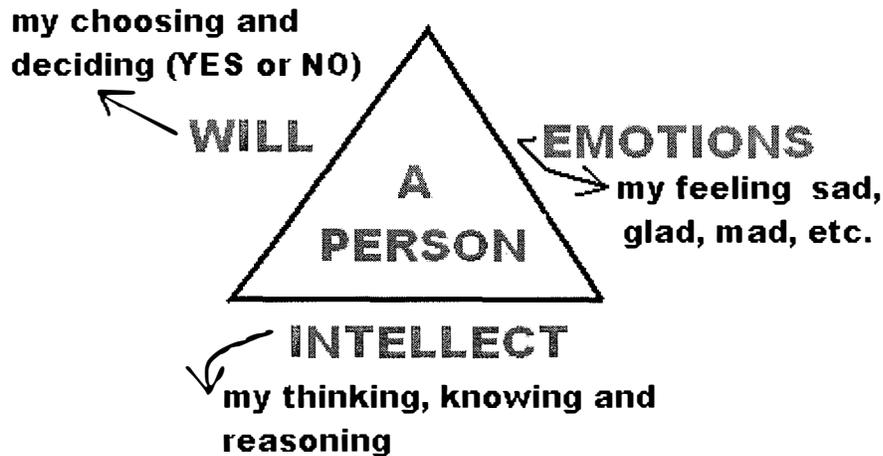


CHAPTER 7

The Make-Up Of A Person

The Emotions



THREE COMPONENTS OF A PERSON

As a person, I feel certain ways (glad, sad, mad, etc.). These strong feelings (such as joy, sorrow, fear, lust, hate, love, grief, anger, excitement) are commonly referred to as my **emotions**.

The Lord Himself is an emotional Person with real feelings. Consider the following verses, and next to each one, write the kind of feeling that is described:

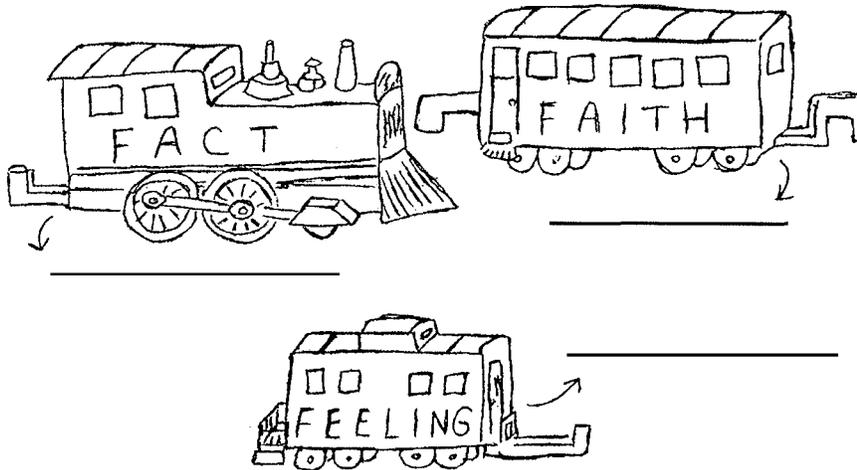
1. Proverbs 6:16-19 _____
2. Psalm 7:11 _____
3. Hebrews 1:9 _____
4. Exodus 34:14 _____
5. 1 Samuel 15:22 _____

As believers we must learn to love what God loves, hate what God hates, get excited about the things that excite God, get angry about those things that anger God, grieve over the things that grieve God, and delight in those things which God delights in! In other words, we must learn to feel the way the Lord feels!

Most people are led and controlled by their feelings and emotions, and the result is disastrous. When asked, "Why did you do that?" a common answer is, "Because I felt like it!" But feelings do not do very well in the driver's seat! Feelings come and feelings go. Feelings change. One hour he's sad, the next hour he's glad and later he's mad. The person who runs his life on the basis of feelings, is like the fool who buries his treasure in the sand ten feet from the shoreline. When he returns he cannot find his treasure because the changing tides have created a different shoreline! We need to be led by

a sure guide that will not change.

