



EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS

Up, Down, All Around

December 10, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Matthew 7:12 (NIV) • “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

John 15:11 (NIV) • “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

2 Samuel 6:14 (NIV) • “Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might.”

Ephesians 4:26-32 (CEV) • “Don’t get so angry that you sin. Don’t go to bed angry and don’t give the devil a chance. . . . Stop being bitter and angry and mad at others. Don’t yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude. Instead, be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.”

John 2:13-15 (CEV) • “Not long before the Jewish festival of Passover, Jesus went to Jerusalem. There he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves in the temple. He also saw moneychangers sitting at their tables. So he took some rope and made a whip. Then he chased everyone out of the temple, together with their sheep and cattle. He turned over the tables of the moneychangers and scattered their coins.”

Matthew 26:38 (NIV) • “Then [Jesus] said to them, ‘My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.’”

Psalms 6:6, 7 (The Message) • “I’m tired of all this—so tired. My bed has been floating forty days and nights on the flood of my tears. My mattress is soaked, soggy with tears. The sockets of my eyes are black holes; nearly blind, I squint and grope.”

Psalms 66:1, 2 (NIV) • “Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious.”

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS”

Earliteens live in a world of powerful emotions and often don’t know how to express them appropriately. They may get mixed messages from family, from the media, and from church about when and how it’s appropriate to express emotions. Boys, especially, have probably been told that “Big boys don’t cry” and given the message (directly or indirectly) that it’s not appropriate for men to express emotions. Girls may be told that it’s not “ladylike” to get angry or show anger.

This week’s study emphasizes the fact that Christians both feel and express emotions. How we express our emotions will vary among people and also cultures, but we should always be guided by our loyalty to God and our concern for other people—the golden rule applies to expressing our feelings just as to all the rest of our Christian behavior.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Explore the ways Bible writers expressed emotion and the guidelines they gave for how to deal with feelings.
2. Discuss how our emotions and the way we express them fit into the "big picture" of a Christian's life.
3. Develop his or her own guidelines for when and how to express emotions appropriately.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) four large pieces of poster board, art supplies, pre-cut pictures; (Activity B) cardboard cube, marker.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • "My Roller Coaster" handout (p. 121), pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word. At some point you should distribute or call their attention to their student lesson for this week.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Provide four large pieces of poster board, a variety of art supplies, and pre-cut pictures that can be used for collages. Divide your class into four groups and give each group a piece of poster board.

Get set • Assign them to create a poster illustrating one of the following emotions: joy, fear, sorrow, peace. (If your group is very large, divide into more than four groups and have two or more groups do posters on the same emotion.)

Go • Allow about 15 minutes for the groups to create visual images illustrating the emotions (the emotion they're illustrating should be included somewhere as the title of the poster). Then, have them share their work with each other.

Debriefing • **Ask:** What kinds of visual images did you pick to illustrate the different feelings? Why? As you look at the posters other groups made, do you think the images they used have the same meaning for you that they did for the group that picked them? We all feel all of these emotions, but how are they different for each person? Why will something make one person joyful and another person sad?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Make a cardboard cube about one foot across. On each of the six sides, write one of the following words: *happy, sad, scared, caring, content, peaceful*.

Get set • Sit in a circle and toss the cube to someone.

Go • The person who catches the cube has to read the “feeling” word on the side facing up toward them and talk about a time recently when they remember feeling that way. Then they toss the cube to someone who hasn’t yet spoken. Encourage everyone to participate, but don’t force anyone! If your group is small, keep it going till everyone has had two or three turns; in a larger group, play till everyone has had one turn.

Debriefing • Ask: For which emotions was it easier to think of examples? Were there words that you found yourself thinking, “Please, don’t let me get that one!” or “I hope I get that one”? Why are some emotions easier to share than others?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

Read the following situations aloud and ask class members to vote with a “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-down” whether or not this was an appropriate way for a Christian to express feelings.

1. Jeff had an argument with his dad and left the house to go see a friend. On the way out of the house, Jeff:
 - a. burst out in tears over his frustration.
 - b. ran all the way to his friend’s house but determined not to share with him his frustration because he loves his dad.

