

EARNESTLY CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH – Sept., 2022

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GOING BY MERE FEELINGS?

Proverbs 14:12 (NKJV)

There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

The oldest false religion in the world is one of going by your own “feelings” instead of going by the Word of God. Under Satan’s influence Eve FELT GOOD about the forbidden fruit on the tree. She saw that it was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise (Gen. 3:6). She totally went by her own intuition and thereby was totally deceived (1 Tim. 2:14).

There is a line from an old song that says, “*It can't be wrong when it feels so right*” but in truth our sincere feelings can be very deceptive. Feelings are not the arbiter of truth. One can FEEL very right about something and be dead wrong. The devil is a master at deception. He specializes in deception. Satan has the ability to transform himself into an angel of light and as such he caters to making us feel right about what is wrong (2 Cor. 11:14).

The world is all about following your own heart and believing in YOURSELF, but the Bible teaches that the “heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9). The world emphasizes following your own instincts or trusting your “gut”, but the Bible emphasizes trusting in God and His Word. Jeremiah says, “Cursed is the man who trusts in man” and in contrast, “Blessed is the man who trusts in LORD” (Jer. 17:5, 7).

For the world (and sadly many professing Christians) it’s largely about feelings, emotions, and subjective experience. Going by mere “feelings” is consistent with what Paul termed as “the basic principles of the world” (Col. 2:8, 20). In contrast to this Paul emphasized that in Christ are “*hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*” (Col. 2:3) Deliverance from the deception of the world begins with coming “*to the knowledge of the truth*” (1 Tim. 2:4). It’s not just about some mystical feelings or subjective experience but about the KNOWLEDGE of the truth. And once we are saved, we continue to “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” (2 Pet. 3:18).

Deception often results in going by mere feelings. The TRUTH is about what God has revealed in His Word. The Word of God itself is the arbiter of truth and not our own heart. In the last days professing Christians will not endure sound doctrine but rather go according “*to their own desires*” (2 Tim. 4:3). Instead of going by the Word they will go by what makes them feel good. It all comes down to what am I going to follow? Will it be my own feelings, heart, intuition, or will it be the Word of God?

Yes, God created us with emotions and feelings too, but they are to be the caboose and not the engine. The head is to rule over the heart (so to speak). We are to love God with all our heart, soul, and MIND (Mt. 22:37). When you remove the mind from the equation you end up with mere feelings according to the principles of this world. And that is tragically deceptive!

Many times in my ministry I have seen this scenario. The person becomes emotionally involved in something that is plainly wrong according to the objective truth of the Scriptures. Yet their subjective feelings lead them in another direction. The heart has the amazing ability to deceive itself because it wants what it wants. Will we obey the objective Word of truth, or will we follow our intuitive feelings? Will we go by God’s faithful Word or by our deceptive feelings? Ever since Genesis 3 this has consistently been the great issue!

Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV)

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Thot: “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isa. 5:21)

Earnestly Contending, Pastor Dwight J. Oswald