

PROVERBS: *Friends & a Glad Heart*

INTRODUCTION:

Daily life brings the sorrows and joys that are common to man. The book of Proverbs gives a variety of wise counsel regarding how we handle each as well as the friends with whom we share such times in life.

I. A GLAD HEART AND A HEAVY HEART

- A. A glad heart is good medicine (17:22, 18:14)
- B. Good news and good words make a glad heart (12:25; 15:15, 30; 16:24; 25:25).
- C. Demands wise action (25:11, 20).
- D. Heeding and trusting in God's law make a glad heart (16:20).
- E. The character of our heart is reflected in our countenance (15:13; 22:11).

II. FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

- A. The counsel of friends is sweet and sharpens the mind (27:9, 17).
- B. Friends are faithful (17:17; 18:24; 27:5-6, 10).
- C. Casting insincere and ostentatious accolades upon friends is considered no more than a curse (27:14; 29:5).
- D. A neighbor's hospitality is not to be taken advantage of (25:17).

QUESTIONS:

1. What has a part to play in our healthy well-being?
2. Is there any Scripture to suggest that our disposition can help overcome bodily infirmities?
3. What is good news from a far country like?
4. What kind of words are sweet to the soul?
5. In trying to encourage downtrodden hearts (cf. 12:25), why should we be careful with our words?
6. Can a cheerful heart become a habit instead of a momentary reaction? How?

7. What *two* attitudes toward God will create a glad heart?
8. Can you hide a sad heart? Why?
9. What principles do you see working in 22:11?
10. In 27:9, why is hearty counsel of a friend compared to perfume?
11. Do friends have influence on one another? How can it be used for good?
12. How often can a friend be depended upon?
13. How do true friends sometime show true love?
14. Should your father's friends be important to you?
15. Why is friendship in the Proverbs characterized as being a closer relationship than with one's own brother?
16. When do words of blessing become no better than a curse?
17. What is the Scriptural admonition about one overstaying his or her welcome?

Thought Question: If a person has no long-time friendships, what might it suggest about the personality or character of that person?