



Grace  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

✧ A Study Guide For ✧

# Feelings and Faith

*Cultivating Godly Emotions in the Christian Life*

*Part Two (Chapters 4-7)*

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**Feelings and Faith**  
Cultivating Godly Emotions in the Christian Life  
Part Two: Biblical Sanctification and Our Emotions  
**CHAPTER 4: Our Emotions and the Authority of God's Word**

1. What are some common unbiblical views among professing Christians concerning our emotions?
  
2. What is the danger in categorizing emotions or emotional behaviors?
  
3. What is a proper, biblical response to such false views of our emotions and feelings? Keep in mind all that we have studied thus far regarding man in creation, fall, and God's gracious work of regeneration.
  
4. Study the quote from Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones on pages 61-62.
  - A. Where do our temperaments come from? Does each person have a unique temperament?
  
  - B. What controls the natural man? Why?
  
  - C. Who should control the Christian?
  
  - D. Does a Christian controlled by the Holy Spirit still have uniqueness and a temperament? If so, how is the Christian different from the natural man?
  
5. The redemptive process is for the whole person; the emotions are an inherent part of what it means to be a person. (page 62).
  - A. What must we do concerning sinful emotional expressions?
  
  - B. What must we do with godly emotions?
  
  - C. What happens when godly emotions are cultivated?

6. God commands us to express specific emotions in a godly way. What does scripture teach us about these specific emotions?

A. Joy.

1. Matthew 5:12
2. Romans 12:8
3. Romans 12:12
4. Romans 12:15
5. Philippians 4:1

B. Forgiveness. (Forgiveness is more than an emotion, but has an emotional element to it.)

Matthew 18:35

C. Love. (Love may be more than a feeling, but never less.)

1. 1 Peter 1:22
2. Romans 12:10

D. Fear. (Biblical fear is a response to biblical thinking. Thinking moves the heart, stirs the emotion, and moves to action.)

1. Luke 12:5
2. Romans 11:20
3. 1 Peter 1:17

E. Peace. (Biblical peace is more than cognitive awareness. It is rest and contentment)

Colossians 3:15

F. Zeal.

1. Romans 12:11

2. What is the idea behind the word “zealous”?

G. Desiring God’s Word,

1 Peter 2:2

H. Tenderheartedness,

Ephesians 4:32

I. Mourning/weeping,

1. Romans 12:15

2. Joel 2:17

J. Exercising self-control,

1. Galatians 5:23

2. 2 Timothy 1:7

3. Acts 24:25

4. 1 Corinthians 9:25

5. 2 Peter 1:6

7. As Spirit-filled believers, we are to be in control of our emotions. What specifically do the following verses say about controlling emotions?

A. Romans 12:3

B. 1 Peter 4:7

C. 2 Timothy 2:12

8. Pastor Brian concludes the chapter by giving three succinct, vital principles which are foundational in making progress in cultivating godly emotions. These principles are developed in the following three chapters.

1. Identify the three principles.

a)

b)

c)

2. Is the order important? Why?

9. **APPLICATION:** In order to cultivate godly emotions, we must desire to change and we must seek pertinent scriptural truth. Biblical change includes three primary steps. How does each of these steps apply to a current situation in your life?

A. Understanding the truth

B. Rejecting faulty thinking

C. Learning practical biblical application

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**CHAPTER 5: The Foundation and Priority of Truth**

1. God's Holy Word is the source of all truth in our study of Biblical emotions. What do the following scriptures say about the importance of the Word?
  - A. The relationship between the Word and truth. (John 17:17)
  - B. The relationship between our rebirth and truth. (James 1:18; I Peter 1:23)
  - C. The relationship between our lifestyles and truth. (James 1:22)
2. Sanctification is the process of becoming increasingly conformed to the will of God. Sanctifying our emotions does not begin with our emotions. Rather, it begins with the mind and truth.
  - A. How is sanctification developed? (John 17:17; Romans 6:17)
  - B. Read John 8:31-32, 36 and explain how Jesus' words relate to sanctification of our emotions.
3. Pastor Brian calls some truths "Oxygen Truths". What does he mean and how does it relate to Proverbs 23:7?
4. What are the three Oxygen Truths?
  - A.
  - B.
  - C.

