RENEW & RESTORE BIBLE STUDIES

Managing *your* Emotions

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Finding Freedom from Anxiety and Stress

Managing Your Emotions

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BY

CHRISTA KINDE

THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

Managing Your Emotions

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Introduction

Why do you let your emotions take over,
lashing out and spitting fire?
Job 15:12 MSG

As children, we learn the ability to read faces. A smiling face means a person is happy. A frowning face means someone is sad. Simple, right?

Well, no, not really. Life is more complex than that. Our feelings don't just range between glad and sad. There are also feelings of anger, disappointment, fear, depression, loneliness, elation, awe, eagerness, longing, resentment, worry, grief, confusion, compassion, frustration, jealousy, guilt, ambition, pride, admiration, curiosity, and love—and that's just to name a few! What's more, our emotions rarely fit into just one of those categories. We usually have mixed emotions, conflicting emotions, or we jump from one to the other in a matter of moments. It can often feel exhausting and overwhelming—add those two to the list!

Most of us live at the mercy of our moods and emotions. We can't control what we feel. We just feel. But God says we are wise if we learn to manage our reactions to people and circumstances and determine how much our emotions will influence our lives.

Now, we're not here to deal with the really severe emotional disorders. They certainly exist and deserve attention, but we'll leave that to the experts. What we're going to tackle in this study are the garden-variety moods and emotions we deal with every day. We all struggle with our tempers. We all know what it's like to be jealous, lonely, worried, and overwhelmed. We all battle with rebellious feelings, not wanting to do what God asks of us. It's part of being human. Isn't it nice to know you're not alone?

The Purpose of This Series

The *Renew & Restore Bible Studies* are designed to help you connect with God through his Word, give Him your burdens and troubles, and experience the healing power of His promises. Whether you are studying individually or with a group, this book will give you the chance to reflect on key Scripture passages and consider how they apply to your life and circumstances. So pull out your Bible and a pen, and get ready to enter into quiet time with God.

For Leaders

If you are leading a group through this study guide or engaging in individual study, please see the Leader's Guide at the back of the book for suggested answers and insights to the reflection questions.

SESSION 1

A Bundle of Emotions

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil."

LUKE 6:45 NKJV

When we start talking about moods and emotions, we must begin with the heart. I guess you could say it's the heart of the matter! We call it the seat of our emotions, and we try to explain our feelings by referring to it. People can be described as hardhearted, softhearted, openhearted, warmhearted, coldhearted, fainthearted, or even heartless. Some people wear their heart on their sleeve. We can do something to our heart's content. We know what it's like to lose heart, take heart, have our heart set on something, have a change of heart, and have our hearts skip a beat. We can be heavyhearted, halfhearted, or lighthearted.

A story can be heartwarming, heart wrenching, or heartening. We can learn something by heart, have our hearts in the right place, and win the hearts of others. Some days, we don't have the heart to face our work. Other days, we tackle the job heartily, going at it heart and soul.

With all these words and phrases connecting our emotions to our hearts, one of our most important organs, it isn't surprising that our emotions play such an important role in our lives. And with so many different things going on within our hearts, it's no wonder our emotions get tangled up sometimes!

1. ***The Bible talks a lot about the heart, and the emotions tangled up within it. God knows we all have our ups and downs. What two emotional extremes are mentioned in Proverbs 15:13?***

2. *What kinds of things are going on in our hearts, according to Proverbs 16:9? What can we take away from this passage?*

3. *The psalms are wonderful for giving us glimpses into the inner turmoil of the heart. Read Psalm 25:17 and Psalm 109:22. Can you relate to what David is experiencing?*

We are moody people, as changeable as the weather. And because we're all so experienced in emotions, we know how to spot them. We can read faces. We can interpret body language. Often, our attitudes and moods come across loud and clear. Though we might try to hide our inner turmoil, our emotions leak out when we're with other people. Whether we realize it or not, we are being defined by the emotion we display most consistently. Throughout this study, we'll examine a range of different emotions we all experience and learn how we can better control these emotions, so they don't end up controlling us!

4. ***When we allow our feelings—like worry, fear, and doubt—to carry us along, how does James 1:6 describe us?***

5. ***Jesus never allowed His feelings to lead Him into sin. Still, it's a comfort to know the Lord completely understands how we feel. How does Hebrews 4:14–15 describe Jesus' inner struggles while on earth?***

6. ***Our moods, emotions, feelings, and attitudes are powerful and can easily overrule what we know is right. What advice does Paul give in Colossians 3:16 on how to counteract the tugging of our hearts?***

Digging Deeper

The Scriptures are filled with descriptions of our hearts. Have you ever noticed the wide variety of adjectives they use to describe it—both good and bad? Let's take a few minutes to dive deeper into some of these passages that describe the attitudes found in our hearts. If you are in a group or own multiple Bible translations, examine how different translations add new meaning to the text. Which of these passages stand out to you and why?

- Psalm 112:7
- Psalm 119:80
- Psalm 119:161
- Proverbs 16:5
- Proverbs 17:22
- Luke 8:15

Ponder & Pray

In the days ahead, take time to ponder what is in your heart. Ask the Lord for a measure of detachment, so you can see the feelings that flit through your heart, the moods that shape your day, and the emotions that get the better of you. Tell the Lord what you discover and ask for His guidance. Then, take some Scripture—perhaps some of this week's verses—and plant them in your heart. The heart is not easily swayed if it is the dwelling place of the powerful Word of God.

Additional Notes & Prayer Requests