stop it right there. I just wanted you to see how often kids laugh. They laugh over the silliest things. Anything will make them laugh. Just tear a sheet of paper. Sometimes you might just need to tear a sheet of paper. But kids laugh all the time over anything. As we get older, somehow we laugh less and as a result, life become tiring and hard and boring and you become worn out and sick and frail and brittle and then you die.

And so, laughter is what keeps us full of life and vigor and vim. Vitality keeps us fresh and keeps life exciting and fun and enjoying life. Man, laughter is so much fun. Lately, I've been-- Suzanne (00:08:41). I've been texting people and I've been sending them little cartoon GIFs on all my texts. It's because when I get a hold of images made me laugh and I said if I can just laugh every time I get a text or send the text, man, it's worth the trouble and so I've making Suzanne laugh every day. But laughter is such a powerful tool that God has given us and sometimes, we use it too often. So, make a conscious effort to laugh more often, make a conscious effort to laugh more often. Don't let a day go by where you fail to laugh. A day without laughter is a day wasted. You waste it. Life it is too short to be angry. Life is too short to be mad and irritated. Life is too short

to be bored and stressed out. Life is just too short to be mean and have rocks in your jaws. No, learn to enjoy life, loosen up. You have to wear life as a loose garment. You have to learn to roll with the punches and you have to learn that if you can't change something even when hard times come, if you can't change something, learn to laugh, learn to laugh at it. Laughter breeds resilience. Laughter breeds resilience.

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There was a man, he had a terminal disease. They've given just a few months to live and he decided to laugh his way out of it and he sent out and had all of these funny videos brought in to his home and he watched reruns of Three Stooges all day and all night and he laughed himself well. Disease disappeared. Laughter is a medicine. Laughter doeth good like a medicine, like a medicine. I've told you Les Brown, the famous motivator, he said that he had prostate cancer. He was diagnosed 20 years ago and they weren't sure if he was going to make it. He said he started laughing in all of his talks. Now, he says he just laughs for no apparent reason. He said that was 20 years ago and now, he's still going strong, but he incorporated at laughter, laughter, laughter. So, laughter is powerful. So, make a conscious effort to laugh more often. Don't let a day go by where you fail to laugh.

Victor Hugo said that laughter is sunshine and chases winter from the human faith. Laughter is sunshine and it chases winter from the human face. Mort Walker said that laughter is the brush that sweeps away the cobwebs of your heart. Someone said that sadness steals your smile, anger steals your laughter and hate steals your heart. When you learn to laugh, people enjoy being around you. When you learn you laugh, you energize people and you lift the mood of others. You encourage others and inspire others and bring joy to others. Stress dissipates when you laugh. Your blood pressure goes down when you laugh. It strengthens your immune system.

Remember we said that one minute of anger decreases your immune system for one hour. One minute of laughter increases your immune system for 24 hours. So, laughter makes you live longer and that's why the joy of the Lord is our strength. In Nehemiah 8:10, "The joy of the Lord is our strength." The joy of the Lord is our strength. Listen what God told Job, Job Chapter

5, Verse 22. He said, “Laugh at destruction and at famine at hard times.” When hard times come in your life, learn to laugh, learn to laugh because laughter is a demonstration of faith and confidence in God. Well, you can laugh when hard times come your way, God send and I trust God. I believe God that this is nothing. This will pass away. I’m stronger than this. I’ll beat this. I’ll overcome this because God is on my side and you can laugh when adversity comes. You can laugh when adversity strikes. You can laugh when famine and destruction come into your life. You can’t do anything about it anyway. You might as well laugh.

You always have two choices. You either are going to frown, be sorrowful and sad or you can choose to be happy and then laugh. So, laugh when hard times come your way. It breeds resilience. You actually bounce back. You can actually get through it because of the laughter, because of the laughter. I have found even when I have done funerals. I even try to make the funeral audience laugh because this is the time when there is most sorrow and there’s the most heaviness and if they’re in that time, they need to laugh to be able to have the strength to get through it. What a great opportunity. So, you’ll find me even when I do eulogies, I try to slip a little humor in there sometimes, somewhere just to lighten up everybody’s heart because there’s so much heaviness. But God has given us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

And so, laughter is such powerful tool. Job Chapter 8, Verse 21 says, that he will fill my mouth with laughing, thy lips with rejoicing. And so, laughter is so wonderful for the soul. Avie, if you can play the wedding video. You have the wedding video. I forgot what’s the name of that one is as well, but you can play the wedding video.

