

Chapter 11

Emotions Are Your Friend

Suppose you are in your car and you are in a hurry. You get stopped at a stoplight (of course, it always happens when you are in a hurry). The light finally changes to "green" and the driver in front of you does not notice it. He just sits there. What would you do? Likely, you would honk your horn. How would you feel? Wouldn't you be a bit upset? When the other car finally gets going, it is too late for you to get through the light. You then have to wait until the light turns green again. Now you are more than a little upset. How long would it take you to calm down? What would you do to calm yourself down?

We all have developed ways of dealing with our negative emotions by trial and error. We try something and it brings a bit of relief, so we add that to our repertoire as a way to deal with such unpleasant moments in the future. Still, for most of us our emotions are a bit mysterious, we don't know what to do with them, and likely we have only been modestly successful in dealing with them.

As a child I learned to avoid my negative emotions if at all possible. This was the message that I got from living in my family, and it was the method of dealing with emotions that I observed in my parents. My experience is not unusual, because our culture (and unfortunately some of the Church) say that our emotions are unreliable. Regardless of how we try to ignore them, they persist. They come and go in a seemingly mysterious way, in a way that we do not find ourselves able to adequately control. Negative emotions are a "problem" we all share.

What Are Emotions?

Are emotions simply random? Are they unpredictable? Did God make a mistake when He gave them to us? Or were they useful before Adam and Eve sinned but are now corrupted by The Fall? Are some of them "bad?" Is it a sin to feel selfish? Is it a sin to feel jealous? Is it a sin to feel angry?

I have a burglar alarm in my home. On a couple of occasions I have accidentally set it off, and the sound the loud speaker made was

earsplitting. The pain was unbearable. I had to do something right away to escape the pain. So I plugged my ears with my fingers and went to the keypad and entered the code. Then the alarm immediately stopped, so the pain stopped. But what would I do if I didn't know the code? My fingers in my ears were only mildly successful in reducing the pain, so I would have to do something else. I could leave and wait outside until the noise stopped (and the police came). Or I could find the loudspeaker and cover it over with something. That would likely not work any better than covering my ears. Better yet, I could cut the wire to the loud speaker. That would stop the noise.

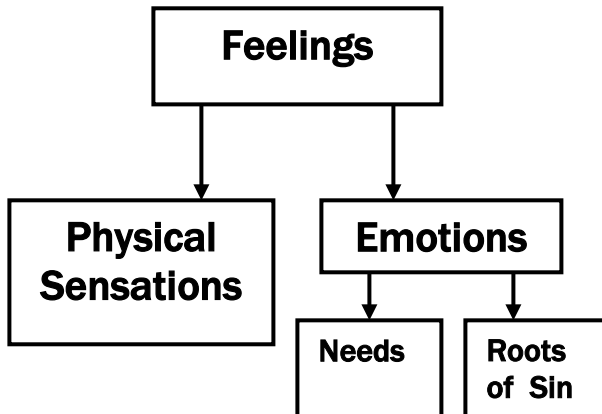
The purpose of the alarm was to make known an intrusion into my house. If the alarm had been set off by a burglar instead of by me, that would be important information. If a burglar entered and I did not have an alarm, something really bad might happen. The burglar alarm was purposely designed to be impossible to ignore, because it is important that the "intrusion" stop. The neighbors and the police need to be alerted, and the intruder needs to know they have been discovered so they will stop doing their dirty work.

Our negative emotions are like that. Some of our emotions are "earsplittingly" hurtful, because they are giving us very important information that we must not ignore. For instance, when you are in front of a group of people and you tell a joke and nobody laughs, you may feel a strong rush of shame, and your face may turn red. Or suppose a large dog rushes towards you, growling and showing its teeth. You will likely feel a large surge of fear go through you. Fortunately not all our negative emotions are that severe. God designed them to be proportional to the bad news they are giving us.

Your negative emotions are your friend. They are simply messages from inside warning you that there is a problem.

You also have pleasant emotions which were given to you so that you would be attracted to whatever is making you feel good. What makes you feel good are the things that fulfill the many needs you have, such as the need for love, affirmation, sex, etc.

"Feelings" and "Emotions"



We receive various signals from our Treasure Inside to our Head. Some of these signals relate to the physical status of our body, and some of them relate to our psychological/spiritual status. When I use the term "feelings," I am including both categories. When I use the term "physical sensations" I am referring to the physical signals. And when I use the term "emotions" I am referring to the psychological/spiritual signals.

