

Week 10 Community: Love at All Times

(written by Pastor Melissa Pickering)

Gathering Song [*I'm Trading My Sorrows*](#) by Darrell Evans

Daily Prayer *Jesus, Jesus you are with me as I step into this day.*

Let me hear you gently calling, "Precious child, walk this way."

Jesus, Jesus when I hear you, calling me to follow you,

In that hour, give me grace to love my neighbor like you do. Amen.

Scripture: Proverbs 17:22 **Context: 17-22 Love at All Times**

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

Devotional Thoughts

I have long contemplated the idea of joyfulness, and the good that it does for our soul. Particularly when I visit nursing homes and senior centers, I noticed that the residents will cling to every laugh, every smile and every ounce of cheerfulness that I can bring and share with them. I asked a member once, who was homebound, how she found joy in her world, where she couldn't leave her house, barely rise up out of the chair, and didn't have many visitors. Her response surprised me, but it has stuck with me for many years. She said, *"If I dwell in the bad, I shut the door to any opportunity to see the good."* She is so right! When we get dragged down, and sit in the yuck, our spirit quickly follows, drying up our laughter and our smile.

"A cheerful heart is good medicine" (Proverbs 17:22a) is certainly something that we can all understand, isn't it? We all know how medicine works, and we all expect that it will work when we take it. Oftentimes, our hope is found in that little pill bottle or the physical therapy regimen, or the words of someone who is working to help us. I wonder what would happen if we heard God's cheerful words to us as "good news", rather than as one more thing to do, or one more box to check.

This Week's Challenge? I would guess that the good medicine, the cheerful disposition and the love that we GET to share with others would spread like wildfire, reaching even those whose hearts have been hardened, or whose souls have felt the weight of the world. In what ways can you spread joy to your neighbor and your community today? What small thing, or what big thing, can you share with others that will put a smile on their face and yours?

Affirmation of Christian Vocation: Make the sign of the cross on your forehead (or if you are doing this devotion with others, make the sign on the forehead of another) while saying...

All that we do belongs to God—our work and our rest.

We follow Jesus with thankful hearts and open hands, serving our neighbor in love.

Morning and evening, at work and at play, our life is in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN