Health Notes...

Tips for Christians to Avoid the Holiday Blues

Yes! Christmas is the most wonderful time of year! As we celebrate Thanksgiving acknowledging all we are thankful for, we begin to look forward to celebrating the birth of our Saviour knowing that He has come to save the world, to wash away our sins, and assure us of Eternal Life through Him!

Yet for some of us, this may have been a year of challenges, death of a loved one, illness, crisis in our family, or a job or living change. Because of these life stresses, you may be dreading the holiday season.

Fortunately, as Christians, we can use Scripture to help us navigate the complexities and difficulties of life. Bible verses speak God's truth to us and give us the information and encouragement needed to push back against the holiday blues.

Here are some tips for Christians to avoid holiday stress and "the blues." —

- **Turn to Scripture to Avoid Holiday Blues:** Find your favorite passages of support
- **Prevent Holiday Blues by Setting Realistic Goals for Yourself:** Make sure you goals, expectations, and limitations are known to your loved ones, so that you do not overextend yourself.
- **Stop Holiday blues by Doing Only What You Can do:** Don't over commit yourself this year.
- **Prevent Holiday Stress:** Pray, worship, ask for help, seek community, read scripture, and examine your load
- **Be Open to New Traditions:** Allow new experiences to bring you joy and encouragement.
- **Reach Out to Family and Friends:** they cannot help if they do not know what is wrong!
- **Talk To and Confide in a Trusted Friend or Love One:** Sharing lightens your load.
- **Maintain Your Normal Patterns to Beat the Holiday Blues:** Don't expect too much of yourself; be kind to yourself and do what is comfortable and don't try to do too much!
- **Don't Isolate Yourself:** Isolating yourself can be self-defeating. Challenge yourself to get involved in family gatherings, surround yourself wit those you love and try to focus on the positive aspects of your life rather than the negative ones.
- **Set Boundaries:** Protect yourself from unsafe people or situations that may drain your energy and make you sad.
- **Do something Specials for Yourself:** Do something you enjoy that makes you feel relaxed and refreshed. Make a list of one or two things that you would really enjoy and make it happen.
- **Make a Difference and Get Involved:** Try to reach out and help someone in need. There is nothing more humbling and gratifying than to help someone in greater need than ourselves. Helping others will bring joy to those you serve, as well as, to yourself.
- **Avoid Holiday Stress by Remaining Spiritually Healthy:** Rather than falling into the trap of pushing God to the side, ensure that your relationship with the Almighty remains healthy during the holiday season (Isaiah 41:10; Philippians 4:12-13; Psalm 46:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; Deuteronomy 31:6; Philippians 4:6; Mark 12:29-31; Psalm 22:19; John 16:33; Isaiah 40:29; 1 Peter 4:11; Psalm 32:7-8; Exodus 15:2, and many others).

Taken from "How to Prevent the Holiday Blues: 8 tips for Christians, by Billy Hallowell" and "5 tips for Avoiding the Holiday Blues" by David and Lisa Bishop.