

How are you feeling *today*? How are you feeling right now, *in this moment*? How do you *want* feel? Do the feelings you have align themselves with God's Word, or are your feelings in opposition with how God's Word says you are/should be? Think about how you've been feeling lately ~ last week, last month, and over the past several months. Your feelings are real and they need to be acknowledged, but like facts, your feelings can change. Your feelings are not always reflective of reality. Your feelings can fool you into believing what is not true. Our surroundings, situations, circumstances, and what we dwell on affect our feelings. Sometimes, our surroundings, situations, and circumstances are out of our control. However, what we dwell on is in our control. So, consider what you've been dwelling on and see how your feelings have been affected by that.

What are feelings? According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, *feelings* can be defined as "susceptibility to impression: sensitivity; (singular *feeling*) generalized bodily consciousness or sensation; an emotional state or reaction; [also] the overall quality of one's awareness." Our feelings are linked to our five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) which affects our awareness. Our awareness affects how we operate in reality.

Let's examine four accounts, paying attention to the people involved, their feelings, and their realities. Put yourself in the shoes of these people and see if you'd feel the same way and do the same things they felt and did, or if you'd handle the situations they were in differently.

I. **The 12 Spies for Canaan – Numbers 13:1-2, 17, 21-33; 14:1-9 (KJV)**

13:1-2

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

13:17

"And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:

13:21-33

"So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh;

and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

14:1-9

“And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.

- The reality: The LORD gave them the land (13:2).
- The 10 were afraid, felt inferior and defeated, so they gave an evil report (13:31 - 33).
- The congregation then became sad and cried (14:1) and expressed frustration (14:2 - 4); they were ready forfeit their promised land that God had given them because of how they felt.
- All 12 went on the same journey. But 10 focused on what they couldn't do versus the two who focused on Who they had with them. The majority affected the population, but the minority, in case, were the ones with the correct attitude.

II. Hannah – I Samuel 1:1–20 (KJV)

“Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord.

- Hannah was provoked, and became depressed (v. 7)
- Hannah was bitter, yet she managed to pray to the Lord, and continued to pray (vv. 10, 12)
- Hannah received a spoken blessing and felt better (vv. 17, 18)
- Hannah’s situation changed (vv. 19, 20)

III. Elijah – I Kings 19:1 – 18 (KJV)

“And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

- Elisha was afraid, so he ran (v. 3)
- Elisha was sad/frustrated, so he asked for his life to end (v. 4)
- Elisha thought he was the only one of his kind left, but he wasn't – there were 7,000 others like him in Israel (vv. 10, 18)

- Elisha didn't focus his thoughts on who he was in God and how his God could've help him

David - Psalm 42 (KJV)

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. **My** soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? **My** tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? **When** I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday. **Why** art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. **O** my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. **Deep** calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. **Yet** the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. **I** will say unto God my rock, **Why** hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? **As** with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? **Why** art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

- David was sad, so he cried a lot (v. 3)
- David was troubled, lacked peace (vv. 5, 11)
- David knew to encourage himself with the solution (vv. 5, 6, 11)
- David went to the house of God with others (v. 4)

The actions that accompany your feelings are crucial in determining the end result. Because your feelings can lead you astray, we are admonished in the Word of God to do the following:

- **Walk by faith, 2 Corinthians 5:7.** Walking by faith helps us to bypass what we see or don't see so that we can operate in the reality of the promises of God. It also helps us to move forward in the assignments God has given us. You are blessed when you can believe without seeing, John 20:29.
- **Bless the LORD at all times, Psalm 34:1.** When you bless the LORD, you have shifted your focus off of what is bothering/distracting you to focusing on the One who can help you, heal you, deliver you, give you peace, comfort, joy, hear you when you cry, and answer you when you pray.
- **Sing to the Lord, Ephesians 5:19.** Similar to blessing the Lord, singing to the Lord requires your focus. Singing can definitely lift your spirits.
- **Think about the good things, Philippians 4:8.** The more you think on the good things, the more you will believe in them and the manifestation of them occurring in your life.
- **Lean on the Holy Spirit for guidance, John 16:13.** Again, your feelings can lead you astray in your thoughts, speech, and actions, which will have you to believe things that are not true. You

can be sure that no matter how you're feeling, you will be on the right path – the path of truth when you lean on the Holy Spirit.

- **Be with friends, Proverbs 27:17.** Being with friends can affect your mood in both directions. It is important to be in the company of those who will be honest with you, encourage you, and remind you of your Godly heritage, and pray with and for you. They should also be speaking the Word to you and your situations.

Our feelings will fluctuate, but truth will never change. So, we must rely on the Holy Spirit to be confident with knowing what He knows, which is not based on how we feel. In Ephesians 3:14 - 19, Paul writes,

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

Faith does not depend on your feelings. Comprehending the things of God does not depend on your feelings. Knowing the love of Christ does not depend on your feelings. These are all dependent on your dependence on the Holy Spirit.