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FICKLE FEELINGS

Teaching Notes by Joyce Meyer

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FICKLE FEELINGS

I. The Believer's Number One Enemy

- A. Emotions are probably the believer's number one enemy.
- B. What about the devil – I thought he was our number one enemy?
- C. He is the true enemy, but he uses our emotions to deceive us – and quite often, we never recognize what is really going on.
 - 1. Some people almost worship their feelings and spend their lives never living beyond them.
- D. **Victory is not possible until the believers learn to live beyond their feelings.**
 - 1. We must learn to do what is right – especially when we do not **FEEL** like it!
- E. People confuse feelings with the will of God.
 - 1. Just because I feel something does not mean it is God's will for me.
 - 2. For example: A woman might say, "I am drawn toward a certain man, and I believe he is the one I am supposed to marry." In reality, she is being emotionally and physically attracted to him; and it has nothing to do with God at all.
 - 3. How can we tell for sure?

Answer: The best thing to do is pray, tell no one, and wait to see what God does. Be mature enough to realize that feelings are fickle.

- F. Fickle (defined) – Deceitful, erratically changeable or unstable; capricious.
1. Capricious (defined) – Characterized by or subject to whim! Unpredictable.
- G. We can feel 1,001 ways in 30 days about the same thing.
- H. Feelings are not evil, but neither are they holy. They are not sanctified. They must be assessed for what they are – emotions that sometimes are helpful, at other times hurtful; feelings that are ever changing and often for no apparent reason. They come in negatives and positives. They are apt to quit on you when you need them most and flare up when you wish with all your heart they would be still. Not wanting them does not stop them from coming, and wanting them does not make them come. They seem to have a mind of their own. They can make us cry one hour and laugh the next.
1. They behave better when circumstances are good.
 2. They act up during periods of waiting and periods of change.
 3. They frequently change overnight while we sleep for no apparent reason.
 4. They seem to have some connection with our physical being. For example: If we don't feel good physically, our emotions seem to pout about it.
 5. They also seem to have a connection with our will. For example: If we don't get what we want, our emotions sink and become sad.
- I. **Psalm 7:9** – God tests and tries our emotions.
1. This means that He brings things into our lives that affect us emotionally until we learn not to be led by them.
 2. **Psalm 94:12-13**

II. Spiritual Maturity

A. I Corinthians 2:13-3:3 – Speaks of three kinds of men

1. The natural man

The man who is unregenerate and devoid of the Spirit has no appreciation for the Gospel.

2. The spiritual man

a. Regenerate and possessing spiritual maturity as seen in freedom from sectarian strife

b. The spiritual man knows how to get along with other people and is willing to do whatever he needs to in order to do so.

c. The spiritual man is not narrow-minded; he is willing to listen to reason. He is filled with Truth, walks in integrity, and keeps his commitments. The law of love rules his life, and he displays the Fruit of the Spirit.

d. The natural man does not understand the spiritual man.

3. The carnal man

a. He is regenerate, but living much like an unregenerate; is a believer with childish ways (as seen in a jealous and sectarian spirit); an immature Christian who lives more for human opinion than for Christ.

b. The carnal man displays jealousy, envy; and frequently starts or participates in strife. He often brings division instead of unity.

c. He is ruled by self-will and emotions.

- B. **I Corinthians 13:11** – When I was a child, I talked like a child, thought like a child; but now that I have become a man, I am done with childish ways.
1. Each believer must come to this decision for himself before he can go to spiritual maturity and the privileges that go with it.
- C. **Ephesians 4:14** – Be no longer children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.
1. The mature believer knows what he believes and is not moved off of it by experience or feelings.

III. Do You Serve The God Of The Bible Or The God Of Your Feelings?

- A. When you ask for forgiveness of sins, do you believe you receive it and move on – or do you waste time under **FEELINGS** of guilt and condemnation?
1. Do you believe your feelings or the Bible?
 2. **I John 1:9** – Admission and confession of sins renders us cleansed by the blood of Christ.
 3. **I John 2:1** – He gives us His Word so we may not sin; but if we do, we have an Advocate.
 4. **Hebrews 10:11-14, 18**

Guilt and condemnation is actually an offering for sin. We are sacrificing our joy and peace, feeling that we are not worthy to have them. Even though Christ has paid, we feel we must pay also.
 5. **Romans 8:33-34** – Who will condemn God's elect? Not God, not Jesus – then who?

