

Feelings

In the years that we worked in the ministry at French Camp Academy, many of the students responded to the gospel when it was given, sometimes in a morning church service, or in an evening worship service, and often in private conversations with a teacher or houseparent.

And I can recall how the whole campus would rejoice on the occasions when we would have a "Revival" type of service and several young people would come forward.

And when that would take place, there would be great jubilation among us staff. And that would be especially so when some of those young people would be those known to be difficult or rebellious.

And yes, it seemed right that we would rejoice. In Luke chapter 15, Jesus said,
7 . . . I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. (Luke 15:7)

And yes, our personal feelings were very involved, because those young people meant more to us than seems to take place in the school systems in much of the secular world. The young people at French Camp were in some ways like our own biological children. And so, yes, we did rejoice, and sometimes greatly.

Here, in Luke chapter 10, we read where the seventy new missionaries that Jesus had sent out to minister in the local Judean towns and country sides were now returning and were rejoicing as they reported about their efforts. And in hearing their reports, Jesus found it necessary to add a measure of caution to their response and to their rejoicing. Beginning in verse 17, we read . . .

¹⁷Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

¹⁸And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

²¹In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ²²All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*."

²³Then He turned to *His* disciples and said privately, "Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things you see; ²⁴for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen *it*, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard *it*." (Luke 10:17-24)

Here, as we read these words, we need always to remind ourselves that Jesus had the ability to fully know all that was taking place within the minds and emotions of everyone around Him. And here, as He spoke with these missionaries, He especially knew what was taking place within their minds.

And yes, enthusiasm and excitement, getting caught up in the emotions of the moment has its good side, but it can also reveal some difficulties.

And as I read these words and consider the powerful "feelings" that were taking place within these disciples as they came back in from their missionary journey, I can identify with them. But I also know that in amongst the excitement, we must always be careful.

"Feelings" are a powerful and controlling influence behind most all that we do and they can lead us astray.

And here, Jesus saw need to bring the mind and the emotions of these disciples back into focus on what was really taking place within the efforts of ministry that they had been experiencing.

And we also need always to remember that in our human condition, we are only able to see and perceive the things and events that are taking place within our visual and natural world. But there is always so much, much more taking place in that deeper and more profound "spirit world" that exists all around us, that place where the Spirit of Christ is working within the souls of men. And also, where the Spirit of Christ is at work, defeating the powers of satan and his

cohorts of demons, casting them down out of their strongholds and freeing up men's souls from their influence and control.

Folks, we must not allow our small minds to always keep the Lord Jesus restricted within this same small world that we live within. Yes, Jesus was here on earth in His human form, but we must understand that He was also able, at the same time, to be present within that unseen realm of the Spirit world. And He is able to do things there that we can never begin to imagine.

In these words of verse 18 where Jesus said to these disciples, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven", yes, there was an occasion spoken about in the Book of Revelation when Satan was cast out of heaven because of his rebellion. But the commentator, Matthew Henry, also envisioned that more was being revealed to us in these words. He envisioned the Spirit of Jesus traveling along with those missionary disciples as they ministered to the people in the towns and country sides of Judea, bringing about the downfall of Satan and his demons that had so freely resided within the lives of those unsuspecting people.

Matthew Henry tells us that Jesus was saying to these disciples,

"My heart and eyes went along with you; I took notice of the success you had, and I saw *Satan fall as lightning from heaven.*" Satan and his kingdom fell before the preaching of the gospel. "I see how it is," saith Christ, "as you get ground the devil loses ground." He falls *as lightning falls from heaven*, so suddenly, so irrecoverably, so visibly, that all may perceive it, and say, "See how Satan's kingdom totters, see how it tumbles."

And Christ foresaw that the preaching of the gospel, which would *fly like lightning* through the world, would wherever it went pull down Satan's kingdom. *Now is the prince of this world cast out.*

And then also, here in verse 17, we can see that these disciples knew from whence their power and success came, because they were quick to give Jesus all the credit for their success by saying,

"Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." (Luke 10:17)

We aren't told about all the many thoughts that were running through the minds of the disciples as they told Jesus about their success, but Jesus knew all that they were thinking. And He said to them,

¹⁹Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:19-20)

Here in these words, we see that Jesus was very satisfied with the efforts of these disciples, so much so that He bestowed upon them even more "Spiritual Power", the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and power over the demonic spiritual forces that they would encounter as they would go out on future missions.

And though we can't know whether it was the human side of Jesus or the God side of Him, or perhaps even both, when here He broke out into a "Hallelujah of Praise" to God His Father. Those words in verse 21.

²¹In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. (Luke 10:21)

And in His Spirit-filled joy Jesus turned to these disciples and shared a secret joy with them, saying in verse 22,

²²All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the ones* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*."

²³. . . "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; ²⁴for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen *it*, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard *it*." (Luke 10:23-24)

Jesus was very blessed by the efforts of these disciples and the possibilities of the things they would accomplish in future mission efforts.

And were this scene to be set within the context of our modern day American culture, the personal "feelings" of the disciples would be the sole topic of the conversation. But you'll note that just the opposite caution is being given here by the Lord Jesus.

