

EMOTIONS

Key Verses: Psalm 139:13-14; Psalm 56:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:7;
Romans 8:15-16

Emotion: a strong feeling. While the word *emotion* is not recorded in the Bible, there are literally thousands of references to “strong feeling” words. In this time of texting and social networking, we can even send someone an emotion in the form of a Smiley to show them how we feel about a statement or picture.

Based on Ecclesiastes 3:4, “A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance;” there is a positive to go along with the negative. My research revealed there are two basic types of emotions: Love and Fear, I John 4:18-19.

Because He loves us we are made perfect in His love and do not have to live in fear. To me, fear is anything that takes our eyes off of Jesus and believe me when I say I’ve been there. By February 2008 I had suffered with anxiety for over two years. This anxiety gripped me to the point of stomach cramps, irritable bowels, and mental fatigue. I was fearful of and worried about doing anything out of my comfort zone, which was my office at home. Finally one Saturday it came to an end, but not until I gave ALL of it to Jesus.



Why Do I Feel This Way?

Do you control your emotions or do your emotions control you? Women have so many irons in the fire we can easily find ourselves at the breaking point. This is when you might feel like you are a basket case, need a good cry, or an emotional train wreck waiting to happen. You are not alone! In fact, we have let our emotions get so out of hand that 25% of American women are on an anti-

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depressant medication and 11% are on an anti-anxiety medication. We are all working full time, whether it's in the home or at an office, planning and preparing meals, possibly raising children, cleaning house, keeping up with the laundry, being a taxi driver, helping with homework, being a care giver, kissing boo-boos... need I go on? Whoever came up with the commercial and slogan, “Calgon, take me away!” was a genius. That bath filled with all of those bubbles looks so relaxing and tranquil. However, we all know that is not real life. Who really gets to take a long, hot bubble bath without interruptions by the kids, the pets, the doorbell or the telephone?

The next time you start feeling overwhelmed, remember Satan likes it when we concentrate on

the negative and are not focused on God. None of us are exempt from emotions, but it's how we handle those emotions that will bring out the positive or negative in us. Also remember Jesus Christ is the One who gives you joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Peter 1:8), the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). No matter how depressed, anxious, or fearful you are, your joy can never be taken from you

unless you allow it to be done. Ask God to renew your joy, to show you that joy, and to increase your joy. It will be more difficult, then, for these other emotions to overtake you.

Our emotions are such an intricate part of our being and can affect our physical, mental, and spiritual health. In order for our body to be its best, we need to keep our emotions under control. So my question to you is this, “Do you control your emotions or do your emotions control you?” Emotions that are out of control can very likely stem from a heart that is out of control and not steeped in the word of God and His love.

Sometimes we just get the “blahs.” We do not want to talk to anyone, be near anyone, or have anyone talk to us. We would like to climb back in bed and stay

there all day: away from the world and the problems of it. Even though I would like to distance myself from people and not have to talk to them, my busy life does not permit those days so I have to put my emotions aside, lift up my chin, pull up my boot straps and carry on whether it be work, family, or neighbors.

Emotions can affect us physically, mentally, and spiritually. They can make us feel sick, as if we are a basket case, or even like we are soul-ed out. Once we understand what is happening on the inside and realize God knows all about us then it will be easier to give it ALL to Him. God made you! He knows everything about you.

Do not try to hide your emotions from Him. If He knows the number of hairs on your head then He knows about your feelings: positive and negative! Matthew 10:31 says not to fear and we are of more value than many sparrows.



Why Do I Feel Sick?

In researching I found several websites suggesting emotions affect our physical body by causing chemical reactions within us. The reactions from negative emotions can actually cause serious illnesses such as arthritis, weight gain and multiple types of chronic illnesses. If negative emotions are constant they damage the chemical system, immune system and endocrine system. We all know when our immune system breaks down we get weak and sick. Here are a few of the illnesses we can experience: upset stomach, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches, migraines, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and heart burn. Staying sick for an extended period of time can lead to depression, a heavy heart, and even the contemplation of suicide. Depression, overeating, and weight gain can create a hard to break cycle. We overeat because we are depressed; we gain weight because we overeat, and we get depressed because we gain weight.

Jesus can heal your physical body and He can heal your emotions. Matthew 8:16-17 tells us how Jesus healed the demon-possessed and sick then refers to Isaiah 53:4 in saying, "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses."

The woman with the issue of blood came to Jesus for physical healing but can you imagine what

types of emotions she felt? I would have to believe at the very least she was anxious about her problem, her finances, and for being unclean—for 12 years! While Jesus healed her physically, He also healed her emotionally. She left that day a whole person.

Fear is an emotion that can affect us physically and has left roughly 19 million Americans with

a phobia. You name it and there is probably a phobia for it. Some are afraid of the dark, others are afraid of cotton, still others are afraid of books, clowns, dolls, bathing, thunder and the list goes on and on. We can overcome fear by trusting Jesus.

Why Do I Feel Like a Basket Case?

Mental health can be affected when emotions are allowed to go unchecked. I once read a church marquee that read, "You're OK, even Moses was a basket case." I had to chuckle at the play on words, but the truth of the matter is we can let our emotions get such a hold on us they cause us to wear out mentally. We feel like the anxiety will never end, we will never get better emotionally, or the stress will never let up. This can lead us

to be mentally exhausted and even to a mental breakdown.