"Emotions" can be telling us about unmet psychological needs ("I need a hug"), or the presence of a root of sin, usually a Bitter Root Judgment.

"Physical sensations" and "emotions" have a great deal in common, and the purpose of all of our "feelings" is to make us consciously aware of something that is going on below our level of consciousness. Most of us do not have difficulty understanding our "physical sensations" (for instance I am thirsty, or my feet hurt), but our problems tend to arise from misunderstanding our "emotions." Because of the similarities between "physical sensations" and "emotions," I will often use parallels between them to clarify a point I am making about "emotions."

If God had not given your "feelings" to you, you would not have any way of knowing the status of what is going on inside of you. You would not know what your needs are, and so you would have no way of fulfilling them. If you did not feel thirsty, you would not drink something, and then you would die.

Our Attempts At Bringing Peace

As a child I knew what to do when I had a physical need. When I was thirsty, I got a drink. However, I didn't know the "code" to turn off the emotional pain. When strong negative emotions came to me I had to find a way to reduce the pain. It was as if I started out by "plugging my ears" (I tried to ignore the message). Since that was only modestly helpful, I searched for a more effective means. I could not "leave," because the noise was in me. So eventually I "cut the wire" (I made an Inner Vow not to hear), and then the pain stopped.

Unfortunately, then the "intrusion" (the cause of the emotional pain) had not been fixed, and so the "burglar" had not been dealt with. Cutting the wire, or anything else I would do to reduce my sensitivity to my negative emotions, had bad side effects. Not hearing the alarm going off, I would not know when a "burglar" came inside and was doing his destructive work.

When I was a boy I had a friend whose father had experienced a stroke, and he had lost the feeling on one side of his body. One day my friend and his father and I were standing in their basement and we smelled something burning. It was his father's hand! He was leaning against the furnace. Since he could not feel the heat, he did not withdraw his hand, and he was badly burned. The physical pain that I feel when I touch something hot is my friend, because it motivates me to stop the pain. I quickly remove my hand from the hot surface, and thus I limit the damage to my body. Physical pain is my friend.

My emotional pain is just like that. Bad things happen when I can no longer clearly hear my negative emotions, because I have built The Wall inside. Then, when something bad happens inside, I will not know about it. Using my metaphor, because I do not know the "burglar" is there, he is free to do his damaging work inside. I will not know about his presence until there had been so much damage that I could no longer ignore it.

Tom had daily frustrations with his boss. His boss always talked down to him and made him feel small. Tom had not had a raise in years, and yet the boss would give him so much to do that he would have to take work home at night. But Tom did not know when he was angry because he had built The Wall, and he did not feel these moments of anger. His heart was filling up with bitterness, but he was not aware of

it. After he would get home from work, his wife would do some little thing that irritated him, and he would explode with anger at her. She did not just receive Tom's reaction to what she just did, but she also received the entire load that had been building up inside Tom towards his boss. It was like an avalanche. One small disturbance was the trigger, and all the "snow" that had accumulated came surging down in one deluge and buried her.

Ski areas understand avalanches. They know that if they can keep the snow from accumulating on the mountain slopes above them they can prevent an avalanche. So they regularly set off small explosive charges in the snow to bring down small snow slides that are harmless. In this way they prevent huge buildups of snow that would inevitably come down in a devastating rush.

In the same way, Tom needed to listen to, and learn to recognize, every surge of anger that he felt. Then he could pray about it immediately and avoid the "accumulation" that would otherwise eventually (and inevitably) come out as outbursts of rage. If there is not an "accumulation" inside him, when people irritate him they only receive the reaction that relates to that single transgression, not his pent up reactions to all the other accumulated hurts inside him.

We Are Needy

We are needy creatures. God made us that way. We need love, we need water, we need sleep, we need exercise, etc. There is nothing "selfish" about getting our legitimate needs met in a legitimate way. When our legitimate needs are not met, we are "hungry" and settle for meeting our needs in any way we can, perhaps including "illegitimate" ways, or groveling for whatever "crumbs" we can find.

For example, at this moment if I were to hand you a dirty, smelly glass of water, you would likely say, "No thank you," because you aren't that thirsty. However, if you had been wandering in the Sahara Desert for three days with no water, and then I offered you the dirty glass of water, you would eagerly snatch it from me and instantly consume it. Why? You would drink it because your need had become so great.

That is what happens when we consciously deny our legitimate needs (or perhaps are unaware of them because we have ignored them for so long). We become so empty inside that we are driven to accept inappropriate substitutes to stop the screams coming up from inside us.

