



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



When Life Ain't Funny No More

“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine . . .” (Proverbs 17:22a) In most instances we all feel good after a great laugh. But what happens when life ain't funny no more? Several years ago, the unexpected death of Robin Williams sparked many conversations. Of all the careers in the world, who would have thought depression would ever affect a comedian? Robin Williams, who provided the medicine of laughter to so many, was unable to provide a dosage strong enough to take away his own symptoms of depression. As stated by Jake Coyle, “Depression doesn't care what you do for a living. It can strike any one, any time.” We are all vulnerable.

Can depression happen to believers? After all, we've got the Medicine, right. We may have the Medicine, but we all run the risk of allowing our minds to focus on life's discouragements more so than its encouragements. When my son mows the yard, why is it my eyes focus on the 12-by-6-inch strip he missed? Despite how many positive things are said to or about us, why is it hard to avoid focusing on the one negative comment?



David asked the question, “Why art thou cast down, oh my soul?” (Psalm 42:5a) Certainly during this period of time David was feeling the stress of life. When Elijah heard the wicked queen Jezebel was seeking to take his life, he became depressed and wanted to die. (1 Kings 19:2-4) But despite his melancholy feeling of depression, Elijah was preserved until he completed his work for the Lord.

We've all been there when life has seemed overwhelming. We've been there when our circumstances have captured more of our attention than our strength from the Lord; when we camouflaged our feelings with the mask of a happy face, while hurting deep inside.

We all need encouragement. The purpose of this Newsletter is to come alongside the members of the Body of Christ to provide a fresh cup of the cold wa-

ter of encouragement that is often needed as we travel in the journey of life.

I'm sure Robin Williams was encouraged by family and friends, but somehow it wasn't enough. The psalmist realized sometimes even the encouragement of others can't pull us out of life's ruts of discouragement. But he realized our hope is not in each other; our hope is in the Lord — whom he would praise.

If stress and bouts of depression have become a natural part of your life, we want to speak especially to you. The healing process begins when, like the psalmist, we realize our hope is in the Lord. It is in the Lord we put our trust. Proverbs 3:5 simply says, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” I am not even asking you to try to figure out how the Lord is going to take you through your situation. Don't even try in your finite efforts to understand. [Many times I can't! Instead, understand the wisdom of instruction from the Lord: “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Proverbs 3:6)]

You may not understand how you're going to make it. But that's okay. In my own experiences I've discovered while I'm trying to figure it out, God has already worked it out! You might not feel like there is a way out of your situation, but acknowledge God. Bring your concern to Him in prayer and trust Him for direction. Think for a few moments, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Because our God brings peace,

Dr. L.W. Edwards

The Toxic Fallout of Fear

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center Towers were struck by hijacked airplanes. Both towers collapsed in a pile of thick smoke and smoldering ruins within hours of impact. Thousands perished that day.

A generation later, people are still dying from 9/11. *How is this possible?* you ask. According to *The Epoch Times* [1], debris from the demolished buildings exposed everyone at Ground Zero to airborne toxins such as asbestos, crushed concrete, gypsum and synthetic fibers. [2] This exposure caused long-term respiratory issues and more than 60 types of cancer. Congress later established a public fund to provide health care coverage and financial compensation to the victims (112,042 as of June 30, 2021) [3]. This indicates the casualty count is many times higher than the reported 9/11 death toll (2,996) [4] suggests.