- c. prayed silently over his feelings of frustration and asked God to restore peace to his heart.
 - d. returned to the house and decided to reconcile with his dad, asking him to forgive his outburst.
2. Julie got an A on an important exam she was expecting to fail. She was thrilled, so she:
 - a. smiled to herself, folded up the exam paper, and didn’t mention it to anyone.
 - b. invited her best friend to spend time with her after school to celebrate.
 - c. called a few friends to encourage them to study hard because their efforts will pay off one day.
 - d. went home and shared with her parents the reason for her joy, thanking God for her success.
3. Mike’s best friend Devin let him down when Mike was really counting on him. Mike:
 - a. was devastated but reminded himself of the good times when Devin proved to be a trustworthy friend.
 - b. felt angry and disappointed inside but never let on to Devin or anyone else.
 - c. waited for Devin after school and tactfully shared with him his disappointment but not without assuring Devin of his friendship.
 - d. continued to be friendly to Devin, proving to him that true friendship is not destroyed by adversity.

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

God created us with feelings. Sometimes we have the idea that the perfect Christian will never express any emotions—at least not any negative ones. They will never feel sad, or angry, or scared. Has anyone ever given you that impression of Christianity? Yet the Bible is full of examples of God’s people expressing their emotions. Read some of the Psalms. They’re full of weeping, fear, even anger over feeling abandoned. And they’re also full of praise, singing, and shouting for joy. It sounds as if people in Bible times weren’t afraid to express how they felt!

How do we handle emotions as part of our Christian lives? How should we react when we’re happy, or when we’re upset, or when we feel down and discouraged? God gives us some guidelines—our anger, the Bible tells us, should not lead to sin. In other words, don’t lash out in revenge and hurt people. God will provide a way out. It is not good to get so caught up in our own emotions that we lose sight of God and of other people.

We need to learn how to express our emotions in ways that will build others up and honor God. Always ask yourself, “What Would Jesus Do?”

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask a volunteer to read the story of Michele from the opening section of the student lesson.

Debriefing • Ask: What are some of the different ways people in different cultures express their emotions when someone dies? Are there things that are OK to say or do in one cultural setting that would be unexcepted in another? What about differences among individuals? Is there one right way to express your feelings? Is one way *more* right than another? People

express their emotions differently in different cultures, societies, and families.

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Everything seems to be going wrong. You’ve had a disagreement with your best friend, schoolwork is piling up, and your grades aren’t all that good. When you find out that one of your friends had a reunion and didn’t invite you, it’s the last straw.

Ask: How do you react? Do you get depressed? If so, how do you deal with it? Do you get angry and take your feelings out in a more active way? What might happen if you express some of these feelings in a negative way? Who could get hurt? What are some more positive ways of expressing how you feel?

Ask someone to read aloud **Ephesians 4:26, 27**. **Ask:** How can you be angry without sinning? Can you express negative emotions—sadness, disappointment, discouragement—without sinning?

Ask someone to read aloud **Matthew 7:12**. **How does this give us a guideline for expressing emotions without hurting others?**

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Distribute copies of the “My Roller Coaster” handout from page 121. Allow about 10 minutes for students to work on them individually. Rather than asking them to share what they’ve written, ask everyone to fold their sheets and hold on to them until closing prayer, when you’ll lead the class in a prayer asking God to be present in their lives this week and help them make wise choices about how to deal with emotions. Invite class members to take the worksheet home with them and keep it in their Bible or another handy place to remind them that our feelings are a gift from God

and we can learn to express emotions appropriately as Christians.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How should Christians express emotions compared to others who don't know Jesus?
2. When, if ever, is it OK, or necessary, to hide your feelings?
3. What is the difference between the way girls and guys express feelings? Do you think this is OK?
4. Whom are you comfortable expressing your feelings with? Why?
5. What emotions are hardest for you to deal with? What are some ways you could change how you respond to those feelings?
6. Anger is an especially difficult emotion for Christians to deal with. What are some appropriate ways to express your feelings when you're angry with someone?
7. If we come to church to be joyful and celebrate our relationship with God, how should we express that?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