The "Code"

To appropriately end the turmoil of our negative emotions, we need to know how God intended for us to eliminate the pain, rather than to cover it up. He intended for us to eliminate the pain by addressing the cause of the pain. When we have a toothache, we can take a pain killer, or we can have the tooth fixed. When the tooth is "fixed," the pain stops.

Remember that emotional pain relates either to unmet psychological needs or to roots of sin that exist inside.

There are therefore two things we need to know about eliminating our emotional pain.

1. We need to listen to the pain rather than run from it. This way we can discover what it is telling us. For instance, when we are feeling lonely, our emotion is probably not telling us that we are angry with our boss for what he said today.
2. Then we need to address the cause of the pain by applying the appropriate "cure." Right now we need to seek out fellowship rather than forgive our boss. If we have judged our boss, forgiving him would be necessary; but that prayer would not cure our loneliness.

Unfortunately, nobody taught us how to do either of these, especially regarding the roots of sin. But it is possible to learn how to do both, and therefore, it is possible to eliminate the cause of our emotional pain so that the pain will stop.

Understanding The Language Of Our Emotions

God gave us our "emotions," and He intended for them to be useful to us. It is therefore possible to learn this mysterious language that our Treasure Inside speaks to us. In later chapters I will go into more detail about learning this language, but here I want to point out a few important characteristics of our "emotions."

1. A negative emotion may be telling us of an unmet appropriate emotional need, such as the need for fellowship in the above example. If that need is met in an appropriate way, the negative

emotion will go away and will likely be replaced by an emotion that feels good. We have received what we needed. For instance James, who is a little boy, needs a hug. The parent picks him up and holds him. The negative emotion will likely be replaced with a good feeling of satisfaction, which tells James he is no longer needy. Now he is ready to be put down and again explore the world.

2. A negative emotion may be telling us about a root of sin that we have just planted inside, such as judging our boss in the above example. These events cause us the most difficulty, and are the most mysterious to us. If unresolved, such a root will cause problems in our life (See Chapter 2, "Why You Are Stuck").
3. The emotional pain may also be telling us about an older root that we have not yet eliminated. For example, I may tend to feel lonely a lot because my parents never had time to spend with me. In this case the current event has touched this old root and triggered a response from it. It is like stubbing your toe. When you first injure it, there is pain. But until it heals, it seems as though you are constantly hitting it on something. Actually, you are probably not again hitting it hard enough to injure it further, but the toe is hyper-sensitive to pain. It is hyper-sensitive because of the previous injury. Therefore, one symptom of the presence of an old root deep inside us is when a small situation triggers a big response, a response that is out of proportion to what just happened. This is what happened to Tom in one of my previous examples. His previous Bitter Root Judgments accumulated and eventually he exploded in anger at his wife.
4. All negative "feelings," both physical and emotional, are proportional to the need. The more urgent or important, the more intense is the pain. If I have a slight discomfort in my tooth, I can take my time about getting it fixed. If the pain is intense, I need to get to the dentist immediately. I can't stand to wait! That is exactly why God designed feelings this way. The intense pain tells me there is a serious problem that needs immediate treatment, and the pain motivates me to take action now. I find myself unable to postpone getting treatment.

5. The language of our "emotions" is not a language like English or Spanish. It is made up of little sensations which are specific to the nature of the hurt. I will ask clients how they feel about something; for instance, how their spouse treats them. Often the response is something like, "I feel as though he doesn't listen to me." This is not an emotion. This is an analysis. The emotion would be something like: "I feel abandoned, unimportant, demeaned, alone." If this concept is new to you, or if you are not used to naming your feelings, see Endnote #11-1 for a list of "feeling" words. You will find this list useful in helping you to describe what you are feeling at a given moment.

Eliminating The Cause Of The Pain

Therefore, if there is a Bitter Root Judgment planted inside us, our negative emotions are our friend telling us about this problem. What do we do in response to the

negative emotion (the "alarm" going off)? We need to key in the "code." When the cause of the alarm is sin, there is only one "code" that works. The "code" that God has provided is

The most common source of emotional pain is the wound that sin plants in our heart.

the provision for the washing away of our sin through the forgiveness provided by the sacrifice of Jesus. This "code" works. When we forgive and are forgiven, the negative emotion stops. It stops because the wound that the pain was warning us about has been healed. The sin has been washed away, and Jesus has come into that place in our heart. The "burglar" is now gone. Jesus' provision truly is Good News!

When I was angry with the other driver who didn't go through the green light, I had judged him. I needed to take care of that as soon as I could,

When we forgive and are forgiven, the negative emotion stops.

immediately if possible. That way I could catch the "burglar" before he had a chance to do any damage. After I pray, if I still find myself agitated, especially if my anger is extreme and is contaminating my day, I need to look for a long buried root of sin. Perhaps I had judged my parents for never paying attention to my needs. Even worse, perhaps I

judged myself as being unworthy to have my needs met by others; and therefore it is left up to me to take care of myself. Certainly, it is true that the other driver was not sensitive to my needs, and it was his behavior that touched that wound deep inside me. But it wasn't what he did that was the problem. What planted the bitter root was my reaction to what he did. Feeling the negative emotion gives me an opportunity to know what happened, and thus I can pray and be set free from the consequences of the bitter root.

It Is Complicated, And Yet Simple

The code to my home burglar alarm is simple, but this “code” to end my negative emotions appropriately is complex. It is complex because many of the old roots of bitterness are deeply buried and I have forgotten about them. I cannot remember many of them myself. It is therefore too complex for me to understand. But it is not too complicated for Jesus, and He will lead me in this process of finding the bitter roots and being healed. I may also need another person to walk through this with me, such as a trusted friend, or a counselor. I also need to listen to my Treasure Inside, who is telling me what is wrong inside.

Ideally, teaching me how to listen to my emotions and to then pray was the job assigned to my parents. In my own childhood, my parents were as ignorant about this as I, so there was no way for them to teach me. In fact, they did the opposite of facilitating my ability to hear my Treasure Inside by giving me messages that emotions were irrelevant. They wounded me and I built The Wall, which reduced my innate ability to hear my emotions. Unfortunately, many parents are unable to mentor their children in order to help them hear what is going on in the Treasure Inside them. If this is true of you, now as an adult you need to have The Wall dismantled, and to learn what your parents should have taught you when you were very young --- how to understand the language of the valuable friend you have in your Treasure Inside. It is never too late to make friends with yourself.

**It is never too late to
make friends with yourself**

When I first realized how shut down I had been inside, I questioned the Lord, "Why didn't I know this earlier?" I felt bitter because I had to suffer for many years before I became aware of the truth. But then I

realized how blessed I was. Many people never learn about the "code," and they suffer for their whole life. We are blessed to know this now.

Are “Bad” Emotions Sin?

Many of us have been taught that "bad" emotions are sin. For instance we may have been taught that it is a sin to feel jealous. However, it should now be clear to you that it is not a sin to feel jealous. There is nothing wrong with that emotion, and so we do not need to repent of feeling jealous. The emotion is simply the message system. There is a sin present, but the sin is not the emotion. There is a root of bitterness inside us (planted by a sinful reaction of judging), and we need to know about the presence of this bitter root.

- The judging was sin.
- The message (emotion) telling us this fact is not sin.

We do then need to find out what the root is and be healed of that. This may sound like hair splitting, but there is a profound difference between the emotion and the root. The bitter root of sin exists, and the emotion is just the signal telling us about the root. The signal is not sin, but rather it is just our faithful messenger, our helper, and our friend.

In ancient times, when a messenger brought bad news, the king had the messenger killed. Of course, the problem wasn't the messenger or the message he carried. The messenger was simply a mechanism for informing the king about something bad that was going on elsewhere. We now look at the king's response and see how ridiculous that is. And yet that is exactly what we have done if we have shut off our emotions because they are "bad."

How The Sequence Works

Be aware that though the emotion itself is not sin, what I do in response to the emotion may be sin. For example, suppose someone insults me. I feel angry at them. The emotion is my friend, warning me that I have already sinned (I have judged the person, and thus planted a bitter root). Now I am at a decision point: I can hit the other person, and thus commit yet another additional sin; or I can forgive that person and remove the bitter root (sin) I have already planted. A third option would be for me to ignore the feeling, but then the bitter root will fester and grow and eventually produce more bad fruit.

Repressing Emotions Hurts Us

Repressing or trying to squash our emotions produces negative consequences in our lives. We are the ones who suffer. When we repress the negative emotions to keep from feeling the pain, we miss out on the awareness that something inside needs attention. That is what the negative emotions are telling us. If we continue to ignore them, there will be unfortunate consequences. Whatever is wrong inside will eventually come to the surface in some fashion, because the problem inside will become too large to ignore. Ulcers, insomnia, and uncontrolled outbursts of anger are common examples of this. When we do not allow emotions to come "straight out" (listen to them and resolve them) as God intended, they eventually come out "sideways" and produce problems in our life.