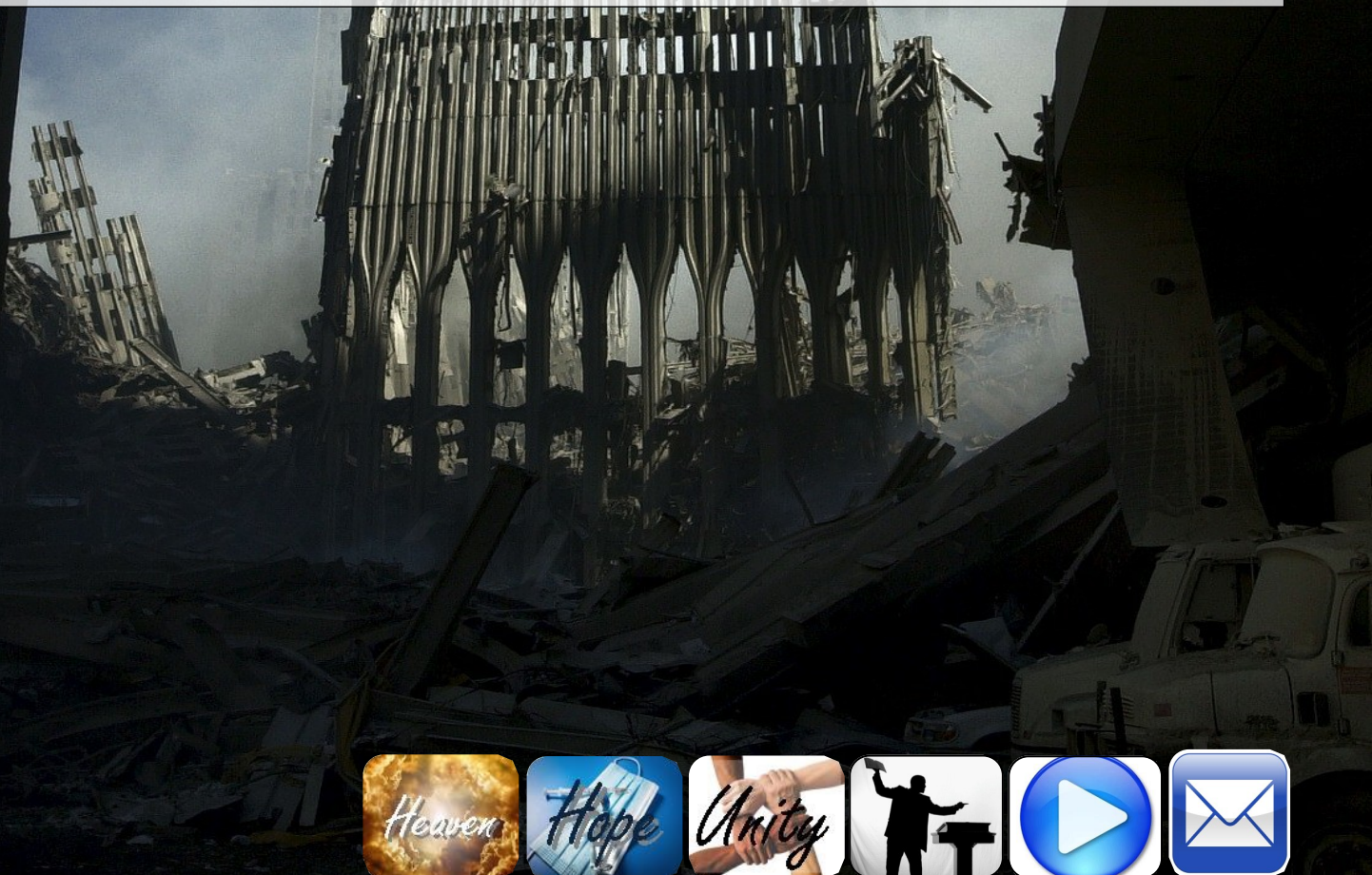
The toxic aftermath of 9/11 is a reminder of the residual damage moments of trauma and pain can cause. When life hurts us, every painful episode creates fallout which leaves an impression on our souls. We become more guarded after each injury, a little less hopeful after each disappointment. We trust less and worry more. We

build walls and destroy bridges. We lock our doors and retreat into emotional shells. We keep people an arm's length away to insulate ourselves from the potential of pain.

These are symptoms of fear, the asbestos of the soul. While our fear may be based on an actual life event, this toxic emotion carries on its deadly work in our minds long after the trauma occurred. Unless we treat it, it only causes more damage.

We can counter fear by practicing faith. Faith is confidence in God's goodness, love, power and perfect purpose in the middle of difficult circumstances. It is demonstrated as we read the Bible and speak its promises to ourselves. For example, if you feel fearful because someone close to you abandoned you, remind yourself of God's promise to Joshua in Joshua 1:5, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." This same God will never fail or forsake you!

Have you been hurt by life? Don't let the toxin of fear hijack your thoughts and poison your relationships. Practice faith in God instead. He will replace your fears with peace.



[1] Savv, Petr, "9/11 'Smell of Death' Keeps Claiming Lives," *The Epoch Times*, U.S. Edition, September 8-14, 2021.

[2] Lippmann, Morton; Cohen, Mitchell D.; Chen, Lung-Chi; "Health Effects of World Trade Center (WTC) Dust: An Unprecedented Disaster with Inadequate Risk Management," <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4686342/>, PMC 2016, July 1.

[3] Kalle Anka Freebase Co.

[4] "How Many People Died in 9 11," <https://1howmany.com/how-many-people-died-in-9-11>, December 27, 2019.