

How to Know if What You're Reading Online Is True

Several times a week, I come across links in my Facebook feed to articles that either 1) try to alarm you, or 2) try to stir up your emotions (whether positive or negative). I guess that's good, in a way. If something alarming is going on out there, I want to know about it. And I do sometimes enjoy feel-good stories. The problem is that often, these articles aren't true.

They get shared thousands of times because people simply don't question what they're told—especially when emotions are involved.

I came across a perfectly worded statement of this principle the other day. Lindsey, Jessica and I were watching one of their favorite shows, which I also happen to like because of its humor (which is well-done and appropriate). One of the characters said to another, "None of that's true!" The second character replied: "But it *feels* true. That *makes* it true."

No. No, it doesn't.

Yet we sometimes act as if what feels true must really be true, or the opposite, if something doesn't feel true, it can't be true.

Why in the world would we appoint our emotions to be arbiters of the truth? We are so fickle, emotionally speaking. Our emotions are swayed by our circumstances, the weather, what a friend just did or didn't say, and even our hormones. They are far from reliable indicators of how we ought to see things and what truth really is.

Even when we read Scripture, we don't really absorb it unless our emotions get in line with what it says. If the Bible tells

us God loves us, but we don't *feel* loved, then we don't really believe it. If it tells us something is sin, but it feels right or good to us, we tell ourselves it really can't be all that bad.

We need to accept as truth what God has told us is true, and we need to believe it and act upon it, no matter what our emotions tell us.

Having an emotionally dull quiet time doesn't mean we haven't worshipped; likewise, having an emotional experience doesn't necessarily mean we *have* worshipped. Let's look at what God says about worship, not about what we feel.

Feeling unloved by God doesn't mean that we are. In fact, the Bible tells us over and over that God loves us. The truth is that He's madly, passionately in love with us, even though we won't always feel it. "Not feeling it" isn't the problem, though. There can be many reason why we have difficulty absorbing God's love, and some of them are in no way our fault. The problem comes in when we fail to replace the lies our emotions tell us with the truth God's Word tells us.

And what about feeling forgiven? I've heard many people say that they believe God forgives them; they just don't feel forgiven. They continue to dwell on feelings of guilt because that's what it *feels* like they should do. But if they've confessed, they *are* forgiven. Emotions like guilt have no authority over us and must be taken captive to the truth of God's Word.

I know it's hard to believe and act upon truth when our emotions scream otherwise. But I choose to stand upon the truth of God instead of what my emotions tell me. I hope you do too.

Psalm 25:5 says, "Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day."

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, Manna for Moms. Megan is the author of Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy and Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure (Regal Books.) She is also a stay-at-home mom with five children.*