

# VIEW

“THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD IS PURE,  
ENLIGHTENING THE EYES.” PSALM 19:8

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## The Blessings and Danger of Humor

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So, you know what the first car mentioned in the Bible was, right? When the apostles were all in one Accord... Ha. Well, I will say that no matter whether you laughed at that or not, humor is a gift from God and should be used as such (James 1:17). Our ability to laugh, be sarcastic, and simply be light-hearted should be enjoyed and shared as the blessing God intended it to be. However, as with all of God's blessings, Satan has taken humor out of its God-given role and perverts it to use against us. And he's doing a mighty good job.

### Humor as a Blessing

Used correctly and thoughtfully, humor can be a powerful tool in many areas. Proverbs 17:22 states that, "A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones." Humor can certainly be used to make a heart joyful, even for a short amount of time. At the right time, it can be used to brighten someone's day and encourage them to lift their head when they most need it, which we all need from time to time. While this may not be a purely

spiritual form of encouragement, it can certainly help us to face our days with more joy and vigor as we seek to serve the Lord with all the zeal we can muster.

**"A WELL PLACED HUMOROUS COMMENT CAN OFTEN HELP US TO SEE THE FOLLY OF OUR OWN FRUSTRATIONS AND AVOID UNNECESSARY CONFLICT WITH OUR BRETHREN AND THOSE WHOM WE ASSOCIATE WITH."**

Humor can also be used to soften anger and avoid potential conflict with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Proverbs 15:1 tells us that "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." How many times have we snapped back at someone instead of taking a moment to consider our response to annoyance or aggravation? A well placed humorous comment can often help us to see the folly of our own frustrations and avoid unnecessary conflict with our brethren and those whom we associate with.

Humor also can function as a powerful evangelistic tool. Paul urges the Christians at Colossae to "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how

you should respond to each person" (Colossians 4:5-6). Humor naturally draws people closer to the one who makes them laugh. If you're meeting someone for the first time, and they're able to make you laugh right off the bat, you probably already feel closer and more comfortable with that person. This sharing in laughter can help to build trust and camaraderie in relationships, which is fertile soil for the seed of the gospel.

### The Danger of Humor

Though we can see where God has given us our sense of humor to help us through hard times and help our relationships, it must not become a stumbling block to us at the same time. First of all, humor must *never* take the place of the truth (2 Timothy 4:3-4)! Many of those who claim to proclaim the word of God fill their lessons with little truth but with an abundance of side-splitting anecdotes—which keeps an audience listening, but does nothing for their souls. Once again, there is a balance here, because when it's used correctly, humor can help open hearts to the truth; but it must not push the truth out.

Satan can also use humor to get us to be dishonest. The fool in **Proverbs 26:18-19** is spoken of this way: "Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death. So is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, 'Was I not joking?'" There is a place for being sarcastic and playing tricks on our friends, but let us examine ourselves so that we don't let our merrymaking turn into sin. It's easy to let a 'white lie' slip for the sake of humor, but when we deceive someone legitimately and mar the truth, God takes it as though we're throwing "firebrands, arrows, and death." Don't let it go too far.

Satan also lets us use humor to avoid confrontation that *needs* to happen, such as confrontation with our own sin or problems that demand our action. One thing I've noted among some peers in high school is some of the funniest people are the people that are hurting the most on the inside. Instead of facing their problems and solving them, they simply laugh it off and hide under their humor to ease the pain—which ultimately will never fix their problem. The preacher in **Ecclesiastes 7:2-4** tells us "It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting. Because that is the end of every man. And the living takes it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for when a face is sad a heart may be happy. The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, while the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure." Let us use humor to comfort one another in sorrow, but not so far as to hide from the reality of the problems that God lets us face.

Perhaps the biggest problem I've seen among Christians in dealing with humor is the way Satan uses humor to desensitize us to sin. Paul writes to the Christians at Ephesus in **Ephesians 5:3-5**, "But immorality or any impurity

of greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or course jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." These are serious words, and we must take them seriously when we use words. It's become too easy to joke about things like drugs, alcohol, and homosexuality. Satan, through television and movies, has used this tactic ruthlessly until we no longer gasp or cringe or feel any kind of repulsion at the sin that is rotting millions of souls all around us. Instead, we laugh. Remember the town drunk in the Andy Griffith show? He was almost always found intoxicated, but he did the 'funniest' things. In reality, that lifestyle would destroy him and be something to mourn over, not laugh at. We must examine the things we entertain ourselves with and make sure we're not letting Satan whittle away at our consciences!

May God help each of us to see humor for the blessing and danger it is, and to use it always to build one another up and to glorify our God!

VIA AUBURN BEACON

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