

The Man Who Jumped Out of Trees

There once was a man who loved to jump out of trees. He loved the excitement and anticipation of the climb. He enjoyed the rustle of leaves and the wonderful view as he stood in the tree waiting to jump. But the most gratifying part was the actual jump. The thrill of flying through the air. He would spread his arms as if he were a bird and leap out into the air; the air whipped his hair back and he felt exhilaration as he fell. The only problem was a slight soreness in his ankles after he landed. But this quickly went away.

So he continued to climb and jump day after day, year after year. As he did, he noticed his ankles becoming increasingly sore. It finally got to the point where he was actually limping and could not walk without considerable pain. Yet he continued to climb and jump out of trees.

Now this man was a good Christian brother, full of faith and belief in God. He knew God could heal his ankles, so he called the elders of the church who were also full of faith and knew the Word. They laid hands on him and prayed, "O God, heal this man, your humble servant. He is unable to walk and cannot do the work you would have him to do. Therefore, we know it is Your will to heal him."

And so they prayed claiming scriptures on healing. But in the back row sat a little old lady who was not noted for faith and who was in fact somewhat shunned because she was not as "spiritual" as some of the others in the church. She summoned the courage and spoke out, "You are praying for healing, but maybe this brother needs to be told to quit jumping out of trees."

The elders rebuked this lady as being out of order and ignorant. Surely God can heal and would not expect his servant to give up this great pleasure in his life. It hurts no one else, is not listed in Scripture as a sin and makes him feel good so he can minister to others better.

And so the man continued to climb trees and jump, although not as often as he once did because he was not able to get outside that much. He was not improving, so he went to church and again called the elders. This time one of the elders said he had heard from God on the matter. The problem was that a spirit of arthritis had a stronghold in this man's ankles and they needed to break it, so he could be set free and be able to walk again.

So again they prayed. They rebuked and came against the devil. They travailed. They pleaded the Blood and the Name. They used the Word. But still nothing happened.

The little old lady sitting in the back row was afraid to speak because of

her first experience, but finally she summoned the courage again. "If you must rebuke the devil, rebuke the devil that causes him to want to jump out of trees."

But the man and the elders rejected that word. They were the spiritual ones and they had heard from God, what did that lady know anyway.

The man was getting tired of the pain and the inability to get around. He considered going to a doctor, but some of those in his church said that would indicate lack of faith as God should be his healer.

But finally he did decide to see a doctor. The doctor examined his ankles and took X-rays. He then asked about his activities and his daily life. When the man mentioned his love for jumping out of trees, the doctor nodded his head and said, "That's it."

"That's what?" asked the man.

"Each time you jump out of the tree as you land, it causes tiny compression fractures in your ankle and foot bones. There is evidence that they have been healing, but each time you jump, you injure them again. You have injured them to the point now that it will take a very long time for them to heal. But if you do not stop the jumping, they will never heal and eventually complications will set in that will lead to your losing both legs. We will need to put both legs in a cast and you will be confined to a wheelchair. When your ankles are completely healed, you will be able to climb trees, but you must never jump again."

He went back to his church and again called the elders and told them what the doctor had said. There were some who felt he should not have gone and some who felt he should not trust the doctor's advice. But others remembered what the old lady had said and agreed. So the man repented of his love for jumping out of trees. The elders prayed for deliverance from this activity. He submitted to having his legs casted and being confined. The elders prayed for healing and God heard and restored the man's ankles.

Alternate ending

The man rejected the doctor's advice and continued to jump out of trees. But one day, as he jumped, his foot hit a branch on the way down and he landed on his head instead of his feet, breaking his neck. He lived, but was paralyzed from the neck down and never climbed another tree.

What is it that you love to do that is really causing you harm?