

Are You Living by Faith or Feelings?

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- saw sign on church building, while traveling from Camden, SC to Atlanta, Ga
 - the just live by faith, not feelings
- feelings have important place in our lives, but we can't use them to guide our lives
 - **Mk. 12:30** love God with all heart, soul, mind, strength
 - **Rom. 1:17** the just live by faith
- lesson: Are you living by faith or feelings?

➤ There are two types of faith – dead, living – disobedient / feelings / dead – obedient / faith / living

- **illus.: two people are asleep in a house**, fire, fireman wakes them up and tells them the house is on fire, tells them to follow him out the window and they'll be saved
 - both people get out of bed and run – both believe the house is on fire
 - one runs to the front door, afraid and tries to get out, burned up – **disobedient faith, feelings**
 - one follows the fireman, trust fireman and escapes through the window – **obedient faith, trust**
 - many people believe in God, that He exists, and they are afraid of hell, but only a few obey

➤ - What does James tell us about these two types of faith?

- dead (disobedient) faith:

- **Ja. 2:14** not save him

➤ - **Ja. 2:15-16** not useful, not helpful to others

- this is the faith based on feelings – felt good, without doing what God requires

➤ - **Ja. 2:17, 20** dead faith, useless – does not work, results in eternal death

➤ - **Ja. 2:19** this is the faith of demons

- if we can be saved with this type of faith, everyone saved, even demons, God is a liar

➤ - **Ja. 2:24** not saved by faith alone, faith only

- only time “faith alone” or “faith only” in the Bible, preceded with “not by”

➤ - living (obedient) faith:

- **Ja. 2:18** seen by obedience, works

- **illus. of fireman**, works show which had a living faith – obeyed, lived, was saved from fire

➤ - **Ja. 2:21-23, 25-26** a faith that obey, even in extremely trying circumstances

- **illus.: Abraham, Rahab** – What did faith require of them? – What would have been their feelings?

- this is the faith based on God's word, trust – obey no matter what feelings are

- the faith that is pleasing to God, is a living (obedient) faith – not based on feelings

- **Heb. 11:6** without faith, impossible to please God

- What kind of faith? dead faith, disobedient faith, demonic faith – living faith, obedient faith

- Which of the two please God? disobedient demonic faith – obedient living faith (**Heb. 5:9**)

- **Rom. 10:17** faith comes by hearing

- **Whenever we walk by feelings rather than faith, we fail (sin)**
 - **Jer. 10:23** not within man to direct his own steps – Israel had gone into apostasy (idolatry), allowing their way to be directed by feelings (passions) rather than God’s word
- - **Is. 55:8** God’s thoughts not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways
 - impossible to please God walking by feelings
- - **Ps. 37:23** steps of a man are established by the Lord
 - steps not established by feelings
- - **Pr. 20:24** man's steps are ordained by the Lord – man can’t understand his way
 - man cannot understand the way he should go, when guided by feelings
- - **Pr. 16:2** all the ways of a man are clean in his own sight
 - when we live by feelings, we always think we are right
 - **illus.:** Paul, lived in good conscience while persecuting Christians (Acts 23:1), felt he was doing right
- - **Pr. 16:25** way that seems right to a man, the end is the way of death – sin, eternal death
 - if we live by the way that just “seems” right (feels right) the end is death (eternal damnation)
 - **illus.:** ten wicked spies vs. Joshua and Caleb, feelings vs. faith in God, all that generation punished with death except for Joshua and Caleb because they were faithful
 - feelings, failed, death
 - **illus.:** men of Israel against Goliath vs. David, feelings vs. faith – battle belongs to the Lord
 - feelings, failed – faith, victory (**1 Jn. 5:4-5**)
 - **illus.:** David, lived according to his feelings (passion, desire) toward Bathsheba, sinned against God, killed several people to try and cover it up, married Bathsheba and baby born, baby died as David’s punishment
 - feelings, sin, death
- Are you living based on your feelings, or based on the faith that comes from God’s word?

➤ This is why **false teachers use feelings to lead people away from God**

- **2 Pet. 2:14-15, 18-19** false teachers entice people within sin, like Baalam – **do what feels right**

- **illus.: Balaam**, not curse God's children, but show Balak how to put a stumbling block before them resulting in sin (fornication, idolatry), and resulting in God punishing them – did for the wages of unrighteousness – used feelings: fornication, idolatry

➤ - **Rev. 2:14** anyone who draws people away from God, into their false religion, with sin (fornication, idolatry), is holding the teaching of Baalam

- **Col. 3:5** idolatry is putting anything before God – putting God 2nd to anything

- **illus. once saved always saved (feelings)**: ok to sin all you want once you're saved, you can never be lost, all sin is good

- **illus. reconciling movement among denominations (feelings)**: homosexuality is ok, God made you the way you are, God loves you, God wouldn't send you to hell for being the person he made you to be

➤ - **2 Pet. 2:6-9** God punishes the sinful (false teachers, those who follow them), and preserves the righteous – sensual conduct = feelings

- **illus.: sinful men of Sodom and Gomorrah vs. Lot and family**

- **sinful punished** – feelings, desires, passions, sinned, died, eternal damnation

- **righteous saved** – faith, saved, not feelings, went to strange land and then mountains

- **Lot's future son's-in-law had a chance to escape, but thought it was a joke** – feelings, died

➤ - **2 Tim. 4:3-4** many people turn to false teachers to validate their feelings, sin – desires

- **illus. Oprah Winfrey**, now a disciple of Eckhart Tolle, has adopted Gnostic doctrines repackaged in a New Age religion

- **in New Earth web class**: tells about being in church one day, and the preacher talked about God as a jealous God, said **that didn't feel right in her spirit**, so she started on a spiritual search that took her to become a disciple of Eckhart Tolle

- **in a New Earth web class**: she said, **"God is a feeling experience, not a believing experience"**

- **when we allow our lives to be guided by feelings, we turn away from God, embracing false teachers who tell us what we want to hear** – validate our feelings, sin

➤ As Christians, we **crucify our passions and desires (feelings)** – no longer live based on feelings

- **Gal. 5:24** crucify passions and desires

- **Rom. 6:3-7** when baptized, crucified with Christ, united with him, free from sin

- **Gal. 2:20** crucified with Christ; it's no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me

➤ - **Tit. 2:11-12** God instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires – feelings

- **Lk. 9:23** Jesus, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must **deny himself (feelings)**, and **take up his cross daily** and **follow Me.**"

➤ - **Are you living based on your feelings, or based on the faith that comes from God's word? – Mk. 12:30**

- **Have you crucified your passions and desires (feelings)?**

- **Are you denying yourself of sinful desires, taking up your cross daily, and following Jesus?**

- **Are you keeping your feelings under control through the power of God's word?**

Inv.

- **inv.:** Jesus calls you to set aside your feelings and come to Him – faithfully obey, faithful until death
- **Matt. 11:28** “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”