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(Video Playing: 00:15:00 - 00:15:57)

So, I believe that marriage is a better one. There’s laughter, when there is laughter. My wife and I we share sitcoms together and it has really helped our marriage to be able to unite and laugh for an hour together. It makes everything

better. Laughter makes everything better. Laughter is the best medicine.

Let me read some of this article to you and then I'm going to show one more video and then we'll be done. I want read this article. This article I came across on HelpGuide.org and it's written by Lawrence Robinson, Melinda Smith, and Jeanne Segal. And that's a powerful article. I had never seen laughter have so many benefits. I had never known that it had this kind of effect to the human life until I read this article. I'm going to read it. It's so long, but I'm going to try this as fast as I can.

It's fun to share a good laugh but did you know it can actually improve your health? It's true. Laughter is a strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Laughter strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back in the balance than a good laugh. Humor lines your burdens, inspires hope, connects you to others and keeps you grounded, focused and alert. It also helps you to release anger and forgive sooner. With so much power to heal, it will renew the ability to laugh easily and frequently. It's a tremendous resource for some mounting problems, enhancing your relationships and supporting both physical and emotional health. Best of all, this priceless medicine is fun, free and easy to use. As children, we used to laugh hundreds of times a day, but as adults, life tends to be more serious and laughter more infrequent. But by seeking out more opportunities for human laughter, you can improve your emotional health, strengthen your relationships, find great happiness and even add years to your life.

Laughter relaxes the whole body. A good hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after. Laughter boosts the immune system. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and even temporarily relieve pain. Laughter protects the heart. Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow which can help protect

you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems. Laughter burns calories.

Okay, so, it's not replacement for going to the gym, but once that you found that laughing for 10 to 15 minutes a day can burn approximately 40 calories which could be enough to lose three to four pounds over the course of a year. Laughter lightens anger's heavy load. Nothing defuses anger and conflict faster than a shared laugh. Look at the funny side can put problems in your perspective and enable you to move on from confrontations without holding on to bitterness or resentment. Laughter may even help you to live longer. A study in Norway found that people with a strong sense of humor outlive those who don't laugh as much. The difference was particularly notable for those battling cancer. So, it boosts immunity, it lowers stress hormones, decreases pain, relaxes your muscles, prevents heart disease. It adds joy and zest to life, eases anxiety and tension, relieves stress, improves mood, strengthens resilience, strengthens relationship, attracts others to us, enhances team work, helps diffuse conflict, promotes group bonding. Laughter helps you stay mentally healthy. Laughter makes you feel good and this positive feeling remains with you even after the laughter subsides. Humor helps you to keep a positive optimistic outlook through difficult situations, disappointments and loss.

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More than just a respite from sadness and pain, laughter gives you the courage and strength to find new sources of meaning and hope. Even in the most difficult of times, a laugh or even simply a smile can go a long way to making you feel better and laughter really is contagious. Just hearing laughter primes your brain and readies you to smile and join in the fun. The link between laughter and mental health, laughter stops distressing emotions. You can't feel anxious, angry or sad when you're laughing. Laughter helps you relax and recharge. It reduces stress and increases energy, enabling you to stay focused and accomplish more.

Laughter shifts perspective, allowing you to see situations in a more realistic, less threatening light. A humorous perspective creates psychological distance which can help you avoid feeling overwhelmed with conflict. Laughter draws you closer to others

which can have a profound effect on all aspects of your mental and emotional health. Laughter brings people together and strengthens relationships. There's a good reason why TV sitcoms use laugh tracks. Laughter is contagious. You are many times more likely to laugh around other people than when you're alone and the more laughter you bring into your life, the happier you and those around you would feel.

Sharing humor is half the fun. In fact, most laughter doesn't come from hearing jokes, but rather simply from spending time with friends and family. It's this social aspect that plays such an important role in the health benefits of laughter. You can't enjoy a good laugh with other people unless you take the time to really engage with them. When you care about someone enough to switch off your phone and really connect face to face, you're engaging in a process that rebalances the nervous system and puts the brakes on defensive stress responses like fight or flight and you share a laugh as well, you both feel happier, more positive, more relaxed even if you're unable to alter a stressful situation.

Sharing laughter is one of the most effective tools for keeping relationships fresh and exciting. All emotional sharing build strong and lasting relationship bonds, but sharing laughter also adds joy, vitality and resilience and humor is a powerful and effective way to heal resentments, disagreements, hurts. Laughter unites people during difficult times. Humor and playful communication strengthen our relationships by triggering positive feelings and fostering emotional connection.