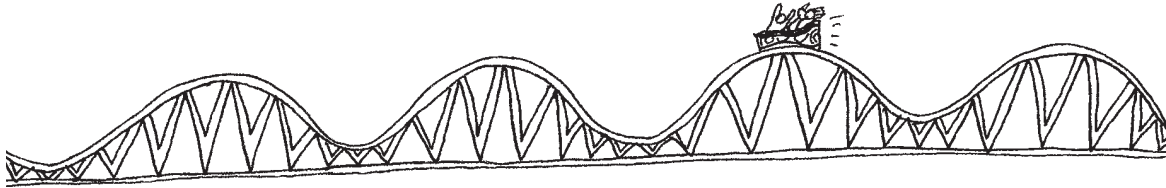
In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Being a Christian doesn't mean you turn into some kind of robot with no emotions, nor does it mean you'll always keep your feelings bottled up inside. In fact, as we look at God's Word we see that there's nothing like what He has planned for His people! If you are a Christian, you will still feel sad at times—especially when dealing with death. Talking to God about your feelings is a great way to deal with them; you can also learn how to make good choices about expressing your emotions in ways that will help you deal with them, and won't hurt others. And, of course, being a Christian also means feeling the joy and happiness that Jesus brings into your life. We can express that joy by sharing it with others and making their lives happier too!

FOR LESSON ELEVEN:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE APPLICATION ACTIVITY.

My Roller Coaster



Do you ever feel your life is like a roller coaster—constant ups and downs? Think about some of your emotional “highs” and “lows” over the last week. On the roller coaster drawing, write in at the top of the curves some of your “high points” and at the bottoms some of the things that made you feel particularly “down.”

After filling in your “highs” and “lows,” answer the questions below.

How can you see the “ups and downs” in your life as part of a journey that can lead you closer to Jesus?

What are some effective ways you can handle emotions in your life? Have you thought of sharing your “high” and “low” moments with Jesus?

How can you deal with the “lows” better if you ask Jesus to help you?

What are some ways Jesus would have you celebrate the “high points” in your life?



STUDENT LESSON

EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS Up, Down, All Around

December 10, 2022

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 26, Death and Resurrection:** “The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 9-13

UP, DOWN, ALL AROUND

Michele sat rigidly on the edge of her bed, wanting to cry but somehow finding that tears wouldn't come. The whole day seemed like a blur. The funeral home, the church, the graveyard. All day she had stood numbly by her mother's side, not able to unlock the feelings that were tumbling around inside her.

From downstairs she could hear the murmur of hushed voices. Her aunt and uncle were down

in the kitchen with Mom. Michele stared at her dad's picture on the desk. His death had changed everything, yet nobody was talking about it.

The long months while he'd been sick had been horrible—all those hours in the hospital, watching as Dad wasted away. Michele remembered him coaching her soccer team just last summer, swinging her high in the air when she scored the winning goal.

She heard her aunt's soft footsteps on the stairs. “Your mom's going to bed a little early, honey, trying to get some rest,” Aunt Sylvia said. She sat down beside Michele and patted her hand. “I know you must be feeling terrible, sweetie,” she said. “But you'll try to be a brave girl for your mom and help her out all you can, won't you?”

How do you cope with feelings of loss, or sadness, or grief? What does the Bible teach about how to deal with our emotions? How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus Himself wept? (see Luke 19:41; John 11:35).

Sunday RESPONDING

- » “Grow up! Big kids don't cry!”
- » “Christians are happy all the time.”
- » “Just because you're happy, you don't have to act all excited. Be mature. Calm down.”

- » Ever get any of these messages? What do you hear about expressing feelings? How do you think a Christian should express his or her feelings, especially when experiencing unpleasant emotions, such as loss, grief, or sadness?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON DEATH AND RESURRECTION

- » Read John 5:28; John 11:25; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.
- » How can you find comfort in the promise of resurrection when you are dealing with the loss of a loved one?

- » Jesus longs to fill our hearts with hope and meaning. What are some practical examples of how you can bring your burdens to Jesus when you feel overwhelmed with feelings of sadness or disappointment?

- » “Our heavenly Father is never unmindful of those whom sorrow has touched. . . . Christ lifts up the contrite heart and refines the mourning soul until it becomes His abode” (Ellen White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 11).
- » Read Matthew 7:12.