B. Some never enjoy the love of God because they don't **FEEL** like God loves them.

1. This is a great tragedy because all the healing in our lives comes from God's love.
2. I need to believe it because God's Word says it, not because I feel it or don't feel it.
3. If a child was abused or unloved by a parent, he or she may have a difficult time **FEELING** God's love.

**BELIEVING IN HIS LOVE IS WHAT
EVENTUALLY RELEASES THE FEELINGS.**

C. Some don't believe God is with them unless they **FEEL** His presence.

1. **Matthew 28:20** – I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth.
2. **Hebrews 13:5** – I will never leave you nor forsake you.
3. **Joshua 1:5** – When God assigns us a job, He promises to be with us and never leave us.

D. Some people never **FEEL** like God is pleased with them no matter what they do or how much they do.

1. **Matthew 3:17; 17:5**

E. Some people **FEEL** they have no gifts or talents. They **FEEL** useless and worthless, as if they have no purpose in life.

1. **Romans: Chapter 12** clearly teaches that He gives the measure of faith to every man and that He gives a variety of gifts to people.
2. **I Corinthians 12:7** – *But to each one is given the manifestation of the [Holy] Spirit . . .*

- a. He gives the gifts of the Spirit to each one as He chooses.
 - b. We are not without gifts just because we don't have the same gift as someone else or the gift we would like to have.
- F. Some **FEEL** rejected when in reality nobody is rejecting them.
- 1. If a person lives by feelings in this area, they may be so shy and withdrawn that others may feel rejected by them.

**THEIR FEAR OF BEING REJECTED ACTUALLY
CAUSES THEM TO REJECT OTHERS.**

- G. Some don't **FEEL** anointed, so they believe they are not anointed.
- 1. **I John 2:27** – The Anointing abides in you.
 - 2. **If I don't believe I am anointed, my anointing won't be released to help anyone.**
- H. I may not feel righteous, but the Bible says I am.
- 1. **II Corinthians 5:21**
- I. I may not feel like a new creature, but the Bible says I am.
- 1. **II Corinthians 5:17**
- J. I may not feel like I have anything to look forward to in the future, but the Bible says I do.
- 1. **Jeremiah 29:11**

FEELINGS CAN BECOME A GOD IF WE ARE NOT CAREFUL.

IV. Signs Of Carnality

- A. **Hebrews 5:11-6:3**

1. They had become lazy and stopped growing.

In the spiritual life, we must **ALWAYS** be growing. Stagnation means death to the Christian life. We either go forward, or we start going backward.

2. They could not handle strong teaching.

- a. For example: Crucifixion of the flesh, sacrifice, obedience, giving, taking responsibility for our actions, being delivered from blaming others for our problems, forgiving, and blessing your enemies, etc.

- b. They did not know who they were in Christ.

3. Solid food is for those who have trained their senses to discern.

Training the senses includes training ourselves not to be led by emotions.

4. They could not get past foundational things. We don't need to keep laying a foundation. Foundations are laid to be built upon!

- a. Repentance is still an issue for many believers.

- b. Abandoning dead works is definitely an issue for most believers.

- c. Some people who consider themselves to be mature believers don't even practice or believe in the laying on of hands.

- B. Carnal believers cater to their feelings.

1. **Romans 8:8**

2. Their decisions are based on what feels good.

3. We see many people today making decisions that relieve the pain of being dealt with by God, but they are avoiding the process of maturity and will never experience “**Promised Land living.**”

C. Catering to impulses brings eventual destruction.

1. Impulse buying
2. Impulse speaking
3. Impulsive decisions – To quit a job; back out of a commitment or make a commitment, etc.
4. Impulse eating

V. Emotions And Change

A. Be especially careful of bowing to emotions during times of change such as:

1. Change in jobs or housing – for example, moving to a new city or neighborhood.
2. Changing schools for young people can be difficult.
3. Change of life.
4. Pregnancy.
5. Getting adjusted to marriage.
6. Getting adjusted to having children.
7. Financial changes.
 - a. If one **suddenly** has a lot of money, it can provoke emotions that may cause trouble.

- b. If one **suddenly** has a lot less money, it can provoke emotions that will settle down after a period of adjustment.
 - 8. Death of a loved one.
 - 9. Change in responsibility level.
 - 10. A promotion may provoke excited emotions; and then when the new responsibility hits, you may feel discouraged and emotional.
- B. A wise (mature) believer knows to wait for emotions to subside before making decisions that are important.

