

# Taming Emotions

DEALING WITH EMOTIONS IS A FACT OF LIFE. As long as we live, we will experience a variety of emotional feelings and reactions, and we must not deny their existence or feel guilty because of them.

However, we do need to learn to manage our emotions. This is easier when we understand that we cannot trust them. In fact, they can be our greatest enemy. Satan uses our emotions against us to keep us from walking in the Spirit and enjoying our spiritual heritage.

We know that the mind is the battlefield-the place where the battle is waged between the Spirit and the soul. That's why it is so important to know that the Lord our God who resides within each of us is "mighty" (see Zeph. 3:17, KJV). His might within us enables us to overcome our emotions and be led by His unchangeable Word and Spirit instead of our unstable feelings and emotions.

People often ask me, "How can I know for sure whether I'm hearing from God or from my emotions?"

I believe the answer is to learn to wait. Emotions urge us toward haste, telling us we must do something and do it right now! But godly wisdom tells us to wait until we have a clear picture of what we are to do and when we are to do it.

We all need to develop the capacity to back away and view our situation from God's perspective. We need to be able to make decisions based on what we know rather than on what we feel.

Many times we say, "I feel God wants me to do this or that." In reality, what we are saying is that we sense in our spirits that the Lord is telling us to do or not to do something. We are not talking about operating by our own emotions but by what we perceive spiritually to be the will of God for us in certain situations.

When we are faced with any difficult decision, it is wise to wait until we have a clear answer before taking a step we may regret. Emotions can be wonderful, but we must not allow them to take precedence over the wisdom and knowledge of God. I fought a battle with emotional instability for many years in my life, and it took me a while to learn this truth.

Before I began to depend on the Holy Spirit to help me control my emotions, I constantly struggled with guilt. But I finally stopped feeling guilty for my emotional lapses when I realized that I am a human being with a weak nature if I were perfect, I wouldn't have had a need for a perfect Savior.

Jesus came to be the perfect sacrifice for us because we do not have the ability to be perfect in the natural realm. We must remember that fact when we are tempted to feel guilty every time we fail to control our emotions.

I finally began to change when I realized that although I have emotions, I don't have to give in to them. I learned that God wants me to trust Him, knowing that He will help me develop the same kind of emotional maturity and stability that marked the life of His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:27 speaks of the Christ within us as our hope of

glory. Only He can provide what we need to live joyfully and victoriously in this life.

That kind of spiritual stability and emotional maturity doesn't come naturally. We must desire it with all our hearts and reach the point of being determined to enjoy our spiritual heritage. "In Him we ... obtained an inheritance. ... So that we who first hoped in Christ [who first put our confidence in Him have been destined and appointed to] live for the praise of His glory!" (Eph. 1:11-12, The Amplified Bible).

Emotional stability is part of our spiritual inheritance. We don't have to live on an emotional roller coaster. We can enjoy our spiritual inheritance, with a sense of peace and security that comes from knowing who we are and whose we are.

I encourage you to claim and live in your inheritance today, enjoying emotional stability and a joyful, victorious life!

---

JOYCE MEYER is an internationally recognized minister and author of more than 60 books, including the best sellers *Beauty for Ashes* and *Battlefield of the Mind* (both Warner Faith), and her most recent, *Approval Addiction* (Warner Faith). She is the founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. and the host of *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide.