

MIXED EMOTIONS

How To Deal With
What You Feel

Week 1: The Truth About Feelings

01. INTRODUCTION

Hello there, My name is _____ and I want to welcome you to _____ Church. I am so excited to kick off our New Series **MIXED EMOTIONS**. I want to welcome everyone who's joining us this week here locally at one of our physical locations or just streaming us online. We're glad you're here.

02. TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

Today we are going to talk about how to get unstuck in our emotions—in our new series called, **MIXED EMOTIONS: How To Deal With What You Feel**.

Our ability to feel deeply is a gift from God and our emotional health plays an important role in how we interact with other people, for the better or for the worse. Understanding what emotional health looks like biblically and learning how to discipline our unwanted emotions will lead to stronger relationships in every area of our lives.

Today we are going to kick off our series with a foundational message entitled: **"The Truth About Feelings"**

Lets read our key verse:

Mark 12:29-30 (NLT): ...“The most important commandment is this: ...you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’

Do you hear the emotion in that passage? Jesus is saying, “I don’t want you to just say ‘I you love, God,’ but I want you to love Him passionately—with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”

- Throughout Scripture we are encouraged to love God with all we are and have. **God wants a powerful, emotional connection and relationship with you.**

BIG IDEA

When kept in proper context, feelings draw you closer to God, others, and your destiny. However, we can get trapped when we allow our emotions to control us. Join us this week as we learn how to manage unwanted emotions.

03. MESSAGE

Let’s start with some important thoughts on... Understanding our emotions:

3 Things That are important when Understanding Our Emotions:

- 1. Emotions are neutral.** Think about fire. Fire is neither good nor bad; it simply depends on how and where it is used. When used in a positive way, fire provides warmth and comfort. When placed in the wrong hands or allowed to burn unsupervised, it can cause destruction – Think about burn bans in Texas this time of year! **It’s the same with emotions.** When kept in proper context, feelings draw you closer to God, others, and your destiny. However, we get trapped when we allow our emotions to control us and continually make decisions that are detrimental to our future, our health, and our relationships.

Personal: I'm a passionate guy. I've am learning to keep my emotions within healthy parameters. Emotions - properly channeled - bring a lift, but we can blow people out of the water. I.e., Kids, wife, team, staff.

2. God has emotions. Many people don't realize this – but God has feelings. He feels joy. He feels grief. He feels pain. God has emotions. The only reason you have emotions is because you're made in His image. **Jesus has emotions.**

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

3. Emotions are a gift from God. It may not always seem that way, but even negative emotions have a role in your life. If you didn't have emotions you'd be a robot – not a human being. It is your emotional ability that allows you to love and create, to be faithful, joyful, kind, loyal, and generous. Your ability to feel is an amazing gift from God.

When dealing with our emotions we want to AVOID EXTREMES: One is called **emotionalism** and the other is called **stoicism**. Let me explain these to you.

Emotionalism says how I feel is everything. It doesn't matter what I think, it doesn't matter what's right or wrong, it doesn't matter what's popular or unpopular, healthy or unhealthy – all that matters is – doing what I feel. If it feels good, do it.

The other extreme is **Stoicism says how I feel is nothing.** Stoicism is the exact opposite of emotionalism. It basically says feelings are irrelevant and unimportant. It's a trap that says the only thing that matters is your intellect and your will, your volition, and your intelligence. You kind of go "Spock" on people.

Illustration: Counseling – getting couples on the same page. Stuffers & Gushers. BTW, emotions are not gender specific.

So, let's look today at *how to deal with how you feel*. First, let's look at God's Word and ***why*** we need to manage my emotions – and then we'll look into ***how*** we do that.

Let's look at **The Truth About Feelings:** There are **four important reasons...**

1. Our feelings are often unreliable. Feelings are often untrustworthy. Your intuition is often flawed. Your emotions can lead you down a blind alley. *You can't depend on everything you feel.* **Proverbs 14:12 (NKJV) says: There is a way that seems [or feels] right to a man, but its end is the way of death.** The tricky word there is *seems*. Your emotions are not infallible. *Just because you feel it doesn't make it true.*

By the way, there is a difference between being led by your emotions and being led by the Holy Spirit.

Personal: Debt – my parents always said you can't have it, we don't have the money. I've gotten older, married a doctor and so now we do have money. It feels empowering for me to spend, until I get the bill!

2. Our feelings can be manipulated. If you don't control your emotions – they will control you. In fact, **marketers and advertisers** are trained in how to stir up your emotions because they know if they can get you hooked *emotionally* you're going to buy their product.

We have to manage our emotions so we don't get manipulated. The wisest man to ever live, Solomon, says in **Proverbs 25:28 (NASB): Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.**

That person has no 'check' on their feelings. That person has no internal governor, no moderator, no manager of their feelings. Solomon says, "you're like a city with no defenses."

3. Our feelings seek to control us. God cannot be God in my life if emotions are god in my life. God can't rule my life if emotions rule my life. The Apostle Paul writes in **Romans 8:6,8** (GNT): **To be controlled by human nature results in death; to be controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace...** ⁸Those who obey their human nature cannot please God.

