

Feelings, the Messengers of Satan



David Wilkerson January 1, 1982

I am so glad my feelings have no meaning I am even more grateful they do not affect my salvation or my relationship to the Lord. I would have given up long ago had I given in to my feelings. My feelings have discouraged me many times; they've tried to deceive me; they've tried to rob me of my peace and joy in Christ; and they have harassed and accused me of every evil thing possible. I have come to recognize all unsettling feelings as messengers of Satan, intended to bring me down into despair and fear.

I can be walking along in the Spirit, reading my Bible, praying and loving the Lord with all my heart. Suddenly, unexpectedly I am overwhelmed with troubled feelings that flood my mind that spirit. I did nothing to deserve these evil messengers of Satan. It seems as though the wicked principalities and powers of hell choose to buffet me with unwanted negative feelings when I least expect them. Often, these mental buffetings come upon me right after some great spiritual victory or revelation.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, trying to drown me in depressing feelings and negative thoughts, I have a tendency to blame myself. I say to my heart, "Why am I cast down, O my soul? Why am I suddenly disquieted in spirit? Why so restless and irritable - when I don't want to be? What evil thing have I done to deserve these negative, depressing feelings?"

"Oh God - Why Do I Feel Like This?"

Dear reader - have you never known such a phenomenon in your life, when peace and happiness are suddenly disrupted and you are cast down into the very pit of despair? Have you never prayed - "Oh, God, why am I feeling like I do? Why such a heavy, sad, fearful cloud hanging over me? What's wrong - have I brought it upon myself by something I've done."

I don't care how saintly you are, or how much faith or revelation of truth you may have - there comes to all God's children this humbling experience of falling into a dry, depressing time of confusion. When it hits you, everything seems distorted for a while. An inexplicable irritability is the first sign of this buffeting from Satan. As much as you hate it - you will find yourself short tempered, cutting off your loved ones and those you work with - and perhaps even raising your voice at your husband, wife, or children. You may then feel condemned; you may even feel sinful and immature. You will probably do as I do and end up thinking to yourself - "How could I feel so low, so weak, so immature, so stupid - how did I turn from hot to cold so quickly? What's bothering me? What's making me act so un-Christlike?"

If you allow it to happen, feelings have a way of draining your confidence in the Lord, and in yourself. Your feelings, if left unchecked and permitted to run roughshod over your spirit, can drag you down into abject despair and fearfulness. And fear has torment. Your feelings, when in control, will lie to you like the devil himself. They will put on you a fear of cancer, fear of dying, fear of losing a loved one - and a world of other overwhelming fears. They are like dark, broken glasses that distort everything you look at.

Perhaps just yesterday, you had marvelous thoughts of God's power and love. Your faith was alive with hope; you encouraged others; you felt spiritually strong; revelation truth excited your soul! But today, just hours later, the picture has changed. Maybe the cloud was there when you work up. Maybe it crept over you in the middle of the

day. Without warning, without any reason you can think of - you are thinking and feeling something entirely different. To be really honest about it, you feel blah! You feel down! You feel strange! You feel confused! You feel helpless! You feel like you haven't learned anything - that you are still a bundle of mistakes! You feel unworthy! You feel like you are wasting time! You feel unloving! You feel dejected! You feel misunderstood, forsaken! You feel angry that you feel so helpless and blue! You feel discouraged because you are still the victim of childish pouting. You thought you had learned how to handle such crisis in the past, but now you realize there is so much more to learn about yourself.

It's so easy to throw around theology and simple formulas and tell people, "You shouldn't feel like that! Where is your faith? God wants you to live in victory and constant joy! You should not be victimized by feelings of despair or depression." My answer to that is this - there is not a single child of God on this earth who does not, at times, experience a low period of unexplained feelings of emptiness, confusion or fear. And the longer one walks with God, and the deeper one goes in Him - the more one is apt to be buffeted by Satan with such hellish weapons. Do not despair or fret if you are going through such an experience at this present time. God is trying to teach you some powerful lessons about feelings and how to deal with them.

Lesson One: My negative, blue, depressing feelings - did not come from God - so I don't have to put up with them!

"For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind..." (2 Timothy 1:7).

I can reject every negative feeling because I know none of them is from God. Feelings that make one afraid are not sent from heaven - they are messengers from the pits of hell! They are to be rejected and bound through the power of prayer and faith.

Think of it - God is saying to us - "I didn't give you these feelings of fear and doubt. Instead, I've given you a spirit of love, power, and authority." He calls us to abolish these unwanted thoughts, bringing them into captivity and obedience to Himself.