5. Oxygen Truth #1: The character of God

A. What is the relationship between understanding the character of God and sanctifying our emotions?

B. The non-negotiable premise!

1. What truth has R.C. Sproul been driving home for years?

2. How does this relate to our study of emotions?

C. How do Jeremiah 9:23-24 and Hosea 6:6 apply to the study of the character of God?

**QUOTABLE:** *“Knowing God—who He is, what He does, what He is like, and what He requires of us—is the foundation for life and faith, joy, obedience, love, and worship.”* (page 70).

D. How does the above quote relate to the sanctification of our emotions? Refer to the following verses but summarize in your own words.

1. John 17:3

2. Psalms 9:10

3. Daniel 11:32

6. Oxygen Truth #2: Justification (the holy God’s declaration of a sinner as righteous)

A. What is the instrument of justification?

B. What is the ground of our justification?

C. The work of Christ entails both the life that He lived and the death that He died. Explain the following terms:

1. The active obedience of Christ.

2. What was the climax of His obedience? (Matthew 26:39-44; Philippians 2:6-8)

3. The passive obedience of Christ.

D. Explain the phrase: "Justification is the great exchange." (2 Corinthians 5:21 & John 19:21)

E. What is your reaction to the rallying cry of the Reformation, "Christ for me!"? What difference should this make in your life?

7. Oxygen Truth #3: Future Glory (Romans 8:18; 24-25)

A. Why is focusing on our future, eternal inheritance important to our cultivating godly emotions?

B. Consider the Hafemann quote (page. 75), "*Faith is the response to the character of God, while hope springs from the promises God has made.*"

1. How does Job demonstrate this truth? (Job 19:25-27; Job 13:15)

2. How does Paul demonstrate this truth? (2 Corinthians 4: 16-18)

8. **APPLICATION:** Pastor Brian states on page 76: "Knowing God—who He is and what He is like, what He has accomplished for us in His Son, and what He has in store for us in the future—is necessary for



progress in emotional sanctification.” Consider a recent trial or temptation you’ve experience as you answer the following questions.

A. Did knowing a truth about the character of God change your thinking and response? If so, why? If not, why not?

B. In the midst of the trial or temptation, did you think of the eternal inheritance awaiting you? Did it bring hope?

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**CHAPTER 6: A Sound Theology of Christian Experience**

PRINCIPAL #1: TRUTH PRECEDES, GOVERNS, AND INTERPRETS EXPERIENCE

1. Truth and experiences are vitally connected but always in a specific order. Consider the two clauses in John 8:32.
  - A. Concerning truth, what must we do?
  - B. What will be our experience if we know the truth?

**QUOTABLE:** *“The truth rightly embraced and believed will give you an experience”* (page 77).

2. Unbiblical views of Christian experience can be harmful. Explain how the biblical truths in the following examples bring understanding and freedom. Look up the references when noted.
  - A. **Error:** Expecting spiritual attainments in the present that are only going to occur in the age to come.  
**Danger:** Disillusionment with God and the Christian faith.  
**Biblical truth:** ‘The already’ and ‘the not yet’
  - B. **Error:** Believing the Christian life should be a pain-free zone.  
**Danger:** Disillusionment, discouragement, or heart wrenching belief that pain and suffering are paybacks from God.  
**Biblical truth:** We should expect to struggle against sin, to experience life’s trials and troubles, and to suffer for Christ’s sake.
    - a. Romans 5:2-5
    - b. I Peter 5:9-10
    - c. Philippians 1:29

- C. **Error:** Thinking “I don’t feel like it. It would be hypocritical to do something when I don’t feel like it.”

**Danger:** Disobedience to God’s commands.

**Biblical view:** Disobedience is sin. The remedy is confession and repentance.

**QUOTABLE:** *“A sound theology of Christian experience makes room for the struggle of the war-faring pilgrim and the suffering of the wayfaring pilgrim” (page 79).*

3. On page 80 Pastor Brian states that if God *“commands us to come and worship him with gladness (Psalm 100: 1-2), yet we don’t feel like worshipping Him with gladness, that is a sin.”* He qualifies this statement with footnote 4 (page 223).

A. Explain the statement and his qualification.

B. What should we do if we don’t feel like worshipping with gladness? Why?

C. What are the necessary steps in dealing with any sin?

4. Doctrine and experience are not enemies or mutually exclusive. In the final section of this chapter, the author relates his own journey in discovering a proper balance.

A. What was his conclusion?

B. How does this apply to worship? Refer to John 4:24.

**APPLICATION:** As fallen men and women, each of us must seek to know and apply biblical truth with the goal of sanctifying our emotions. What should you do if your feelings do not match what the Bible teaches?