Emotions not governed by the Word of God can become a major trap in your life. The fourth reason we must address unhealthy emotional patterns:

4. Our feelings, uncontrolled, will ruin our life. How we manage our moods is one of the top predictors of success or failure in our life. If you don't learn how to deal with how you feel and control your emotions – you will never be the success in life that God wants you to be.

Study-after-study has shown that your EQ, your **Emotional Quotient**, is more important than your IQ, your Intelligence Quotient. In business and life, your Emotional Quotient is far more valuable than your Intelligence Quotient.

A lot of people who don't have a high IQ are very successful in life. Why? Because they have great skills in dealing with both their emotions and people!

Solomon says this about people in **Proverbs 5:23** (CEV): **They get lost and die because of their foolishness and lack of self-control.**

The Apostle Peter says this to Believers in **1 Peter 4:2** (GNT): **From now on, then, you must live the rest of your earthly lives controlled by God's will and not by human desires.**

So, let's look at **How To Manage Unwanted Feelings:** So, how do we do that? This is what I want to spend the remainder of our time on today. **Contrary to popular belief, you can control your thoughts and emotions!** So, how do we get free from toxic emotions? **Three things:**

1. Name it. The first thing you have to do in dealing with an emotion is to name it. *You put a name on it.* What does that mean? You identify it.

You can only change, control, and manage something you have identified. *You're probably not as in touch with your emotions as you think you are.*

We all think we're very much in touch – but we're often not. If you can't name it you can't change it. So, you've got to name it first.

Sometimes I feel like David, who wrote **Psalm 55:2 (GW): My thoughts are restless, and I am confused.** That's the way we are a lot of times about our feelings. We're confused. We're trapped.

Personal: I had to get in touch with the **anger** in my life. Fear is the root. Type A personality – I would get angry. I had to name it!

2. Challenge it. You and I have to challenge what we're feeling. You don't just automatically accept what you're feeling and assume it's accurate, true, or even reality. *You challenge it.* Remember, our thoughts produce our emotions! Are things really as bad as I feel they are? *Probably not.* On the flip side, are things really as good as I feel they are? *Maybe not.*

The Scriptures say in **Psalm 26:2 (NET): Examine me, O LORD, and test me! Evaluate my inner thoughts and motives! What are your motives? They're your emotions.** "God, help me to test and evaluate what I feel, my affections, my emotions."

Let me give you **three questions** to ask when you're trying to figure out *how to deal with how you feel.* Let's say you're angry, you're upset, you're irritated, you're frustrated, or you're depressed, let me encourage you to **ALWAYS ASK THREE QUESTIONS**

1. What's the underlying reason I'm feeling this? We are thinking thoughts of fear, of worry. What's the real reason I feel trapped in this emotion? It's because of where my thoughts are leading me to feel! The second question to ask yourself...

2. Is what I'm feeling true? Is what I'm feeling right now true?

Illustration: Believing lies in relationships. Best in yourself, worst in others. Reject that!

3. Is what I'm feeling helping me or hurting me? Sometimes this is the simplest thing to changing an emotion – just say, “Is what I'm feeling right now going to help move where I need to go or is it hindering me?” In other words, “Will I get what I want by continuing to feel this way?”

A lot of feelings we have feel natural – but they're actually a self-defeating trap.

For Example: Let's say you go in and you sit down in a **restaurant** and the service is slow, I mean it's *reeeeallllll slow*. You're waiting, waiting, waiting for a seat, and then you're waiting to be served.

- Then a couple comes in like fifteen minutes after you and sits down and they get their meal before you do. Then you look at your spouse, “Are you seeing this? Is this really happening?” You're starting to get a little irritated and all of a sudden you feel an emotion welling up inside of you. You ask the three questions,
- “What's the real reason I'm feeling this? Well, I'm hungry!” Then, Is it true? Yeah, it's true. I'm frustrated because the service is slow here. That is particularly true.
- But then, Is it helping or is it hurting me? **Question:** Do you get better service by getting angry at the wait staff? The answer is no – absolutely not. That's called managing your emotions.

04. CLOSING & PRAYER

After you've asked these questions, next you **MUST**:

3. Replace It. To tame your emotions, you have to change them...while you are experiencing that unwanted emotion. If you want to succeed in life you must learn how to master your moods. When you have an unhealthy emotion that isn't getting you where you want to go, you have two options: **You either change it or you channel it.**

- **Sometimes we need to change what we're feeling.**

Often emotions are so destructive, so damaging, so hurtful, so ineffective the **only thing** you should do is to *change* them. You need to change what you're feeling. **Philippians 2:5** (NIV) says this: *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

- **Sometimes we need to channel what we're feeling.**

Sometimes you can take a negative emotion you're feeling and rather than change it, *you channel it.* **What does that mean?** *You use it for good.*

For Example: let's say you have been the victim of some sort of abuse and there is a lingering, painful emotion attached to that experience. So you take that negative emotion – pain – and you use your place of pain for the benefit of other people. Use it for good. Don't get trapped in your pain. Use it to help others. Channel and focus those emotions. *What pain in your life can you use for good?*

So in **review**, in order to manage your emotions, it starts with naming what you are feeling. Challenging it then taming it. You tame it by changing it or channeling it. **Lets Pray**