

10. Rejoice in the Lord Always

Faith has always led its possessor to keep the commandments of God; and it has inspired human beings with a calm and rational fearlessness of death, whether it came to them in the form of the sword or the cross.

We are to be controlled by faith and not by feelings. We should go in direct opposition to our feelings when they go contrary to the Word of God. This is denying ourselves and this is exactly what Jesus has asked us to do; this is crucifying the old man and crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires.

The possessor of faith is often called to pass through many dark hours, many trials, and inward sorrow and anguish. This lesson will open to us how to carry the cross by faith, feeling or no feeling.

1. How do we walk with the cross?

2 Corinthians 5:7

Note: Faith and feeling are as far apart as the east is from the west. Faith does not depend on feelings.

2. What restricts our walk with the cross?

2 Corinthians 6:12

Note: The bowels or affections come from the Greek word *splanchnon* which means seat of the emotions. Our temptations, our ideas, our feelings, must all be laid at the foot of the cross. Then the soul is ready to listen to words of divine instruction.

3. What must be done with our own affections and desires?

Galatians 5:24

Note: Human nature is always struggling for expression. If we are to be made complete in Christ, we must be emptied of pride and selfishness. Then there is silence in the soul, and God's voice can be heard. But until self is crucified at the cross we can not reach God's ideal for us.

4. What did Christ overcome for us in the garden of Gethsemane?

Matthew 26:38-39

Note: Christ was feeling how terrible the wrath of God is against transgression, when He exclaimed, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death." He was feeling the offensive character of the sin that He must bear. Although the terrible feeling of condemnation loomed over Christ, He clung to His Father in prayer saying "Nevertheless not as I will but Your will be done." See also Luke 22:44-45

5. What protects us from our old desires and emotions?

Ephesians 6:14

Note: Those who are always verbalizing their doubts and demanding additional evidence to get rid of their unbelief are not building on the Word of God. Their faith is based on their feelings and circumstances. There is only one power that can guard and keep us steadfast--the power of God.

6. What did Paul and Silas do when they were in physical pain?

Acts 16:25-31

Note: Faith and feeling are distinct, one not being dependent upon the other. Faith, relying upon the simple promise, takes God at his word, not because of any special feeling, but because the Lord has said it, and will fulfill His word.

7. What does Jesus tell us to rejoice in?

Luke 10:17-20

Note: We cannot mix faith and feeling together. Our feelings have nothing to do with faith. When by faith the blessing comes and you rejoice in the blessing, you are no longer walking by faith but by feeling.

8. What sanctifies the blessing?

Matthew 23:18-19

Note: The message of the cross is to be proclaimed with a loud voice through out the land. Every thread of selfishness is to be swept away by the cross. Let every altar be thrown down, except the one that sanctifies the gift and the giver--the cross of Calvary.

9. What must we not be moved away from?

Colossians 1:23

Note: It is not to be physically moved away from the 'hope of the gospel' that Paul is concerned with but rather having our emotions lead us away from principle and into unbelief.

10. What must be girded up?

1 Peter 1:13-14

Note: We must recognize how important it is to keep the mind from wandering to forbidden themes or from spending our energies on petty subjects. Those who want to have victory over temptation must guard the avenues to the mind; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon any subject that the Satan may suggest.

11. What is the result of setting our minds on earthly things?

Philippians 3:18-19

Note: All should guard the senses or Satan will gain the victory over them. Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs will not be heard; or, if heard, that they will not take effect upon the heart or change the life.

12. Where will the mind of the Christian be?

Colossians 3:2-3

Note: As we surrender our lives to Jesus and take up our cross we have signified that we "are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then you will also appear with Him in glory."

Many know so little of faith that when they have asked God for his help and blessing, they look to themselves to see if their prayer is answered; and if they have a happy feeling, they are satisfied. This is not faith, but unbelief. We should trust God, whether we experience any change of feeling or not. We cannot expect to be joyful and hopeful while we look to ourselves; for we must think of self as sinful. The majority of professed Christians are watching their feelings; but feeling is an unsafe guide, and those who depend upon it are in danger of being deceived. Satan can move upon our feelings, and he can so arrange surrounding circumstances as to make our feelings changeable.