We dare not allow our feelings to master us. We dare not permit them to linger and grow into roots of bitterness and doubt. We must come against them in the name of Christ the Lord - and cast them down! We are commanded to do so!

"Casting down imaginations, and every proud thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ..." (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Every downcast feeling is the fruit of a satanic seed of mistrust. It is the old serpent at work again, trying to make us question God's faithfulness. It is Satan planting, in our minds, evil thoughts of being abandoned or neglected by God. The devil wants God's children to think of themselves as spiritual orphans, left to their own ways and wit. It is subtle, insidious, and very dangerous - because it is rooted in a lie. The lie is this - God is with you to a point - then you are on your own. He answers some prayers, but not all prayers. He delivers you from some temptations, but not all. He reveals Himself - only to go back into hiding. Lies - all lies, and the very seeds of our negative feelings. No wonder God commands us to war against them.

Lesson Two: God can cause these messengers of Satan - these negative feelings - to praise Him!

"Man's futile wrath will bring you glory. You will use it as an ornament!" (Psalm 76:10 Living Bible).

Negative feelings turned into praise are an ornament for our Lord and Savior! Yes! God can show us all the sinfulness and evil still lurking in our hearts, by permitting Satan to buffet our minds with these messengers. Certainly, negative thoughts do not originate from God - but they can be permitted by God. Such permission was given in Job's case.

It happened to me recently. It was the second night of my crusade in a southern city. The huge auditorium was nearly three-fourths empty. The meeting was not attracting new people. About 7:30 I peeked at the crowd from behind the curtain - at all those empty seats. and after so many months of crowded auditoriums. Up to that very moment, my spirit was aglow. The message for that evening was burning in my heart. I had prayed diligently for the meeting. But suddenly, my countenance fell - and a flood of negative thoughts cascaded over my spirit. I had thoughts of anger, disappointment, rejection, confusion - thinking that my crusade team had been guilty of poor planning. I thought of the TV evangelist who had drawn such good crowds in the same auditorium just a month before our crusade.

I ran to my bus and fell on my knees, weeping and horrified. I didn't know there was no much spiritual junk left in me. I thought I had gotten the victory over all numbers, crowds, and ambition. But, oh - such terrible feelings I had just experienced. I had even entertained thoughts of shutting the crusade down.

I cried out, "Oh, God - I can't go back into that auditorium - I can't preach - until you deal with me! Cleanse me! I see why you allowed it - you knew this was all still in me! You brought it all out - you dug it up and made me see it!"

God did deliver me. Every negative thought was bound on the authority of Christ's name, and I walked onstage with a glow of peace and victory. God had humbled me by allowing the messengers of Satan to bring out those proud feelings in me - so they could be exposed and cast down. The very thing Satan meant to hurt me, turned into a blessing. Satan's wrath was turned to praise to God. I walked away from that victory, wearing the ornament of meekness and joy. Praise His holy name!

When you sense the enemy of your soul pumping negative feelings into your mind, let it do its work before casting them out. Let those feelings reveal to you how weak you are - how dependent on the grace, love and mercy of the Lord. Let those sad, confusing feelings show you how evil the heart is and how much His strength is needed, every day, every hour. Let it expose in you every remaining shred of pride, self-ego, ambition, secret sin, lust - and bring you so low you will never again boast about how spiritual or mature you are. One blue, depressing day of negative feelings can knock out of any Christian every false notion of self righteousness. God allows disgrace to make a way for His grace.

Confess your failure, then cast down the feelings that revealed it to you, committing all your thoughts to His care.

When your feelings cause you to suffer and grieve, you can be sure the Lord is trying to teach you obedience and complete trust in Himself. I know I have learned to rest in Him alone when swamped by negative unwanted feelings.

"Though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered..." (Hebrews 5:8).

Lesson Three: We must take comfort in knowing that our Lord feels what we feel, and He understands completely.

"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin...Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need..." (Hebrews 4:15,16).

I take great comfort in knowing that my Savior understands my feelings. He relates to all I am experiencing. Every feeling, He truly understands. And He never condemns me for suffering such attacks from the enemy. Instead, He tells me to hold on, and be not afraid. He lets me know He too is familiar with this kind of struggle. Then He offers me a gracious audience at His throne, with a promise of mercy and grace in my hour of need. Whether my negative feelings have been a result of a physical or spiritual battle, our Lord offers comfort and help when most needed.

What does our Lord mean by this? He is encouraging all His dear children to quit fretting when under the influence of negative thoughts. No more accusing yourself of failure and wickedness. Sin can be the cause of despair and fear - but not always. So don't just lie down and take it! Don't go to bed at night until you shut yourself in with Him, approach His throne boldly and claim the mercy and help He has so clearly promised. Claim mercy, forgiveness, and grace to expel all negative feelings. That is Christ's formula, not mine.

Having claimed victory, having used the authority of His name, having come to Him with faith to lay hold of forgiveness and the promises - then ride out your storm in a state of rest! Let God dissipate the negative feelings at His own pace.

"...after he patiently endured, he obtained the promise..."(Hebrews 6:15).

"...weeping endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning..." (Psalm 30:5).

You can lie down to sleep with this prayer on your lips: "Oh, Lord - I reject these negative feelings. I disown them. I don't know where they came from or how - but I commit them all to you. Give me a new assurance, take away all fear. Amen!"

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tested, he is able to help them that are tested..." (Hebrews 2:18).
PART TWO: Proof of God's Love and Protection

1.

When it appears law and order is collapsing - Christians do not have to run and hide - because our God is closely monitoring every move!

Proof: "How dare you tell me, 'Flee to the mountains for safety,' when I am trusting in the Lord? For the wicked have strung their bows, drawn their arrows tight against the bowstrings, and aimed from ambush at the people of God. 'Law and order have collapsed,' we are told. 'What can the righteous do but flee?' But the Lord is still in His holy temple; he still rules from heaven. He closely watches everything that happens here on earth. He puts the righteous and the wicked to the test; he hates those loving violence. He will rain down fire and brimstone on the wicked and scorch them with his burning wind. For God is good, and he loves goodness; the godly shall see his face" (Psalm 11 1-7, L.B.).

2.

No matter how much violence and crime is on every side - God promised to keep His loved ones from the reach of evil men.

Proof: "O Lord, we know that you will forever preserve your own from the reach of evil men, although they prowl on every side and vileness is praised throughout the land" (Psalm 12:7-8, L.B.).

3.

Even if the whole world around us begins to collapse - any nation or person who really trusts God will still be standing. We are not even to fear earthquakes.

Proof: "Some nations boast of armies and of weaponry, but our boast is in the Lord our God. Those nations will collapse and perish; we will arise to stand firm and sure" (Psalm 20:7-8, L.B.).

4.

The coming recession need not frighten or worry the true believer - because God has promised to take care of him.

Proof: "Such a man will not be overthrown by evil circumstances. God's constant care of him will make a deep impression on all who see it. He does not fear bad news, nor live in dread of what may happen. For he is settled in his mind that Jehovah will take care of him. That is why he is not afraid, but can calmly face his foes. He gives generously to those in need. His deeds will never be forgotten. He shall have influence and honor. Evil-minded men will be infuriated when they see all this; they will gnash their teeth in anger and slink away, their hopes thwarted" (Psalm 112:6-10, L.B.).

5.

The godly person will not escape all suffering - but God has promised to deliver in the end.

Proof: "The good man does not escape all troubles - he has them, too. But the Lord helps him in each and every one. God even protects him from accidents" (Psalm 34:19-20, L.B.).

"Who can stand before an angry God? His fury is like fire; the mountains tumble down before his anger. The Lord is good. When trouble comes, he is the place to go! And he knows everyone who trusts in him! But he sweeps away his enemies with an overwhelming flood; he pursues them all night long" (Nahum 1:6-8, L.B.).

"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand" (Psalm 37:24, K.J.)

6.

God has clearly promised to deliver anyone who trusts Him and who calls upon His name.

Proof: "It is senseless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, fearing you will starve to death; for God wants his loved ones to get their proper rest" (Psalm 127: 2, L.B.).

"I have been young and now I am old. And in all my years I have never seen the Lord forsake a man who loves him; nor have I seen the children of the godly go hungry" (Psalm 37:25, L.B.).

"If you belong to the Lord, reverence him; for everyone who does this has everything he needs. Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those of us who reverence the Lord will never lack any good thing" (Psalm 34:9-10, L.B.).

"Day by day the Lord observes the good deeds done by godly men, and gives them eternal rewards. He cares for them when times are hard; even in famine, they will have enough" (Psalm 37:18-19, L.B.).

"Therefore the Lord God says, You shall starve, but my servants shall eat; you shall be thirsty while they drink; you shall be sad and ashamed, but they shall rejoice. You shall cry in sorrow and vexation and despair, while they sing for joy" (Isaiah 65:13-14, L.B.).

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