

## LIVING BY FAITH

### Message 8

September 11, 2016

INTRO: Our study is on faith. Last week I mentioned four important aspects of the Christian faith. In the section of faith as a gift, I mentioned the prosperity Gospel. Afterward I felt I should add this so you get some understanding of the influence of the prosperity Gospel. In Brazil, a country of which 92% professed to be Catholic in 1970 it is expected that it will become mostly Evangelical by 2030. A recent CBC article says, As Catholicism loses ground to evangelical competition in its largest country, Brazil's economic malaise has given Christians here more reason to pray. Many downtrodden have sought spiritual answers to their earthly "health and wealth" afflictions. It goes on to say, The largest denomination, the Sao Paulo-based Assembleias de Deus (Assembly of God), boasts 22.5 million followers in Brazil.

The CBC article says, "Pondé, a University of Sao Paulo philosophy of religion professor, traces the rise of evangelical Protestantism in Brazil to the Catholic Church's cozy relationships with political parties in the '70s and sermons in Latin America that waxed too political. Political speeches were not what churchgoers sought when they were struggling with health problems or finances at home, Pondé says, and many were enticed by the Pentecostal promise of magical healing. 'This neo-Pentecostal movement is very emotional,' Pondé says. 'The belief is if you do what God wants, if you take the baptism and the holy spirit, you're going to get rich.' Cucato, a pastor there, and I quote, "asks attendees to envision a day when they won't have to choose between paying their electricity bills or their hydro bills and to dream of paying off their cars in cash."

Here is a picture of their church, called the temple of Solomon. It cost \$275 million dollars . The article went on to say, "The tithe is nothing new. But in Brazil's Pentecostal denominations, churchgoers are expected to donate 10 per cent of their earnings – not an insignificant amount in a country where, according to the government's statistics from 2010, 16.2 million people (8.5

per cent of the population) live on less than the equivalent of about \$28 Cdn a month."

The article further says, "Temple of Solomon attendees select roses to represent their struggles: A red rose denotes family and love life troubles, yellow for emotional problems, white for financial woes. When Cucato takes the stage, the crowd stands. Nearly all the roses in the room are yellow or white." So most of them have emotional or financial troubles.

I give that with regard to last week's message. The subject I want to deal with now is feelings, as related to faith. This is a very important subject, because here Satan deceives or defeats many believers. This is an area Satan can use to his advantage, because when it comes to feelings, we have entered an arena outside of the scientific, or that which is objective. Here we are now in the realm that is much more subjective. In this message I want to simply get us ready for the real message on feelings.

#### D. Feelings as related to Faith

##### 1. Preliminary matters

###### -Definition

Let us begin by going to Psalm 139. Verse 14 says, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well." We can study any of God's creatures and we will find ourselves in full agreement with the Psalmists conclusions. If we study only man's physiological makeup, that verse is very true. But even beyond that, if you study only man's skin, or his bones, or the blood or the hands or feet or the eyes, each one of those is fearfully and wonderfully made.

But man is not only physical. He is also spiritual, and the spiritual is also most amazing. And involved in both the physical and the spiritual part of man are the feelings. In the physical, we have a sense by which we feel. It is the sense of touch.

But there is another area we call feelings. Someone may make a suggestion and they might ask, "How do you feel about that?" And the response might be, "I feel that is a good suggestion", or "I don't feel good

about that." Now we are no longer talking about the sense of touch.

So there is the more objective sense of feelings which is the physical feelings, but there are the more subjective feelings. We might call these spiritual feelings. I will explain later. Now all five physical senses can set off both physical and spiritual feelings. For example, hearing songs can set all kinds of feelings in motion. Seeing things, smelling things etc.. All of these can set off all kinds of feelings. But not only can the five senses affect our feelings, but memories, dreams, visions, or imaginations can set off all kinds of feelings.

We must begin this study by defining what we are talking about when we speak of feelings. I have mentioned already that we are not talking about the physical sense of touch. When we touch something, if our sense of touch is in order, we feel that which we touch. When something touches us, all things being equal, then we feel it as well. Without this sense, many of us would die in a very short time.

But, the connection between what we are now dealing with in feelings and the sense of touch is so close that we use physical words to describe that which is not physical. So we say, "What he said touched me deeply." That is not physical touch. Or we might say, "I feel strongly that we should not do that." In this message, when I speak of feelings, I always mean the inner subjective feelings. When I don't I will refer to them as physical feelings.