In the following illustration we see the different parts of a train. Please indicate the correct order in the spaces provided (**FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST**):



The FACTS are found in God's Word, the Bible. Do these FACTS ever change (Psalm 119:89; Hebrews 6:18; Numbers 23:19)? _____ FAITH acts upon the FACTS of God's Word. FAITH says, "I believe God's Word and I am going to *DO* what God says (even if I don't feel like doing it)!" Then when the believer does what God says, FEELINGS follow. You will be pleased, glad, satisfied and you will feel good because you have obeyed God and done the right thing. Good feelings are the natural outcome of obedience (acting upon what God has said).

Imagine yourself sound asleep enjoying all the relaxing comforts of dreamland. Suddenly you hear the dreaded buzz of the alarm clock. Do you feel like getting up or do you feel like shutting off the alarm and resting for another hour or two? You know that getting up is the right thing to do, so you get up even though you really feel like staying in bed. After you are up and around awhile you begin to feel differently, and you are glad that you *acted against your feelings*. If you had followed your feelings and slept in, then later you would probably feel terrible because you would realize how lazy you have been, how you have wasted time and how half the morning is over before you have even started your day!

Every day is filled with many decisions that must be made on the basis of obedience to God rather than on the basis of one's feelings. There are many things that are good and right and proper that we may not always feel like doing. There are two ways to live. They reflect two kinds of religion and two kinds of morality. One religion and life and morality says, "I will live according to feeling." The other says, "I will live as God says." The feeling motivated life is a life of sin oriented toward self gratification. The commandment motivated is a life of holiness oriented toward obeying God (FAITH--trusting God and responding in the right way to what God has said).

Read Romans 15:1-3 and notice the word "please" (or "pleased") in each of the verses. If we should do what we naturally FEEL like doing, whom would we please? _____ Whom are we commanded to please (Romans 15:2)? _____ Whom should we please most of all (Hebrews 11:5)? _____ According to Hebrews 11:6, it is impossible to do this without _____ (believing God and *doing what He says* even if we do not feel like it).

Consider the illustration Jesus gave in Luke 17:7-8. Here is a servant who has worked up a big appetite laboring in the field. He has been ordered by his master to prepare and serve the meal, and only after this is done may he eat and drink himself. As he savors the aroma of the food that he is

preparing, what do you think his FEELINGS tell him to do? Thus he must make a choice: Should he follow his feelings and enjoy this food now or should he do what he has been commanded to do? What choice did he make (Luke 17:9)?

_____. Later, after his master had finished eating, the servant could enjoy his food with the inner satisfaction and delight of knowing he had done right (he did the will of his master)!

In Matthew 5:44, Christ gave a command, "_____ your enemies." Is this something that most people feel like doing? _____ If we were to follow our feelings, we might punch our enemy in the nose or let air out of his tires or some other malicious deed! What do people FEEL like doing (Matthew 5:46)? _____ But if you treat your enemy as God commands you to (see Romans 12:20-21), you will be amazed to see how your feelings will begin to change towards that person.

In Genesis 4:4-5 we learn the important principle that **behavior** (the way we act and live) determines feelings. Cain disobeyed God and brought the wrong kind of offering. God could not accept this offering, and thus Cain became angry and upset, and his **countenance** (face) _____ (Genesis 4:5). Because he had done wrong he felt terrible! His emotional problems resulted from his behavioral problems. God told Cain how to overcome this problem: Verse 7 literally says, "If you do right, will not **it** (your face) be lifted up?" Right living and acting and thinking leads to right feelings.

People often feel bad as the result of **bad behavior** (not living in obedience to God's Word). Bad feelings should **alert us** to the fact that something is wrong with our behavior! Bad feelings are like the red light on the dashboard flashing out at us telling us that something is wrong (that I am not believing God and doing what He says). What must a person do to fix the problem? Should he take a hammer and smash the red light on the dashboard? Obviously not! He must get out of the car and lift the hood to see what is wrong. His problem is not with the light on the dashboard. The light is working well and doing just what it is supposed to do. He is thankful for the light; it has warned him early enough to do something about the real problem. The real problem, in terms of the person who has bad feelings, is that there are certain areas in his life where he is not doing what God has said. It is this sinful disobedience which has caused the bad feelings. To have good feelings, the person must do W _____ (Genesis 4:7), that is, he must do what is right and what God has told him to do!

