



#3 When Facts and Feelings Collide

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There is a strange concept circulating today that I somewhat innocently adopted as a child conflicted with “feelings” that didn’t match up with the teachings of God’s Word. The church was not addressing “feelings.” In fact today many congregations are adopting “feelings” as truth rather than facing them with the powerful instruction God had provided us in His loving letter to us which promises to our companion to the very end. The disturbing concept is that “God caves in.”

This is a dangerous theory that will leave you warped by the enemy and unprepared for the daily battle each of us face. God has not left us helpless and without clarity about His will and His plan for our lives.

If you or someone you know is suffering from “feelings” that are not supported by God and His Word, it is my prayer that this handout will provide information that points toward hope, help and healing available through Jesus Christ and developing intimacy with Him and His Word, the sword that has been provided for the battle. Victory over “ANY” sin is promised and possible by our Father who has given each of us the precious breath of life. This victory transforms us, preparing us for eternal life.

Keep in mind that “rebellion” brought about the condition in which we are living in today; a fallen world. Key to our journey in growth in Jesus, which takes place one day at a time, is to remember that “rebellion” toward God’s perfect plan will not again be allowed or admitted into His Kingdom.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM – “FEELINGS”

Let’s look at the process of sin. How does it come about? What can we learn to help us recognize its presence?

Remember – Temptation does not come from God. James 1:13 “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

Disturbance Life is full of allurements and distractions by which if we are not constantly centered in Jesus, will seek to pull us into the process of sin. Distractions can include, but are not limited to what we are viewing and reading. What we eat and drink. Where we let our thoughts drift without making instant decisions to reign in and seeking God’s presence and will. We must be aware that Satan has a custom plan for each of us that he is planning on making us fall. This is how temptation arrives. How we respond has great impact on what happens next.

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. James 1:14

Enticement If we entertain the thought of what we are being tempted with by beginning to focus our attention on the allurements, Satan begins to stimulate us through our sensory network by what he has put before us. We sometimes begin to dance with the devil. We begin to weaken in our reasoning. “Maybe just this once.” “Nobody will know.” Secret sin is holding many captive today. We tend to forget that Jesus is always present. Because we don’t see Him, we somehow reason that it won’t matter. This often gives way in food and diet matters, pornography, sexual or physical abuse, masturbation and other indulgences that place shame before God, the Holy Spirit and His angels. Yet even in the enticing stage, there is still opportunity to choose Jesus and His way out of the temptation process.

Conception The trap has been set. And at this point Satan is pretty much counting on you caving into whatever it is that he’s selling. He has you frothing at the mouth with desire. An insect or animal sees the lure and bait often without recognizing the trap. But God has given us a higher development of senses. We know it’s a trap and by clinging to Jesus and running from temptation we can avoid the trap. Satan uses his methods to engage us and then insult us on the

other side of the sin with doubt, failure, guilt and worthlessness. At conception, sin is pretty much inevitable without divine intervention.

Action Action is the sinker. Once Satan sees that he has you in his clutches, the mind has already adapted to the carrying out of the consideration. All that is left is to carry out the planting of the idea. At this stage we are often numb to the power of the Holy Spirit. Sin has taken hold.

Repeated actions will bring about a searing of the sin on the mind and body. Some have excused themselves here with the idea that God's grace will cover them. This is likely to be a "cheap grace" approach to the sin problem which results in presumption and eventually can give way to the grieving away of the Holy Spirit. By repeating sinful actions we distance ourselves from God. Where we made allowance with "I'll just do this this one time," we may now have found that we are in a rut a persistent sin problem. For many... this is where "feelings" have given away to deception. If a searing has taken place, many become adamant that their "feelings" are their truth. Without divine intervention hearts can easily become hardened. Here most no longer see their need of Christ as they become steeped in justification.

Caught in a vicious cycle by Satan, this is where many are today. They can't see a way out. They "feel" trapped. They are victims of Satan's powerful lies. You might see yourself as such a victim.

Death Living in sin without repentance and a turning from sin, leaves only one outcome according to God's Word to us. Sin must be destroyed.

God does not desire the destruction of any. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Eze. 33:11. Throughout the period of probationary time His Spirit is entreating men to accept the gift of life. It is only those who reject His pleading that will be left to perish. God has declared that sin must be destroyed as an evil ruinous to the universe. Those who cling to sin will perish in its destruction." Christ Object Lessons, page 123

VICTORY IN JESUS - Finding your way out

It is while we are estranged from Jesus that we "feel" hopeless and helpless. Remember that when you are steeped in sin, that Satan has woven his web and is not going to relinquish without a fight. But the battle is the Lord's if you will surrender and invite Him to take control.

Victory over sin doesn't generally manifest itself in an instant. Remember that you have fallen victim to a routine of willful sin. You now bear the scars of your sin and consequences of sinful behavior. Temptations are going to continue to be Satan's method of seeking to regain your allegiance. Now you must cling to Jesus. You will find that victory is going to be a combination of divine power and human effort. Jesus does not force. But with your decision, He will provide all the strength and power that belongs to Him in overcoming the enemy.

As you walk out of sin, remember that it may be gradual. A verse comes to mind that I would like to share with you. It is about the sin struggle. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me." Romans 7:18-20.

The keys to victory are in submission to the Holy Spirit and in the surrender of self and abiding in Jesus every moment of every day. Take an inventory of your activities and ask yourself if these activities bring honor and glory to God.

"Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe the Savior's word. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is "dead in trespasses." Ephesians 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin.

The sense of sin has poisoned the springs of life. But Christ says, "I will take your sins; I will give you peace. I have bought you with My blood. You are Mine. My grace shall strengthen your weakened will; your remorse for sin I will remove." When temptations assail you, when care and perplexity surround you, when, depressed and discouraged, you are ready

to yield to despair, look to Jesus, and the darkness that encompasses you will be dispelled by the bright shining of His presence. When sin struggles for the mastery in your soul, and burdens the conscience, look to the Savior. His grace is sufficient to subdue sin. Let your grateful heart, trembling with uncertainty, turn to Him. Lay hold on the hope set before you. Christ waits to adopt you into His family. His strength will help your weakness; He will lead you step by step. Place your hand in His, and let Him guide you.

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. Seek Him as One who desires to be found of you. He desires you not only to touch His garments, but to walk with Him in constant communion." Ministry of Healing – page 39

Prepare for Battle

Living a "redeemed" life cannot be accomplished by in good in us. We are now exchanging the sin that lived in us by making room for the righteousness of Jesus Christ. You might be successful at a "white knuckle" approach for a sustained length of time. But without Jesus, we are nothing. My prayer each day is that I will fall more and more in love with Him, developing the intimacy that will transform me here and continue to grow throughout eternity.

By inviting Christ to be leader and master in my life, today my identity is no longer found in sexuality or "sexual orientation." My orientation is now centered in Jesus and He has given me a new identity as defined in 2 Corinthians 5:17. I am a New Creature. This not a one-time decision. I must submit myself to Him each and every moment of every day and claim the victory He has won and the new identity I have adopted in Jesus Christ. What was natural is sin and how it controlled me. What is unnatural is continual response to still small voice of The Holy Spirit.

We are born in iniquity. And from birth, we must prepare to do battle with the enemy.

Exercise your will – Steer clear of that that once bound you. Make decisions for Jesus instead of for what your flesh cries out for. Disassociate yourself from things or situations that acted as a courting field for sin. Remember the first part of this document that defines Satan's tactics.

The most effective weaponry is the power of prayer. Begin your day by inviting Jesus in to your life and asking Him to be present and influence your thoughts and decisions throughout the day.

Spend quality time with Jesus as you start your day. This is part of developing intimacy with Him. Spend time in His Word and communicating with Him. The power over sin has been provided in God's love letter to you. "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11

You've heard it over and over... and that's because it is so true and powerful. Put on the whole armor of God that you may stand against evil. Ephesians 6:10-11

Surround yourself with **"truth."** God's "truth;" no longer your "feelings" as "truth."

Put on the **"breastplate of righteousness."** Jesus is our righteousness. Make decisions that make more and more room for Him in your life. Opt for "holiness." His holiness. Be drawn to Him and allow Him to take place of that which once consumed you. His ways... no longer yours.

Jesus imparts peace. **"The gospel of peace."** By choosing Him, His peace and joy belongs to you. His message is one that wraps protection around you with the life-sustaining, precious blood He shed for you.

The **"shield of faith."** Your new strength is no longer rooted in your "feelings." You are now living outside of what your "feelings" suggest. You are walking with God in "believing" all that He imparts to you and has planned for you. This belief will grow you and strengthen you in Him. Faith will dispel the fiery darts that the enemy will never stop firing at you. Keep in mind that he has been overcome. He is as good as dead. Stay away from his camp of temptation.

Put on the **"helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit."** You are now experiencing the promises of Jesus as you explore and trust in His Word. Commit those promises to memory. They are then at the ready when the enemy finds a weak moment. His Word is not ready for the attack that comes through your "feelings" that are ready to try and overcome you in your weakness. Immerse yourself in prayer claiming all that is promised to you in God's Word. Retreat to your "prayer closet." Don't come away until you are secure in the peace and protection offered by your Savior.

I don't pretend to have all the answers. You may fall. If you do, get up. A friend of mine used to travel the world with the "Righteousness by Faith" message. He used to say over and over... "If you drop the soap, you're not out of the shower." We have not arrived at perfection. We are told to choose it daily. Should we have a fall, we have a "Redeemer" who has paid for our violation of His Character. Come to Him as a child seeking forgiveness. He is willing and able to grant you pardon. Keep your focus forever on Him and all that is possible through Him.

VICTORY IS POSSIBLE

Never give up. By repeated right decisions for Jesus, you will be strengthened. You can experience freedom in Him. You have been granted His "Blessed Assurance."

Following are some of those "assurances" that have blessed me.

"Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Galatians 5:22, 23. They will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God they will follow in His steps, reflect His character, and purify themselves even as He is pure. The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate. The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. Christians will seek not the "outward adorning," but "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

There is no evidence of genuine repentance unless it works reformation. If he restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, confess his sins, and love God and his fellow men, the sinner may be sure that he has passed from death unto life.

When, as erring, sinful beings, we come to Christ and become partakers of His pardoning grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness.

The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Savior's life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. "We love, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around." Steps to Christ" – page 58-59

Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*."

Galatians 5:13 "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

Isaiah 42:16 "I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, And crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, And not forsake them."

Isaiah 43:1-2 "But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine. When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you."



"He called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." - 1 Peter 2:9

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