The Paradox Of "Selfishness"

Some people believe it is "selfish" to seek to have their own needs met. They believe that it is pleasing to God for them to always give up their own needs for the benefit of others, and so they believe it is a sin to seek to get their own needs met. This belief brings about a paradox.

1. When these people thus try to always give up their own needs, they become more needy inside, and thus more focused on getting their unmet needs met. When they ignore a need, the message from their Treasure Inside gets louder and louder and eventually becomes difficult to ignore. Thus they become highly motivated to fill their own need. They become more "selfish." To the degree they do succeed in denying their own need, they experience the unfortunate consequences which I have just listed ---- the emotion comes out "sideways."
2. On the other hand, when they understand that they have legitimate needs, and now recognize that the message coming up from their Treasure Inside is their friend, they are able to get the need met in an appropriate way. Because the need is not yet so severe that it is screaming at them for fulfillment, there is not an urgency about meeting the need. They are then still in a position to be particular as to how the need is met. They can thus succeed in having their legitimate need met in a legitimate way. When their need is met,

they are no longer focused on themselves and are free to give to others. They become less "selfish."

Thus the paradox is that for those who try not to be "selfish," what seems so right (not being selfish) brings about failure. What seems so wrong (getting their own needs met) would bring about success. This seeming paradox is fueled by their neediness. Unmet needs scream at them for fulfillment. Met needs bring about peace inside, freedom, and the ability to love others as they love themselves.

The Role Of Positive Emotions

God gave us both positive and negative emotions. So far we have been focusing on the negative ones. Remember, He made the negative ones unpleasant so we would avoid whatever was causing them. The positive ones are also useful. God made them pleasant so we would approach whatever causes them. They signal the receipt of something good for us. When children need to be held, they hold up their hands so that their parent will pick them up and fill the need. Once they have been filled with the touch of the parent, they are ready to get down and again explore the world.

Since we are needy creatures, it is important that we have a way of knowing what is good for us so we can seek it out and receive it. Feeling both positive and negative emotions is therefore meant to be our way of navigating through life.

Unfortunately, when we repress our negative feelings, we lose the good ones too. "The tragic thing about burying or smothering negative feelings is that it doesn't stop with them. The good, positive ones get clobbered at the same time." (Jacobs, p.25).

Jesus Felt His Emotions

The Bible describes Jesus as experiencing many emotions. He was sad, He wept, He was angry, and He had compassion. ¹ We are also instructed to experience emotions.² We are given permission to be angry, but we should not let it drive us into sinning. We are encouraged to be joyful. We are told that we can experience peace.

Can You Rely On Your Emotions?

It may shock you to know that your emotions are always 100% accurate. Your emotions are not sometimes accurate, or often accurate. They are always accurate - - - in one way. They always tell you exactly what is going on inside you.

Because of old wounds and the reactions that are triggered by their presence, our emotions may not be an accurate measure of what is going on outside of us. For instance, I might feel rejected by the host at a party, only to find out later he liked me! My emotion was not an accurate indicator of what was happening in my relationship with the host at the party (what was happening outside me). Nevertheless, the feeling was giving me very important information about what was happening inside me. In this situation, my emotion was saying I have an old root of

Your emotions always tell you exactly what is going on inside you.

¹ **Matthew 9:36**, but when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

Mark 3: 5, So when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Luke 19:41, Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

John 11:33; 38, Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. . . Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb.

John 11:35, Jesus wept.

² **Matthew 5:4**, "Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted."

Romans 12:15, Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Romans 14:17, For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:26, "Be angry, and do not sin." Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Philippians 2:18, For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

2 Timothy 1:4, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy,

James 4:9, Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

bitterness that was triggered when I felt rejected. I need to know this so that I can find the old root of rejection and be healed.

Whenever my emotion is not appropriate to the circumstances, this is an important clue that there is a wound inside me that needs to be taken care of. In these situations I might blame others, or circumstances, or dismiss my emotion as undesirable. And sometimes The Wall is so impenetrable that I may not feel some emotions at all; or the feeling vanishes in a flash, before I can recognize it.

Whenever and however I dismiss my emotion, I rob myself of the opportunity of seeing that I have a wound inside me. Then I miss out on the opportunity of being healed. My emotion was my friend giving me important information about what was going on inside me.

