

FAR

ABOVE RUBIES



It's good to talk

Anyone who knows me will know that I love to talk and really enjoy good conversation. When my husband and I were at Bible College in Surrey I had to attend the GP, who commented that my tonsils had been nicely removed. He wouldn't believe me when I told him that I had never had my tonsils out, even though my parents confirmed this. My husband, who loves a good joke, delights in telling people that I must have worn them away talking!

One of the most successful television advertising campaigns in the 1990s was when BT came up with the slogan, "**It's good to talk.**" It was no longer just about making a phone call, but about "reciprocating confidences" which would lead to better communication and better relationships. It was a simple yet redefining thought and just what women wanted to hear, as they could now talk for hours without feeling guilty. Men, however, who were generally the bill payers in the house, were anything but happy until BT won them over by having Bill Hoskins deliver the "It's good to talk" message in his macho, cockney style, which made it more acceptable.

Today, in Northern Ireland, there is a new "**it's good to talk**" infomercial on TV. Its aim is to promote good mental health particularly among men who are struggling with depression and other mental issues. Given the high rate of suicide in our land particularly among young men, they are encouraged to seek help and talk to someone about their depression and anxiety.

Perhaps you are struggling with mental issues, difficulties or even abuse. If so, don't bottle it up. There is no shame. You need to seek help and talk to someone. It could be a trusted friend, your Pastor or Minister, your GP or even a counsellor. Always remember that your arch enemy, the devil, who is a liar and the father of lies, wants to isolate you and make you think that no one cares about you. The truth is that many other Christians have experienced the same difficulties and the same attack of the enemy. In

Proverbs 25 v 11 we read that *“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.”* How good it is when a friend gives you the right word or counsel just when you need it. Gal. 6 v 2 also tells us to *“Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.”* As Christians we are called to help each other.

In today’s society, with the dramatic increase in the use of mobile phones and ipads, people are losing the art of good conversation. I heard recently that a school in England banned the use of mobile phones during their lunch period and it took the children three weeks before they could hold a conversation with one another! If they are to develop socially, our children need to be taught and shown the importance of verbal communication.

It’s good to talk to others who have difficulty communicating. Sometimes we’re tempted to turn a blind eye to that member of staff who is always sitting on their own in the canteen, instead of drawing alongside for a bit of chat. What about that family member with learning difficulties or perhaps a parent with dementia? Do we leave them sitting in the corner or do we try to stimulate them with conversation? In 1 Thess. 5 v 11 Paul writes, *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing ”* and in Phil. 2 v 4 we read, *“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

It’s good to talk to yourself. In 1 Sam. 30 v 6 we read: *“And David was greatly distressed....but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”* When you are up against it, remind yourself of who you are in Christ, what God has already brought you through and the many blessings you have received. The apostle Paul faced many hardships but could still write in Phil. 4 v 13: *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* Remind yourself that you are a child of God and are loved unconditionally!

It’s good to talk to God. When we are struggling with personal issues and difficulties, God is the first person we should talk to. He is our loving heavenly Father and wants us to come to Him in prayer. In Psalm 55 v 22 we are told to *“Cast your burden on the Lord and He will sustain you.”* God also desires that we fellowship with Him, as Rev. 3 v 20 tells us: *“Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”* You will be truly blessed when you spend time with God.

Never forget that it’s always good to talk and especially when you don’t feel like it!