

Overcoming Holiday Blues

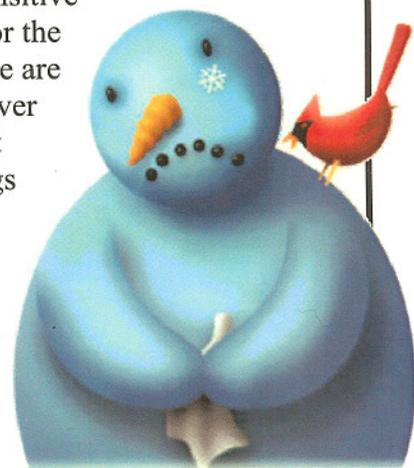
Dr. Lynda Morris Parham www.DrLynda.org



The 2008 winter holiday season is upon us. At the same time, we are all entering economic hard times which might change how we feel and celebrate. Traditionally, we celebrate with abundance of food and drink, gifts of all kinds and extravagant parties. In the midst of all these reasons to celebrate, there are some people who are not experiencing holiday cheer. Many people have past experiences and some have present situations that keep them from experiencing the joy that we assume is connected with all of these special occasions. Some have had difficult family relationships or negative life experiences that hinder their ability to celebrate during the holidays. Maybe there is not enough money to meet expectations, illness in the family, or simply family conflicts that inhibit times of love and fun to be shared. Take time to notice how the people around you are feeling; if they seem lonely or down, offer some suggestions or simply a listening ear.

As Christians we are called to be ministers. As ministers, it important that we are sensitive and discern when others are feeling down, discouraged or sad. Some people reach for the bottle, for food, for sex, or for mood altering substances; while others gamble. These are obviously unhealthy ways to cope. Some people think that “real Christians” don’t ever feel “down.” However, a relationship with God does not insulate us from unpleasant feelings or experiences. In Psalms 42 and 43, we can hear the writer describe feelings of sadness, rejection and oppression.

How can we help someone during an emotionally difficult season in his/her life? Start by understanding we are spirit, mind and body and that each part of the person needs some relief. The practical tips below may work to improve your attitude and mood.



How to Manage Holiday Blues

Spiritual Help for the Soul

1. Pray for yourself and with others. Be as specific about the situation as you can be and apply scriptures in appropriate ways. (*Phil 4:6*)
2. See your circumstances as a season, rather than a permanent state. (*Ecc 3:1-8*)
3. Find something to thank God for, i.e. sunshine, heat, food, friends and peace. (*I Th 5:10-13*)

Emotional Help for the Mind

1. Don’t dwell on the past or negative thoughts. (*Phil 4:8*)
2. Organize your time: set goals, make to do lists, prioritize and ACT! (*Pr 6:6-11*)
3. Focus on people and relationships rather than money and things. (*Matt 6:33*)
4. Avoid people who have bad attitudes and habits. (*Pr 22:24*)

Physical Help for the Body

1. Take care of yourself: eat right, get enough sleep and take time to exercise. (*Rom 12:1*)
2. Don’t over indulge in alcohol, rich foods or partying. (*I Pet 2:11*)
3. Remember: A merry heart is like medicine---laugh, laugh, and laugh. (*Pr 17:22*)