A Strange Language

If you have not been listening to what your emotions are telling you, their "language" will likely be strange to you. Our parents were supposed to teach us how to understand this language. If they didn't (and mine sure didn't, because they didn't know it themselves), and if we have been running from our emotions, we are probably not very adept at describing how we feel. Saying, "I feel like he doesn't listen to me" is not a feeling. It is a conclusion. Saying "I feel unimportant," or "I feel lonely," are descriptions of emotions. If you have difficulty describing what you are feeling, the list of negative and positive emotions in **Endnote #11-1** may help you put a name to what you are feeling. We need to learn this language so that we can understand what our emotions are telling us, thereby benefiting from the information.

Leave No Negative Emotion Unexamined

Be aware that subtle negative emotions also give you important information. The new lifestyle of constantly listening to your negative emotions should not be limited to "nuclear blasts." In fact, the majority of negative emotions that you feel will be fairly mild.

For instance, you may be a bit irritated because your wife left the top off the toothpaste tube, but you may not be so angry as to start an argument. Nevertheless, this emotion is still a signal that you judged her, and so you need to pray. Otherwise these little bitter roots will accumulate (a bundle of bitter roots will be forming in your heart), and at some point you may explode at her over something minor.

For most of us, these sorts of mild reactions happen many times a day, and we therefore need to pray many times a day. If we do this we don't have to carry the burden of those sinful reactions, because Jesus takes them. We then experience the rest that Jesus promised.

A Profound Way For God To Lead You

If you will diligently listen and pray as outlined below, this will provide a simple, accurate, and effectual way for God to direct your healing walk. He knows what He wants you to deal with, and will lead you by your emotions.

How To Listen To Your Emotions And Pray

Pay Attention to every **negative emotion** you feel.

Keep a pad of paper with you to write down every incident of a negative emotion, no matter how small. It can be a short note or a long journal. It is your choice. A major purpose of keeping a written list is so that if at the end of the day your paper is blank, you will know **you haven't been listening**. We all judge (and therefore have a negative emotion) many times every day. It is very easy to fall back into the old pattern of not listening if we aren't watchful.

Pray over each item on your list. Be diligent to set aside time to get quiet and comfortable where there are a minimum of distractions.

- Look at each item on the list. Close your eyes and remember the recent incident that triggered the negative emotion.
- Let the emotion come up, and choose a "feeling" word to describe the emotion. Most negative emotions are signals that you have judged. If you need help naming the emotion, see the list of emotions in **Endnote #11-1**.
- Forgive whomever/whatever you have judged.
- If your Treasure Inside is the one you have judged, ask him/her to forgive you (If you have a history of judging yourself, once you begin to listen you may be astonished at how awful you are to yourself.)
- Ask the Lord to forgive you for the judgment, and
 - To remove the bitter root
 - To cleanse that place with His blood
 - To fill that place with His spirit.

After you pray, review the incident and see if there is peace. If there is peace, you are done. If not, there is more praying to be done. The further praying may have to do with the current event, or there may be an older, deeper root to be prayed about. When you have peace, you are done. Peace means that the work the Lord wanted you to do right now is done. It does not necessarily mean that every bitter root with respect to that person or type of situation is gone. If there is more, in due season the Lord will bring it up. Once you have prayed and have peace, then just go on and enjoy the day.

Positive Emotions

Also listen to your positive emotions, because they are also directional. They point you towards things that are good for you.

It is not selfish to listen to your positive emotions. Of course, no healing prayer is necessary, because they are not pointing out sin. Just enjoy them! They mean that good things are happening; and this can be an opportunity for thanksgiving and praise to the Lord.

Summary

Our "feelings" are special, wonderful gifts that God has given to us so that we can know the conditions that exist inside us. These messages are our helpers, and we need to listen to them.

Our "bad emotions" are not sin. They are simply the message system God gave us to alert us to when all is not well inside us, when something needs attention. We may have an unmet need, or we may have a root of bitterness inside. It is important for us to "leave no negative emotion unexamined," because our negative emotions always tell us accurately when there is a root of sin hidden inside us.

The living God has provided the way to fix all these things by washing away our sin. He also wants to walk with us in our Treasure Inside to show us what He wants to heal inside us.

Our positive emotions are also important. They are enjoyable and fun, and they will also guide us into those things that minister

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to us. Each of us is a unique person who finds fulfillment in unique ways, and the positive emotions are the signposts directing us to our fulfillment. In addition, these good feelings are a reward for achieving cleansing from our sins, and obtaining fulfillment of our needs.