**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

**On KTTR (99.7 FM) Every Sunday at 8:30 a.m.**

**Rolla, Missouri**

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**Heartfelt Religion**

Before we get into our lesson today I want to announce a special series of meetings that will be conducted by the St. James church of Christ in St. James. Beginning Sunday, Sept. 24th and continuing through Friday night Sept. 29th, Bruce Reeves from Conway, Arkansas, will be with us and present lessons from God’s word that will convict and encourage our hearts. The titles of some of his lessons are “The Lord Never Fails,” and “Overcoming the Greatest Challenge to Your Marriage,” and “Why Does God Allow Suffering.” These are just a few. Come and be with us. We will meet at our regular times on Sunday and 7:00 each evening Monday through Friday. That’s Sept. 24-29. Our building is located at 685 Sidney Street in St. James where Sidney Street and Highway B intersect. We will look forward to you coming. Now for the Bible lesson this morning.

Do emotions play a part in religion? There are two extremes. Some people will say that the emotion they feel is evidence they are saved, or that they are right in their religion. He may say it like this, “I know that I am saved, [or that I am right] because I can feel it right here” (and with his fist he pats his chest). He knows he is right because of how he feels about it.

But there is the other extreme, and that is those who believe that emotions do not play any part in their religion.

I suggest that both extremes are not Biblical. While our feelings are certainly not PROOF of our salvation or of being right, they should certainly be one RESULT of it.

I want to emphasize these two points in our lesson today. Our emotions are not PROOF of our being saved, but they certainly are a RESULT of being saved.

First of all, feelings are NOT proof of salvation or of being right in religion. You will never find in scripture where one’s emotions or how he felt is given as evidence that he was saved from his sins. How one feels about a certain belief is never given as proof that that belief is right. Proverbs 14:12 says, *“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”* This is saying that I may feel that a certain way is right, but it be wrong. Just because I feel good about it is not proof that it is right. In Acts 26:9 Paul said, *“Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.”* Before Paul became a Christian he was a persecutor of Christians. He says here that he thought he was right in persecuting Christians. But just because he felt he was right does not mean he was right. The fact is, he was wrong. Jesus said in John 16:2 that there would be those who will kill His disciples, thinking they are offering God service. They think (feel) they are serving God, but in reality they are committing sin.

There are people today who are relying on their feelings for knowing they are right in their beliefs. You talk to them about what the Bible says about what one must do to be saved, and what the Bible says is different than what they have done, and rather than changing and obeying the truth they present their feelings, their emotions as evidence they are saved. I heard that someone said it this way, “I would not give up my feelings for a stack of Bibles.” But the fact is, one may feel a certain way about a matter, but the truth be something else. You see, one’s feelings are the result of what one is taught. If he is taught error, and believes it to be the truth, he will feel good about it. But his good feelings do not change the fact that it is still error that he believes. Let me illustrate. On one of the episodes of the Andy Griffith Show, Opie, Andy’s son brought home a report card with all “A’s.” Andy and Aunty Bee were ecstatic. They were so happy. As a result Andy gave Opie a new bicycle. But Miss Crump, Opie’s teacher made a mistake. Opie did not get all “A’s” Their feelings were one thing, but the truth was something else. They had good feelings, but it was based on false information.

Let me give you a biblical example of this. In Genesis 37 we read of Joseph’s brothers selling him to some Ishmaelites who took him as a slave to Egypt. Now, Joseph brothers did not want to go back to their father, Jacob, and tell him they just sold his favorite son as a slave. So, what they do is they kill a he-goat and dipped Joseph’s tunic in the blood of the he-goat. They brought it to their father and said, “We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son’s tunic or not?” Jacob knew it was Joseph’s, and he concluded that Joseph had been devoured by a wild animal. Jacob mourned for many days, believing that his son was dead. But his son was not dead. I don’t think Jacob would have mourned the death of his son any more even if his son had actually been dead. Jacob’s emotions felt one way, but the truth was something else.

Now, many years later, Joseph became a ruler in Egypt. His brothers came to Egypt to buy grain because of a famine in the land, and Joseph recognized them, but they did not recognize him. Later Joseph makes himself known to them, and tells them to go get their father and bring him and the rest of the family into Egypt. And that is what they do. Jacob comes to Egypt and sees his son who he thought was dead.