“Feelings” truly are an all-consuming fascination within our society today. That is especially so in our secular media and in matters to do with psychology. “Feelings” seem to be the “acceptable cause” and also the “justification for” most all the things people do today.

But as Jesus is explaining to these men here in this passage, personal feelings should never be allowed to have that kind of influence over a person, and especially so as we go about doing the works of God.

Yes, feelings will take place. And they are especially good in circumstances like those we read about here, where the plans and the purposes of God are going forward in the way that God intends. When that takes place, every heart involved shares in that joy.

And I marvel at the way the secular world tries to understand that special joy. They so much, want to feel those deeper, stronger feelings, but they can't.

I have often had people say to me, “Your work among the children at French Camp must be a very “rewarding” work, very “fulfilling”. And I understand the feelings that those people are trying to explain. But unfortunately, they are trying to compare a very secular feeling to a very spiritual experience and that simply can't be done. The two feelings of joy are not at all the same.

Here as these dear servants returned from a very successful missionary journey, their emotions running high, Jesus, very gently, tried to refocus their attention and their faith back upon the things that were most important to their efforts.

Their success had not been their own, but had come from the Spiritual gifts Jesus had given to them. And His words quickly reminded them of that.

¹⁹Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (Luke 10:19)

And in His prayer of thanksgiving to the Father, you can hear Jesus' gentle shepherding of His sheep,

²¹In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. (Luke 10:21)

Jesus was obviously concerned for His young missionaries. It probably would not take many times of laying on of hands, with crippled people being healed to begin to confuse the minds of some of them. Certainly, the fascination of those supernatural powers would be captivating. That kind of confusion and deception has proven to take its toll over the generations since.

As we watch today's "faith-healers" like Benny Hinn, with all of his obvious theatrics, it sure seems that he is confused.

I have personally prayed over a person and asked God to drive the demons out of them, but I have never been present to witness a demon being forcefully removed. So, I don't know what that is like or how I would react to it personally.

But no doubt I would get more than fascinated if I were to do that sort of thing on a regular basis. I would have to guard my feelings very carefully.

Again, I am sure this warning from Jesus is because "feelings" are one of satan's very special entranceways into a person's heart and mind to corrupt an otherwise excellent ministry, to pull a person's focus off the real object and purpose of the triumph, that of Jesus and His plan of salvation, over onto self and onto the abilities of self.

Here, Jesus gave the simple warning,

²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:22)

These words put all "feelings" into perspective, and that is, there is no other feeling in existence that could possibly compare to the importance of knowing that our name is written down in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Why is that so? We know why, but let me say it anyway. Someday, all of the matters of this life will eventually be called to a close, and at that time, everything will be measured, as to whether it is good or evil, right or wrong.

And contrary to what the world thinks, it is not simply a measurement of the good things that we might do being more in number than the bad things we do that will get us into heaven. It will be this one measurement that Jesus spoke

about here that will be used. "Is our name written in the Book of Life"? This and only this will be the deciding measurement. Listen to these words given in Revelation chapter 20.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

Again, here in our text, as Jesus watched His disciples rejoice, He warned them, ²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20)

Folks, this same warning is also given to you and to me. There will come a time when every soul will stand before the Lord Jesus, the great King and Judge of all the earth. And He will call us all to account.

If our names are written in the Book of Life, we will be invited to come in and live forever with Him in Heaven. But if our name is not written in the Book of Life, we will be cast into the eternal lake of fire.

Note carefully that these words in our scripture are specifically being given to people in seriously dedicated Christian service. For that reason, those who are in fulltime ministry today should examine themselves carefully and not be confused into thinking that it is their service that Jesus desires most. It is not. It is their heart.

Ministers who serve faithfully but never personally surrender their heart to Christ, will be lost, and eternally so. What a terrible thing to take place, a life, an eternity, completely lost.

In the Book of Ecclesiastes, as the great King Solomon looked back over his life at all of his accomplishments, his great wisdom, his pursuits of good times and great rewards, he was frustrated, and he called it all “vanity”, “meaningless”.

He concluded in Ecclesiastes 12 that yes, men should work hard and give a good account of their life's work, but in the end, it will be our relationship to God that will really count. His final words on the subject in Ecclesiastes 12 were,

¹³ Now all has been heard,
here is the conclusion of the matter:
Fear God and keep his commandments,
for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)

Unfortunately, throughout his life, even with his great wisdom, Solomon had allowed his heart to rule most of his conduct and behavior. And his heart had led him astray.

We are warned about that in Jeremiah 17.

⁹ “The heart is deceitful above all things,
And desperately wicked; Who can know it?
¹⁰ I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind,
Even to give every man according to his ways,
According to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

The deceptive ways of the heart are what Jesus is warning these returning disciples about, saying that even in the most successful of Christian service care must be taken.

Too often, “feelings” can be the entranceway for the demonic world to enter in and turn an “on-fire saint for the Lord” down a wrong pathway. All it takes is a small “twist” or turn and suddenly, people doing good Christian service can start to take on wrong directions and wrong involvements.

We need to remember that all of the matters of this life eventually will come back to this one measuring point. Is my name written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

I'll close with these simple words of Jesus.

²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20)

Let's pray.