Once the negative emotions get their claws in us it's easy for them to outweigh the positive, consume our minds, and make us feel as if we are actually going crazy. When we get to this point mentally it also starts to affect us physically because we are completely worn out; depleted of our energy.

I recently read a post on a social media site that said something like this, "I'm reminded today that I am human, a female human, and I have emotions. I would much rather stuff them down deep and never let them out, but life seems to bring them straight to the surface." While we would rather not confront our emotions, trying to keep them from surfacing can never lead to a healthy mental attitude. We need to face them head on and let Jesus take it from there. Jesus has experienced these emotions Himself and knows exactly how we feel.

Right after Jesus was baptized by John in Matthew 3, He was led by the Spirit to the wilderness. He fasted for 40 days and 40 nights and was tempted by Satan. At this time Jesus was a human so I can only imagine His physical and mental fatigue. Then to be tempt-

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ed by the one who wanted to destroy His life; that seems almost too much to bear and certainly more than I can comprehend.

However, Jesus did exactly what we need to do, He turned to His Father for strength and perseverance. God provided it for Him and He will provide it for you and me.

Moses also comes to mind when he was on the mountain with God and the Israelites turned from God.

God sent Moses back down the mountain, but first Moses pleaded with Him for the people. We know then that Moses got angry, but I believe he was also very distraught and allowed his emotions to get the best of him mentally.

Consider the father of the Prodigal Son. This poor father watched his son leave possibly knowing full well what the outcome would be because we know he stood watching for him to return home. We have no idea how long the son was gone, but the father was most likely in anguish for his return.

People who are mentally and emotionally healthy tend to have a sense of contentment and a

zest for living. They also have the ability to laugh and have fun, they are able to handle stress and even bounce back from troubled times. We need to work at getting ourselves back to a healthy emotional state so we can serve God and do His work to the best of our ability.

Why Do I Feel Soul-ed Out?

We can get so focused on our negative emotions we can't

think on Christ or spend time in prayer with our Father. Our negative emotions can influence our spiritual condition. When we are so caught up in our negative emotions it blocks our relationship with God. We get stressed out and worry about things that either

never come to actuality or we cannot change. We get so tied up we cannot stop our brain long enough to think on Christ, read His word, pray or even praise Him for His love and blessings. I believe Satan is having a real hay day with this one. His goal is to keep us from Christ. We cannot let him win at this!

Recently I had to run an errand to a different town. After about 20



miles, I entered the interstate only to notice my gas light glaring at me. When did that thing come on? At this point I was over 15 miles from the nearest gas station. You talk about emotions! Mine were in full bloom right about then so I had to take my own advice: PRAY! Of course I instantly felt a wonderful calmness wash over me as I spoke to my Father who knows everything about me. He knew my situation, how far it was to the gas station, and how much gas was left in my tank. It would have been very easy to worry and fret through those miles especially after hitting every possible red light. However, being anxious would not have changed God's power in my personal life. I am so very thankful God knows exactly what I need exactly when I need it. Philippians 4:6 now takes on a new meaning for me.

Paul is such an inspiration and example to not let our emotions cripple our relationship with Christ. He and Silas had been beaten, thrown in jail and were in shackles, and still they were praying and singing hymns to God. I know in my life I have never faced such opposition as this, so surely I can pray and sing hymns to God

in my dark hour. Can you say the same and work on the same?

What about Joseph? Can you imagine his emotions when he found out that his beloved espoused wife was with child? How did Joseph react to this? Do you think his relationship with God was hindered by his emotions?

On the other hand, Sarah let her emotions get in the way of her relationship with God and what

God had planned for her and Abraham. God told Abraham his descendants would be numbered like the stars, but in Sarah's anguish of being childless for so many years,

she took matters upon herself. She thought she had the answer of what God had planned to give Abraham's descendants.

In conclusion, I want to leave you with some verses. Commit them to memory so when you find your emotions out of control, find yourself sick, or a basket case, or soul-ed out you can speak them no matter where you are, Bible in hand or not. May they give you joy and renew your spirit.

Numbers 6:24-26; John 14:1; John 14: 27; Romans 15:33; 2 Thesalonians 3:16; and Romans 15:13.

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Reflections

During your daily Bible readings, start identifying scriptures that deal with emotion, what type of emotion it is and how the person dealt with that emotion. Keep a journal for reference when you have these same feelings. This will help you know how to better react or overcome your feelings. Also make notes in your journal of your own feelings and the outcome.

Think back over the past 6 months and list some of the emotions you have felt. Evaluate your list. Did you control your emotions or did your emotions control you? How did your emotions affect you physically; mentally; spiritually ?

Read Genesis 25-32 for the story of Jacob and Esau.

Jacob is returning to his own land and finds out that Esau is coming to meet him and he is greatly afraid and distressed according Genesis 32:7. Why should Jacob be afraid of his brother? Were Jacob's fears substantiated? Why or why not?

Do you have any phobias? Would you be better off giving them over to Jesus and putting your trust in Him?

From the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32, do you believe our Father feels the same way and is watching for our return when we have let life and our emotions take us away from Him? Why or why not?

Would Joseph have been within his rights to divorce Mary for being with child? What other punishment could Mary have gotten at that time?