

EMOTIONS/FEELINGS

WHAT ARE THEY REALLY FOR?

Emotion

A mental state that arises spontaneously rather than through conscious effort and is often

Accompanied by physiological changes

The part of the consciousness that involves feeling; sensibility

Definitions from: dictionary.com

Feelings

Capacity for emotion

A sentiment; attitude; opinion

Capacity to experience the higher emotions; sensitivity; sensibility

A general impression conveyed by a person, place, or thing

John Piper says:

But the emotions-they are the weathercock of the heart.

Ed Messer says:

Feelings are like the check engine light in your car. It tells you to check because there is something that needs some attention. It can't fix the car it simply alerts you to pay attention.

JD Hatfield says:

Some people are so used to being sad, they have learned to derive energy from it. They resign themselves to living in that state, and draw their power to live from it. When they hear a little bit of bad news, they immediately go into their adrenaline mode to be able to cope, and actually bring on more pain to give them more energy. Being sad spurs them on in a sense.

The same goes for anger. We create situations where we are angry at something that didn't even happen. We imagine for a moment the "what if it did", and become adrenalized and feed off the only source of energy that will satisfy us. We may even get up in the morning and dream up a scenario that will raise our ire, just because it gets us going. This is the reason for the road rage drug and its disproportionate response. This is why some people get high; they instinctively recognize a problem but don't know how to deal with it other than muffle it through drugs, legal or illegal...

People may not believe a word you say, but they will believe everything you do. When your actions line up with your words the conviction that people will see in you will herald the revolution to those whom God would call. You become greater than mere words, and larger than life.





THE BIBLE SAYS

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15 (NIV) And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

God uses feelings to produce a longing for change and growth.

Philippians 1:6-8 (NIV) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

God allows us to be feel encouragement.

Colossians 3:4-6 (PWP) Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ. And that means killing off everything connected with that way of death: sexual promiscuity, impurity, lust, doing whatever you feel like whenever you feel like it, and grabbing whatever attracts your fancy. That's a life shaped by things and feelings instead of by God. It's because of this kind of thing that God is about to explode in anger. It wasn't long ago that you were doing all that stuff and not knowing any better. But you know better now, so make sure it's all gone for good: bad temper, irritability, meanness, profanity, dirty talk.

You cannot be controlled by your emotions.

2 Corinthians 11: 28-29 (PWP) And that's not the half of it, when you throw in the daily pressures and anxieties of all the churches. When someone gets to the end of his rope, I feel the desperation in my bones. When someone is duped into sin, an angry fire burns in my gut.

Feelings should spur us onto prayer.

2 Corinthians 6:11 (PWP) Dear, dear Corinthians, I can't tell you how much I long for you to enter this wide-open, spacious life. We didn't fence you in. The smallness you feel comes from within you.

Your lives aren't small, but you're living them in a small way. I'm speaking as plainly as I can and with great affection. Open up your lives. Live openly and expansively!

Feelings can limit you and stop you from your full potential.

2 Corinthians 7:8 (PWP) I know I distressed you greatly with my letter. Although I felt awful at the time, I don't feel at all bad now that I see how it turned out. The letter upset you, but only for a while. Now I'm glad-not that you were upset, but that you were jarred into turning things around. You let the distress bring you to God, not drive you from him. The result was all gain, no loss.

Feelings are tied to situation and change.

1 Corinthians 3:1 (PWP) But for right now, friends, I'm completely frustrated by your unspiritual dealings with each other and with God. You're acting like infants in relation to Christ, capable of nothing much more than nursing at the breast. Well, then, I'll nurse you since you don't seem capable of anything more. As long as you grab for what makes you feel good or makes you look important, are you really much different than a babe at the breast, content only when everything's going your way? ...

Following your emotions and not using wisdom makes you immature.

THE BREAKDOWN

Emotion or feelings are just an indicator. They are not to rule your life or even your actions. They are a tip to you to check what is going on inside you. Just as an example, sometimes they are a reminder to pray; sometimes they indicate that something needs to be changed in you, the list goes on and on.

The bottom line is that God has built into you the capacity to feel so that you can understand others and be moved. But, your feelings were never intended to rule you or your actions.

Emotions cannot be used to make decisions because they are affected by so many factors including: those around you, your environment, your hormones, and your flesh. Godly wisdom and prayer must be used to decipher your feelings and make your decisions.

Begin to take your thoughts and emotions captive into the obedience of the Word of God. Start asking God what you should be doing with the emotions you have. Begin seeking God's wisdom on how to act on what you are feeling; or even if you should be acting on what you are feeling.