When we laugh with one another, a positive bond is created. This bond acts as a strong buffer against stress, disagreements and disappointment. Humor and laughter in relationships allows you to be more spontaneous. Humor gets you out of your heat and away from your trouble. It lets go of defensiveness. Laughter helps you forget resentments, judgements, criticisms and doubts. It causes you to release inhibitions. Your fear of holding back is pushed aside and causes you to express your true feelings. Deeply felt emotions are allowed to rise to the surface.

How you can bring more laughter in your life? Smile. Smile. Smiling is the beginning of laughter. It's contagious when you look at someone or see something even mildly pleasing. Practice

smiling. Instead of looking down at your phone, look up and smile at people as you pass on the street. The person serving you a morning coffee or the co-workers you share an elevator with, notice the effect on others. Count your blessings, literally make a list. The simple act of considering the positive aspects of your life will distance you from negative thoughts that block humor and laughter.

When you're in a state of sadness, you have farther to travel to reach human laughter. When you hear laughter, move toward it. Sometimes, human laughter are private, a shared joke among a small group, but usually not. More often, people are very happy to share something funny because it gives them an opportunity to laugh again and feed off the humor you find in it. When you hear laughter, seek it out and ask what's funny. Spend time with fun, playful people. These are people who laugh easily, both at themselves and at life's absurdities and who routinely find the humor in the everyday events. Their playful point of view and laughter are contagious. Even if you don't consider yourself a lighthearted humorous person, you can seek out people who like to laugh and make others laugh.

Every comedian appreciates an audience. Bring humor in the conversation. Ask people what's the funniest thing that happened to you today, this week in your life. Even simulated laughter. So, what if you really can't find the fun? And believe it or not, it's possible to laugh without experiencing a funny event and simulated laughter can be just as beneficial as the real thing. It can even make exercise more fun and productive. A Georgia State University study found that incorporating bouts of simulated laughter into an exercise program help improve older adults' mental health as well as their aerobic endurance plus hearing others laugh, even for no apparent reason, can often trigger genuine laughter.

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To add simulated laughter into your life, search for laugh therapy groups or laugh yoga or you can simply start by laughing at other people's jokes. Even if you don't find them funny, both you and the other person will feel good. It will draw you closer together and who knows, it may even lead to some spontaneous laughter.

Here are some other opportunities to laugh. Watch a funny movie, TV show or a YouTube video, invite friends or co-workers out to a comedy club, read the funny pages, seek out funny people, share a good joke or a funny story, check out your bookstore humor section, host the game night with friends, play with your pet, go to laughter yoga class, goof around with children, do something silly, make time for fun activities and you'll find your laughter and your joy levels increasing.

Laugh at yourself. Share your embarrassing moment. The best way to take yourself less seriously is to talk about times when you took yourself too seriously. Attempt to laugh at situations rather than bemoan them. Look for the humor in a bad situation and uncover the irony and absurdity of life. When something negative happens, try to make it humorous, make it a humorous antidote that will make others laugh. Surround yourself with reminders to lighten up. Keep a toy on your desk or in your car, put up a funny poster in your office, choose a computer screen saver that makes you laugh, frame photos of you and your family or friends having fun.

Remember funny things that happen. If something amusing happens or you hear a joke or funny story you really like, write it down or tell it to someone to help you remember it. Don't dwell on the negative. Try to avoid negative people. Don't dwell on negatives news, stories, entertainment or conversation, things that make you sad. Many things in life are beyond your control, particularly the behavior of other people. While you might view carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders as admirable, in the long run, it's unrealistic and unhealthy.

Find your inner child. Pay attention to children and try to emulate them. After all, they are experts on playing, taking life lightly and laughing at ordinary things. Deal with stress. Stress can be a major impediment to human laughter, so it's important to keep your stress levels in check. Draw upon a favorite memory that always makes you smile, something your kids did or something a funny friend told you. And so, that's the crux of the article, but it's a powerful article. You can go to HelpGuide.org and you can read the entire article. I didn't read all of it, just for the sake of time, but it's a great article.

Avie, you can play the last video. We'll just laugh our way on that here.

(Video Playing: 00:27:50 - 00:30:00)

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(Video Playing: 00:30:00 - 00:30:17)

We're out of time. We got to pray. Father, we just love you and praise you. Thank you so much for giving us the ability to laugh. Lord, thank you for allowing us to just loosen up and lighten up life because we trust you and your joy fills us and allow us to share a little laughter and a little sunshine and joy with others out in the world. We just love you. Thank you so much for being our joy, Lord. And in Jesus' name we pray. Let every heart say, Amen.

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