



#25

Theme: I Feel Lousy

Scripture: Psalm 33:18, 20, 22 (NIV) *“The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love... We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.... May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you.”*

A Thought: When I first accepted the Lord it was wonderful. Although there were times that I just didn't get it. Furthermore, I was in a hurry. I'd been to the mountain top and I did not want the spiritual glow to leave me internally or externally. I was on fire. I'm sure my human feelings came before my faith feelings. Of course, that may not be all bad...according to theologian Carl Spurgeon... *“True religion is more than notion; something must be known and felt.”* To continue - it was as though I had taken a pain pill. To be sure a spiritual high. I didn't want to come down. Nevertheless, I did. What I didn't get at the beginning was the importance of the triad factor: complete obedience, my faithfulness to God and the Lord's faithfulness to me a fallen human being (Jeremiah 31:3; 1 Corinthians 13) Acts 10:34). At one time or another many of us confront daily struggles e.g., strained relationships, unforeseen circumstances, death, sickness, loneliness and depression (lost of employment and marital difficulties). This is the period when your faith comes into question and doubt prevails. You feel as though God is not near you, not hearing your prayers, your cries, your pain and you.... just feel lousy. The spirit balloon kaput! If we're honest we've all experienced the spiritual doldrums. Even so, have no fear God is near! (2 Thessalonians. 3:3; 1 John 1:9; James 5:15)

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- Do you believe God is near? If you do, why? Do you believe He is faithful? Are you obedient to the Word?
- Do you understand the true meaning of faith? Sight verses unseen?
- Feelings and faith...discuss with friends.
- Break bread with a Christian brother on a weekly or monthly basis.

Scriptures to read: Psalm 118:8; Proverbs 3:5; Luke 17:5-6; Romans 1:17; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1-2; Ps. 42:5; Isaiah 40:27-29; Matt. 17:20; John 20:25-27

Quote: Ney Bailey, Author, "Faith Is Not A Feeling" (2002)

"I have made a lifetime commitment to bank my life on the Word of God, and God has honored that commitment. And yet, there have been times when I could have easily gone back on my commitment because I couldn't believe that anything was truer than what I was going through—times when my feelings have screamed 180 degrees in the opposite direction of God's Word but over and over I have found God to be faithful to His word."

Bottom Line: In my men's prayer group I have had the pleasure of meeting a young man who has experienced the travails of life. He has opened his heart to our group and has talked about his personal and spiritual struggles. He has expressed that he does not want to "mess up" (his words) the blessings he has received. He is conscience of the fact that the Lord has sustained him today and forever...and he loves the Lord for His faithfulness. However, there are times when he questions if he is able to get through the circumstances of today and the weeks ahead. Two things my young friend has taught me....the importance of faith and the tenderness of his heart seeking hope as we all do...*"And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."* (NIV) Romans 5:5

NOW.....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler,

Your bro, Ray