**QUOTABLE** *"We cannot afford to live by emotional impulses; we must live by the truth. We cannot be experience seekers; we must seek God as He is revealed in His Word."* (page 81).

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**CHAPTER 7: How to Handle the Emotions through Truth**

1. Our emotions are good, although fallen, and a part of God's image in us. They are an inherent part of our humanity. The goodness of human emotions was perfectly modeled by our Lord Jesus.

A. How do our emotions become sanctified and honoring to God?

B. Where is truth found?

2. Using your own words, summarize the following two quotes.

A. *"...truth is always found in the person of God himself, and ultimately it is the encounter with God through truth that changes us."* (page 83).

B. *"The pathway to a life of obedience born of hope is ultimately not something we follow but someone we encounter."* Hafemann, (page 83).

**QUOTABLE:** *"The Word through the Spirit helps us not to suppress our emotions but to cultivate and communicate them with Spirit-empowered self-discipline."* (page 83).

**3. APPLICATION:** The psalms give us concrete examples of how to handle emotions through truth. Consider a recent event or situation that brought disappointment, sadness, grief, or similar emotion. Write out a prayer to God following the structure of the lament psalms (page 84).

- A. An address, an introductory petition and lament
- B. The lament proper
- C. The confession of trust
- D. The petition
- E. The vow of praise

**4.** Grief is the common denominator of the lament psalms. What other emotions are addressed in these psalms?

**5.** Is the depth of emotion expressed in these psalms sinful? Why or why not? What determines if the emotion is sinful or not sinful?

**6.** Read Psalm 6 and without referring to the book, identify (verse by verse) as many emotions and their expressions as you can.

Verse 1:

Verse 2:

Verse 3:

Verse 4:

Verse 5:

Verse 6:

Verse 7:

Verse 8:

Verse 9:

Verse 10:

7. From Psalm 6, note the different ways in which our emotions can affect our bodies and physiology. What verses in the psalm support your assertions?

8. What is “hyperbole”? Note which verses in Psalm 6 employ hyperbole and note what its purpose is.

9. Psalm 6:8-10 describes David’s triumph.

A. In verses 8 and 9, three different phrases are used to describe God listening to David’s prayer. Consider the importance of the varied wording.

1. For the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.
2. The LORD has heard my plea.
3. The LORD accepts my prayer.

B. Comment on the change in verb tense from past tense (has heard) to present tense (accepts) to future tense (shall be ashamed, shall turn back). Why is understanding the order important?

C. What is the importance of A and B in your personal prayer life?

*QUOTABLE: "The stance is between assurance that Yhwh is committed to action and experience of the action itself" (Goldingay, page 86).*

**10.** Read Psalm 16. After reading the entire psalm, focus on verses 8-10.

- A. What did David do previously? (verse 8).
  
- B. What is the current result? (verses 8 & 9).
  
- C. What is the future promise? (verses 9 & 10).

**11.** Lamentations of Jeremiah

- A. Give a summary of Jeremiah's circumstances and ministry.
  
- B. Describe Jeremiah's emotional response to these conditions. Was his response righteous or unrighteous?
  
- C. Read Lamentations 3: 21-25 (page 88).
  - 1. What verse shows a shift in Jeremiah's focus? What is the result?
  
- D. Read the above passage aloud, speaking phrase-by-phrase. As you speak, conclude each phrase with Pastor Brian's "that is a fact". When you are finished, write out what impressed you the most about God's character.



E. **APPLICATION:** How can you incorporate this method in a situation you are facing?

**12.** Paul's lesson in Asia (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

A. What were Paul's circumstances?

B. Paul had suffered other great trials without feeling overwhelmed (Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 4:8). What was unique about the strength of this trial?

C. If Paul's difficulty "was so dark and so deep that it was not just a matter of quoting a verse and pulling himself up by his Bible bootstraps", how did Paul pull out of his great despair?

D. What is the pivotal point in this passage? What two words mark the transition?

E. What were the two great truths which gave Paul reason to hope and to celebrate his divine deliverance?

1.

2.

**13. APPLICATION:** On page 91, Pastor Brian states: *"The truth about God, His sovereign purpose, and His resurrection power was an emotional lifeline that rescued Paul."*

A. How important is it to know scripture?

B. What verses have you memorized to secure you in a time of deep testing?

- C. We don't know what trials lay ahead, when they will come, or how long they will remain. What commitment can you make to prepare for those times?