Why was Peter so sorrowful (Luke 22:62 and see Luke 22:40, 45-46, 55-61)?

Why did David lose his joy (Psalm 51:8,12 and see verses 3-4)?

Why was Saul troubled (1 Samuel 16:14 and see 1 Samuel 15:23-24)?

Why was Haman hot with anger (Esther 3:5 and compare 5:9)?

Therefore, to be emotionally healthy and happy, we must keep FACTS, FAITH and FEELINGS in their proper order:

1. I must make sure I understand what the FACTS really are. What does God want me to do? What does God's Word say that I should do in this particular situation that I am now facing? What commands am I responsible to obey?

2. I must by FAITH act upon the FACTS of God's Word, no matter how I feel. I must believe God and do exactly what He says. "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be HAPPY in Jesus, but to trust and obey."
3. I must let my FEELINGS follow, remembering that when I do well, I will begin to feel well. Right living results in good feelings. Wrong living results in sadness, guilt (Genesis 42:21-22), worry, sorrow, depression, anger, etc. If I am feeling bad, this should alert me to the fact that I may not be living according to God's Word (unless the bad feelings are a result of a physical problem such as sickness, etc.).

**1) UNDERSTAND
GOD'S
WORD
(facts)**

**2) OBEY
GOD'S
WORD
(faith)**

**3) ENJOY THE
BLESSINGS OF
OBEYING AND
PLEASING GOD
(feelings)**

Feeling Depressed?

Consider Psalm 42:5, "Why art thou _____, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted (inner turmoil, inner agitation) within me." As you read the rest of the verse, what was the solution for these feelings of depression?

_____ As we look to God, God can take care of our feelings and our emotions. Do you find the same thing in Psalm 42:11 and 43:5? _____ Make sure your rope is rightly connected to the Anchor, to the living God. God can take care of the inner turmoil and the resulting peace will be reflected on the face (countenance) of the one who is hoping in God (Psalm 42:11).

Assurance of Salvation

Some people doubt their salvation because they do not FEEL saved. We need to be careful not to base our salvation upon feelings, but upon God's sure salvation promises found in His Word.

Let us consider a few of God's salvation promises. We want to be looking for two things: a) **First we want to see what the sinner's responsibility is.** This is exactly what the jailer wanted to know in Acts 16:30 when he cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" b) **Second, we want to see what God promises to do for the sinner when the sinner responds in the right way.** The first three verses will be done for you so that you will understand what to look for. Then look up the other verses that are listed and do the same for them.

1) Matthew 11:28

- a) The sinner must **come unto Christ** _____
- b) God promises the sinner **rest** _____

2) John 1:12

- a) The sinner must **receive Christ and believe on His Name** _____
- b) God promises the sinner **that he will become a son (child) of God** _____

3) John 3:16

- a) The sinner must **believe in Christ**
- b) God promises the sinner **that he will not perish but will have everlasting life**

4) John 5:24

- a) The sinner must

- b) God promises the sinner three things:

1.

2.

3.

5) John 6:35

- a) The sinner must

- b) God promises the sinner

6) John 6:37

- a) The sinner must

- b) God promises the sinner

7) John 6:47

- a) The sinner must

- b) God promises the sinner

8) Acts 10:43

- a) The sinner must

- b) God promises the sinner

["Remission" means forgiveness]

9) Acts 16:31

a) The sinner must

b) God promises the sinner

How can we know we are saved? How can we know that we have eternal life (compare 1 John 5:13)? We know so because God said so! "Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take Him at His Word, just to rest upon His promise, just to know THUS SAITH THE LORD!"

Our feelings may come and go. Our feelings are very changeable. But God's Word never changes. You can read John 3:16 before you go to bed. When you wake up in the morning, will John 3:16 say something different or will it be exactly the same thing that you read the night before?

**Feelings come and feelings go
And feelings are deceiving.
My warrant is the Word of God,
Naught else is worth believing!**

Note: I am indebted to Dr. Jay Adams for some of the illustrations used in this chapter. See *Godliness Through Discipline* (p.15ff.) and *Competent to Counsel* (p. 93ff.).