See activity at the end of this lesson.

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read Hebrews 4:15, 16. What a great promise we have in this Bible text! Jesus as our high priest can sympathize with us because He faced some of the same perplexities that are common to human existence. The Bible guides us to be careful in how we express emotions. For example, it’s natural to be angry, but not to let our anger rule us in such a way that we lose control and hurt others. It’s OK to mourn and express sorrow when we’ve lost someone we love, but even as we do so we should be aware that we have hope in Jesus’ soon return, when He will resurrect those righteous people who believed in Him.
- » So if you feel like shouting for joy when you get an A+ on your final exam, go ahead and do it! And when someone has truly hurt your feelings, try telling them honestly: “That really hurt me. I felt bad when you did that.” It’s OK to express your feelings—but not OK to use them as an excuse to hurt others.

Wednesday BIBLE INSIGHTS



See activity at the end of this lesson.

Thursday **CONNECTING**

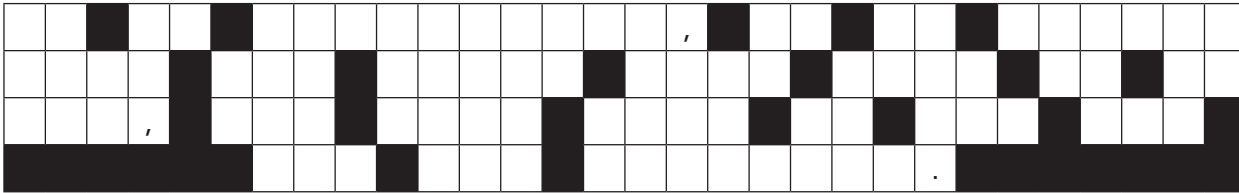
- » Review the Bible memory text.
- » Where's God when you're feeling hurt, or angry, or sad? Sometimes you may feel as if God has disappeared and left you to deal with your life alone. One of the bad things about bad feelings is that they can get in the way of our relationship with God. He's there, like the sun on a cloudy day, but sometimes we can't see or feel Him.
- » That's when you need to hold on to God by faith and trust His providential leading. Make it a habit to talk to God, even when you don't feel good. He's there, and He's listening. He can help you find positive ways to deal with distressing situations that leave you hurt and discouraged. Remember God's promise in Jeremiah 29:11-13. His desire for you is to give you a hope-filled future not only in His glorious kingdom but already here on earth. Would you trust your life in His loving care? In doing so, you will make the best decision of your life! God always has a positive solution, a way to deal with any situation. Talk to Him in bad times—and in good times too.

Friday **APPLYING**

- » Write a card or letter to a friend or family member. You can write a thank-you to someone who's made you really happy and explain how they have made your life brighter. If you feel hurt or disappointed, it will help to get those feelings out on paper too.
- » Be sure to send or deliver a positive letter right away; you would do wisely not to send the letter expressing negative feelings (just getting the words down on paper will do you good even if the other person never reads it). As you have learned in the previous lesson, being tactful and keeping silent about certain unpleasant situations will spare you from pain and help restore your relationship with others.
- » After you write your letter, take a moment to pray for that person and for your relationship with him or her.

Monday activity

Find the hidden phrase by using the letters directly below each of the blank squares. Each letter is used once.



y h a i n y e v e w y i l i P h a v h e t h t h o d L a w s
w o u t f o r d t t u s d n g m s d u t t o m e t h e t o
S o a n r h h h s u o p e o p s e o r
o u o t e r

Wednesday activity

Match the phrase with the Bible text. Texts are from the New International Version of the Bible.

1. John 15:11
2. 2 Samuel 6:14
3. Ephesians 4:26, 27
4. John 2:15
5. Matthew 26:38
6. Psalm 6:7
7. Psalm 66:1

A		" Shout for joy . . . "
B		". . . that my joy may be in you . . ."
C		"My eyes grow weak with sorrow . . ."
D		"Wearing a linen ephod, David . . ."
E		"Stay here and keep watch with me."
F		". . . Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry . . ."
G		"So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts . . ."