

Lies We Believe about our Feelings

FATHERS' DAY HISTORY

Sonora Dodd, of Washington, first had the idea of a "father's day." She thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909.

Sonora wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart. Smart, who was a Civil War veteran, was widowed when his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child. Mr. Smart was left to raise the newborn and his other five children by himself on a rural farm in eastern Washington state.

After Sonora became an adult she realized the selflessness her father had shown in raising his children as a single parent. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910.

President Calvin Coolidge, in 1924, supported the idea of a national Father's Day. Then in 1966 President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day. President Richard Nixon signed the law which finally made it permanent in 1972.

1. Introduction

- a. We have been dealing with some of the lies we believe about our lives and how they affect the way we live. If you believe a lie in one area of your life, it will affect every other area of your life.
- b. Last 2 weeks we looked at "lies we believe about marriage" and "about our children"
 - i. Hopefully we dispelled the lie that "marriage exists to make ME happy."
 - ii. That one will ruin you and your marriage. It affects the way we see life, the way we see others and the way we see anything that interferes with our selfish pursuit of our own happiness (even at the expense of someone else's happiness).

2. This week, we will be looking at the lies we believe about our feelings.

- a. If you recall from some of our other teachings that **man's soul is composed of three interconnected parts: Our mind (thinker), Our will (chooser) and our emotions (our feeler).**
- b. Our mind and our emotions are "INFORMERS" to our will.
 - i. Our will is be informed by what we feel and think and make conclusions and decisions.
 - ii. Our emotions can be very powerful.
 - iii. That is where we get our first lie:

3. Lie #1: If I feel something it must be true.

- a. The world tells us to "follow our hearts" but doesn't tell us where it will lead us.
- b. But Proverbs 28:26 "*He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: but who walks wisely, he shall be delivered.*"
 - i. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that "*The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?*"
- c. The world has told us that feelings aren't either right or wrong, and when listening to someone, we shouldn't argue with their "feelings" because to them, they are real.
- d. While this provides an empathetic atmosphere, I believe that it can also reinforce Satan's work. Consider how untrue these "feelings" must be.
 - i. If I feel unloved then I must be.
 - ii. If I'm feeling worthless, I must be worthless.
 - iii. If I feel God has deserted me, then what's the use of praying.
 - iv. If I feel like life is hopeless then it must be.
- e. The world teaches us that our feelings are the truth.

- i. If you “feel” in love, then you should get married.
- ii. If you “feel out of love” then you should divorce.
- iii. What is missing in this equation is what the truth is.
 - 1. Infatuation is a feeling, romance is a feeling, happiness is a feeling, sadness is a feeling.
 - 2. But love isn’t a feeling it is a choice.
 - 3. Our decisions must be based on the truth and not on fleeting feelings that change with the weather, our hormonal levels or our circumstances.
- f. **If we are to walk in freedom we must realize that our emotions are not always trustworthy.**
 - i. **We must be willing to REJECT any feelings that are not consistent with the truth.**
 - ii. This, I believe is one of the applications of “*taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.*” (2 Cor. 10:5)
 - iii. Consider the difference between truth and our feelings:
 - 1. **Truth is objective.**
 - a. It never changes. It is consistent. It does not change with the weather or with our circumstances.
 - b. If God says He forgave us, then whether or not we feel forgiven doesn’t change the FACT that he has forgiven us!
 - c. *Martin Luther is reputed to have been asked, “Do you feel forgiven?” he replied, “No, I don’t, but I place my faith in the unchanging truth that God has forgiven me in Christ and I stand upon it!”*
 - 2. **Feelings are subjective.**
 - a. They change with the weather. You can feel happy one minute and sad the next.
 - b. People with bi-polar disorder struggle with mood and emotion swings that go from one extreme to another.
 - c. While medication is vital for dealing with these emotions, more important is to make sure that you are taking your daily dose of God’s truth!
 - d. *Feelings shouldn’t pull the train, they are the caboose, not the engine. Feelings always follow facts.*
 - e. Which brings us to the next lie:

4. **Lie #2: I can’t control my emotions.**

- a. While it is true that to some degree we can’t control what we feel (pain, loss, anger, etc), **the truth is that you don’t need to let your feelings CONTROL you.**
 - i. Take for example, a person of the opposite sex who is already married shows an interest in you.
 - 1. Do you feel flattered? Do you then dwell on that feeling? Do you feed that feeling?
 - a. You DO have a choice of what to do with those feelings.
 - b. Your emotions are supposed to be “*servants of your will.*”
 - c. *Hannah Smith wrote, “Our will can control our feelings if only we are steadfastly minded to do so. Many times when my feelings have declared contrary to the fact, I have changed those feelings entirely by a steadfast assertion of their opposite.”*
 - 2. John 14:27 says, “*Do not be afraid.*”
 - a. This means that you can **choose** not to cave into fear.
 - 3. Philippians 4:6 “*Don’t worry about anything.*”
 - a. This means that you don’t have to be anxious! It would not be commanded of us unless we had a choice.
 - 4. Mark 11:25 says, “*if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him.*”

- a. This means we can choose to break anger's hold on us.
 - b. We **can** control our emotions. I think sometimes it is just easier for us not to do so.
 - i. Am I stepping on anyone's toes yet?
 - ii. Women sometimes use "PMS" as an excuse for outbursts of emotion.
 - iii. Men sometimes use "stress" as an excuse for outbursts of anger.
 - iv. **You notice, I said excuse.**
 - 1. Our bodies do affect how our emotions operate.
 - 2. We are integrated beings, our mind, will and emotions all affect one another.
 - 3. I believe that letting our emotions control us can be sin.
 - 4. *I read of a young woman who was trapped in this excuse making cycle until her best friend confronted her with biblical truth by saying, "Don't let tiredness be an excuse for carnality." Upon hearing this truth she was cut to the heart and repented of her attitude.*
 - v. When someone you love is being overwhelmed with emotion, either anger (which is the fruit of fear) or depression, sadness, worthlessness, etc. they need someone who loves them enough to listen to them and to lovingly tell them the truth.
 - 1. My wife has learned this lesson well. I am also learning to vocalize when I am feeling down or frustrated instead of just acting it out and hurling it on my family.
 - 2. When Jennifer discovers that I am down, instead of arguing with me, she assures me of her support by asking if there is anything she can do to help. My feelings of isolation and helplessness are confronted by the truth of her support and love.
 - 3. She shows me the truth with her understanding, and if I won't respond, she will tell me the truth whether I like it or not.
 - c. **If you don't control your emotions they will control you.**
 - i. If you let your emotions run your life, to run over your will and your body, then your body and your mind will pay for it.
 - 1. *In his book, None of These Diseases, Dr. S.I. McMillan says, "Medical science recognizes that emotions such as fear, sorrow, envy, resentment and hatred are responsible for the majority of our sicknesses. Estimates vary from 60 to 100 percent."*
 - 2. *One patient was told by his doctor, "If you don't cut out your resentments, I may have to cut out your intestinal tract."*
 - ii. My question for you this morning is...do you have unresolved issues that are rooted in deep emotional hurts? Have you forgiven those who have hurt you? If not, have you even begun the journey to forgiveness?
 - 1. Are you holding onto anger or fear or control...because turning it over to God means admitting you aren't god? Are you sick of being sick? That journey to wellness starts with confessing it to God, to admitting what God already knows about you...that you are holding onto something that only He can carry. You weren't made to carry it.
5. Did you know that twice as many women suffer from depression as men.
- a. Never before in history has there been such widespread depression among women in the western civilization as now.
 - b. No matter how we treat it, we find that by and large, most people don't find relief.
 - c. Could it be that our society, that so medically advanced, has been only treating the symptoms and not the root cause?
 - i. Christians have written for years that psychological problems are rooted in the spiritual realm.

1. I am not talking about demons per say, but with issues rooted in ingratitude, unresolved conflict, guilt, bitterness, unforgiveness, unbelief, claiming of rights, anger and self-centeredness.
 2. These all have roots in the spiritual realm because they are violations of God's plan for us.
 - a. **They are acts of disobedience.**
 - b. They involve the rejection of God's grace.
 3. No matter what the prescription, unless you deal with the root the rotten fruit will keep coming back.
- d. Let's look at a couple of biblical examples of depression
- i. **Ahab** – He got depressed when he couldn't get his own way. His neighbor refused to sell him a piece of land. He threw a temper tantrum, he lay on his bed, sulking, refusing to eat. His wife, Jezebel tried to pull him out of depression by promising to give him what he wanted.
 1. 1 Kings 21:7 *“Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”*
 - ii. **Jonah** was depressed and suicidal. “
 1. *Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry. He prayed to the Lord, ‘Now O lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.’* (Jonah 4:1-3)
 2. God's response corrected his condition and to his anger which was at the root of his depression. *“Have you any right to be angry?”*
 3. Later, Jonah got angry and depressed again because a vine he was using for shade withered and died.
 4. God wanted him to see that it was not just his circumstances that was causing his depressive anger but it was his anger toward God's sovereignty.
 5. I think that when we don't get our way, when life doesn't turn out the way we want it to, we are prone to project our anger at someone else or even at ourselves.
 6. **It is sin no matter how you spell it.**
 - a. Next week we will look at *lies we believe about our circumstances*, which will deal with the roots behind that kind of attitude.
 - iii. **Jeremiah** – in Jeremiah 20, he felt God had let him down.
 1. He wasn't going to speak any more! Of course, God dealt with him on a very deep level to change that.
 - iv. Remember **Hannah**, who was barren?
 1. She had a husband who loved her, provided for her far better than his other wife. Yet she became bitter and angry and depressed because of her circumstances which were beyond her control.
 2. What she wanted and what she had didn't match. 3
 3. Has that ever happened to you?
 - v. **David** – the psalms reflect his depressive state.
 1. He experienced intense emotional pain and darkness, some connected to his sin, other connected to his circumstances.
 2. I can relate to David when he cries out , “why O Lord” or “Where are You” or “How long Oh God.”
 3. Can you relate to these cries of David's heart?
 4. Yet David, of all the people in the bible, always seemed to reach deeper, beyond his circumstances to deal with his mood.
 5. Psalm 42:5-6 v5: *“Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me?”*
 - a. (solution v6) *Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him. For the help of His presence. O my God, my soul is in despair within me;”*

6. Psalm 13:1-6 (v1-4) *How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.*
 - a. v5-6 Solution: *But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.*
7. Psalm 31:9-13 *Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow And my years with sighing; My strength has failed because of my iniquity, And my body has wasted away. Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, Especially to my neighbors, And an object of dread to my acquaintances; Those who see me in the street flee from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind; I am like a broken vessel. For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life.*
 - a. Solution v14-17 *But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, "You are my God." My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me. Make Your face to shine upon Your servant; Save me in Your lovingkindness. Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I call upon You;*
 - b. If you can relate with David, then learn from his example...**when you are feeling bleak and down, LOOK UP!**

6. Tools for dealing with Emotions

- a. Get perspective What is true and what is not.
- b. **Remember who is in charge.**
 - i. Charles Spurgeon said, "DEPRESSION FORCES ME TO GO BACK TO THE PROMISES OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS. AND HERE'S WHAT I FOUND, GOD WAS PREPARING ME FOR SOMETHING GREATER. THE CLOUD IS BLACK BEFORE IT BREAKS. IT OVER SHADOWS BEFORE IT RELEASES ITS DELUGE OF MERCY. DEPRESSION HAS NOW BECOME TO ME AS A PROPHET IN ROUGH CLOTHING"
 - ii. God is in charge. The world may be falling apart, but it is only doing so with His permission. He is still on His throne.
 1. You may lose all you have, but you still belong to Him. You will never lose Him and your treasure of eternal life.
- c. **Remember what the truth is.**
 - i. No matter what you feel, compare it with the absolute truth of God's word.
 1. Remember, emotions are supposed to be informers to our will. We must test the informant, to see if it is reliable.
 - ii. **Dave Griffith is a licensed pilot. He has to refuse to trust his own instincts and emotions in a storm and to instead, trust the instrument panel.**
 1. Instincts can be wrong if he experiences vertigo. Just as a pilot can get so jostled around that he loses his sense of up and down, we can get so jostled around by the our emotions that lose our sense of what we should do. We have an instrument panel that is more reliable than our own feelings. It is the Word of God. It is the truth.
- d. **Examine yourself** to see if there is unconfessed sin your life.

- i. James 5:13-16 *“Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”*
- ii. Sin is closely related to illness. Franklin Graham was interviewed a couple of weeks ago by Time Magazine and had the courage to connect the two. This week, readers were outraged by his statements in the letters to the editor. James makes it clear, clear up your unconfessed sin and you will find forgiveness, and quite possibly some of root cause to your illness or struggle may be eliminated.
- e. **Don't try to do it alone.**
 - i. Get godly, professional help! V. 16 of the previous passage says, *“Confess your sins to one another.”*
 - 1. Let someone who follows the Lordship of Jesus Christ counsel you.
 - 2. A godly, Christian counselor who has been trained to understand wounding and has a solid background in biblical truth and its application can help you to untie the knots that our hurts and wounds have tied.
 - a. Many times when we were wounded or hurt, we either didn't know these principles or did not have the tools for dealing with the injury in a biblical manner.
 - b. As a result, we make choices that oppress our emotional state. They need to be handled one at a time until each one loses its power to control us. They need to be healed with the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. That is the role of the Christian Counselor...to help us unearth the root that is deeply buried in our heart and our past and to surrender it to Jesus.
 - 3. Another reason we better not try to “do it ourselves” is best exemplified by a movie I was watching last week about a couple living in the 1940's. The husband was a rich lawyer who rarely had time for his family and was emotionally and mentally detached from his spouse. One evening she asked him if she could go to a Psychologist, to sort out her thoughts. He angrily asks why? She replies with candidness. “So I can talk to someone!”
 - a. In our do it yourself society, we have lost the art of friendship. We are mobile, suffering from suburban sprawl, garage door openers and a cave-man mentality. Most of us spend less than 1 hour a week with friends.
 - b. We cannot survive emotionally in that kind of environment.
 - c. You have a roomful of potential friends here. You must take the initiative and make a phone call. Ask someone over to play cards, to chat with, to go get an ice-cream with.
- f. Most importantly, **Fix your eyes on Jesus and get them off of yourself.**
 - i. Jennifer was having a conversation with a lady at CSU this week. The woman said to her, “I feel so worthless some times.” Jennifer replied, “When you are feeling this way, when the devil whispers these lies about you concerning how you feel, just agree with him.” The woman looked perplexed. Jennifer continued, “Agree with the devil that you are worthless, lost, insignificant, and corrupt without Jesus. Then tell him that in Christ you are a new creation, yours are the riches of his glorious inheritance, greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world, that you can do all things through him who strengthens you...”
 - ii. Colossians 3:1-2 *“Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”*

- iii. 1 Peter 5:8-10 *Be of sober (to be calm and collected in spirit dispassionate, circumspect) spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith. (not your feelings) knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.*
- iv. The key, just like King David that we read earlier was to get your eyes off of self.
 - 1. The devil wants your eyes, your attention on you.
 - a. He wants you to focus on you, on the flaws, faults, and failures.
 - b. He wants you to think you cannot do anything. He wants you to believe your feelings. He wants you to put more trust in your feelings than your faith.
 - 2. But if you will focus your attention on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, the One who bought you with a price, the One who has made you complete in Himself, you will rise up on eagles wings and soar!
 - a. **Nothing, absolutely nothing can hold you back!**

7. Cautions regarding Emotions:

- a. **Don't make decisions under the influence of a strong emotion.** Strong emotions can interfere with us hearing the voice of God. (Notice "Be of sober (to be calm and collected in spirit dispassionate, circumspect) spirit," quoted in 1 Peter— just as alcohol can quench the Spirit, so also can strong emotions)
- b. **Do not use your emotions to find the will of God** Again, for the same reasons as #1. We often say, "I got a peace about it" which is often interpreted as an emotion. Make sure that you use MORE THAN mere emotion to make your decision.
- c. **Don't rely upon your feelings as a barometer of how much God loves you.**
 - i. I feel so loved today. That is nice. But the truth is YOU ARE LOVED. Tomorrow you might not feel loved, but that won't change the truth. You are loved!
- d. **Don't use emotions to manipulate and control others.**
 - i. We must be careful because emotions are easily manipulated. Movies do it all of the time. I read that movie makers have studied the power of manipulating emotion. They discovered that: a baby's first cry; the blast of a siren; the thunder of breakers on rocks; the roar of a forest fire; a foghorn; the slow drip of water; the galloping of horses; the sound of a distant train whistle; the howl of a dog; the wedding march have incredible power to cause our heart to race and our pulse to quicken. One of these sounds causes more emotional response and upheaval than any other, has the power to bring forth almost every human emotion: sadness, envy, regret, sorrow, tears, as well as supreme joy. It is the wedding march.

8. Closing:

- a. God will not force you to obey or to trust Him; it's totally your choice.
 - i. By choosing the way of faith you choose to live ON THE PROMISES.
 - ii. If you choose to live according to your feeling you will end up living in an emotionAL PRISON held captive by the pain of your own choices
 - iii. Which will you do? Will you live on the promises or will you live in your prison?
- b. If you've recognized your prison today, then I want to invite you to take the first steps in being set free today.
 - i.
- c. A sign of Christian maturity is when he praises God out of obedience and not just when he feels good. . THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE IS JUST THAT, YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT BUT YOU DO IT ANY WAY.