But let us suppose, just for illustration, that when the brothers came to their father, Jacob, and told him that Joseph was alive in Egypt, that Jacob refused to believe it. And let’s say that the reason he gave for not believing that Joseph was alive was how he felt when he saw Joseph’s tunic covered with blood many years before. Let suppose he said, “I know Joseph is dead because I felt it right here in my heart when I saw his tunic covered with blood. I know he is dead because I would not have felt that way if he was alive.” Well, his sons would probably have said, “Father, you are not being reasonable. The reason you felt that way is because we lied to you. Your feelings were based on a lie.” And would’nt it be unreasonable if Jacob refuse to accept the truth because of his feelings? But isn’t that what people do today when they refuse to accept God’s word for their salvation, and instead rely upon their feelings. God’s word says one thing, but rather than accepting the truth of God’s word, they are relying upon their feelings as proof of their salvation.

The point we are emphasizing is that our emotions are not PROOF of our salvation, or of being right in religion. The only way we can know we are saved and that we are right in what we believe is by reading it in God’s word. Romans 10:17 says, *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

Now, while feelings are certainly not PROOF of salvation (or of being right in a certain belief), they should just as certain be a RESULT of it.

Joy and rejoicing are the RESULT of knowing we are saved from our sins. But how do we know we are saved from our sins? We know it because we know God always fulfills His promises. You see, God promises salvation to those who obey Him. The Hebrew writer says in Hebrews 5:9 that Jesus *“became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* And so we obey the commands of the Lord to be saved, and we know He saves us because He always fulfills His promises. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Consider with me some examples. In Acts 2 we read of Peter proving to the Jews that the Jesus they had crucified is both Lord and Christ (v. 36). Verse 37 says, *“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’”* They are cut to the heart, meaning they are filled with guilt, and they want to know what to do. Peter tells them what to do, *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* Verse 41 says, *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”* These Jews who were cut to the heart, filled with guilt, obey what the Lord commanded. They believe that Jesus is Lord and Christ. They repent of their sins and are baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sins. Verses 46-47 says, *“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people....”* Notice, those who once were filled with guilt, now have gladness of heart, and are praising God. Why? Because they know they are saved. How do they know they are saved? They know that when they did what God commanded to be saved, God fulfilled His promise and saved them. The result is joy, gladness and praise.

In Acts 8 we read of Philip preaching Jesus to a eunuch from Ethiopia. The eunuch believes what was being preached and desires to be baptized. Verses 38 and 39 says, *“So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”*  Notice, the word was preached, the word was obeyed, and the result was rejoicing. And rightly so. He was saved from his sins. How did he know he was saved from his sins? Because he believed the promise of God.

In Acts 16:30 we read of a Philippian jailor asking Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Paul and Silas “spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.” Verses 33-34 says, *“And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.”* Again, the word was preached, it was obeyed and as a result there was rejoicing. The jailor knew they were saved because he believed the promise of God.

And the joy of the Christian continues and deepens as he matures in Christ. As he walks by the Spirit, he will produce the fruit of the Spirit which includes “joy” and “peace” (Gal 5:22). Peter talks about this joy in 1 Peter chapter 1. He makes mention in verses 3-4 of the Christians’ inheritance, that it is *“incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”* In verse 5 he says that they *“are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* And then he says, *“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation of your souls.”* (1 Peter 1:6-9) Now noti ce, this joy does not come from perfect external circumstances. These Christians had been grieved by various trials. The genuineness of their faith was being tested by fire. But because of their faith, believing in the promises of God, they could rejoice with joy inexpressible.

Is there emotion in the religion of Christ? Indeed, there is. Now, emotion is not the evidence of our faith, but it is surely the result of it.

Dear listener, when you hear the gospel of Christ, believe it and obey it, you can know you are saved and have the hope of eternal life. Why? - Because God has never reneged on a promise. He saves you. In that you will greatly rejoice.

Before we close we want to invite you to check out our website. On this website you are able to hear sermons on a variety of Bible topics, and you also are able to hear previous Bible Talk radio broadcasts. The web address is sjchurchofchrist.com, that’s sjchurchofchrist.com.