I am working on a definition of feelings. At present I would suggest this: A feeling is the response of the brain to the data that enters our being through any of the senses. As I see it, the brain then sends its response to the mind which registers it in the body through the nervous system. We describe the feelings created, by words such as joy, happy, guilty, depressed, funny, excited etc.. etc.. The effects of those feelings may cause amusement, laughter, tightness in the chest, butterflies in the stomach, clenching of the teeth, a lump in the throat, tension

in the neck and shoulders, or any of many other such phenomenon.

For example, we were recently visiting in my home town, and while we were there a young man in his early 20's drowned. The dad was out hunting. They could not find the body of the drowned boy nor could they make contact with the hunting dad for a number of days. What kind of painful feelings must not that mother at home alone have felt? What feelings will the dad have experienced when he heard the news? You see, we call both the physical and the spiritual sensations, feelings. When we cut off a finger or lose a loved one, both feelings are described as painful.

-The brain

Now our feelings, physical and spiritual are information driven. Thus the brain plays a key role in our feelings. What happens in our brain and body can be studied with man's new technologies.

I studied an interesting article on the brain. Let me read a few headings from this article. One says, "Different Parts of Your Brain Are Responsible for Different Emotions." Another heading in the article said, "Brain Chemicals Dictate Your Mood." Another said, "Antidepressants work by adjusting the amount of neurotransmitters reabsorbed by neurons in your brain."

Let me quote from this last section: *Your [brain](#) is a complex network that processes vast quantities of information every second. Part of the brain's information-processing network includes neurons, or cells that transmit signals throughout the brain. Neurons send signals through neurotransmitters, which are chemicals some release and others receive. These chemicals essentially let the parts of the brain communicate with each other.*

*The three most commonly studied neurotransmitters are dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine. Dopamine is related to experiences of pleasure and the reward-learning process. In other words, when you do something good, you're rewarded with dopamine and gain a pleasurable, happy feeling. This teaches your brain*

to want to do it again and again. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter associated with memory and learning. Researchers believe it plays a part in the regeneration of brain cells, which has been linked to easing depression. An imbalance in serotonin levels results in an increase in anger, anxiety, depression and panic [source: [Nazario](#)]. Norepinephrine helps moderate your mood by controlling [stress and anxiety](#).

Abnormalities in how the brain receives and processes these chemicals can have a big effect on your emotions. For example, when you do something rewarding or pleasurable, the part of your brain that processes that information interacts with the chemical dopamine. If your brain can't receive dopamine normally, the result is that you feel less happy -- or even sad -- after what should have been a happy experience. Studies of people with [major depressive disorder](#) (MDD) have shown that they have fewer serotonin receptors in their brains [source: [National Institutes of Mental Health](#)]."

Then, under the heading, "Antidepressants and Your Brain" it says: Because neurotransmitters have such an impact on your emotions, tweaking the amounts of certain brain chemicals can help relieve symptoms of depression. That's how most antidepressants work -- they change how much of a certain brain chemical your brain gets. Some do this by reducing the reuptake (re-absorption into the neuron it was released from) of serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine or a combination of these chemicals, which raises their levels in your brain and improves your mood.

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/life/inside-the-mind/human-brain/5-ways-your-brain-influences-your-emotions.htm>]]]

The Alberta Mental Health Care Consumer's Network says, "Put simply, brain activity involves electrical charges that fire across the space between brain cells. This space is called a synapse. Brain cells have two main parts: the axon and the neuron. With the help of brain chemicals called neurotransmitters, the electrical charges move from one axon of the cell to the neuron of another. This is the neurological reaction of the brain to data received by the mind."

-The mind

So, let us go to another subject. The last article said, "This is the neurological reaction of the brain to data received by the mind." Now one of philosophies great difficulties is, just what is the mind? It is absolutely amazing what man has learned about the brain, but he can only philosophize about the mind. When you call something philosophical, you have used a term not clearly understood by most which in turn seeks to teach things it does not clearly understand either. It then usually gives its conclusions in such terminology that nobody dares argue with its conclusions. L.E. Maxwell called it foolosophy. I say philosophy is a very educated way of saying, "I don't know."

Well, Philosophy studies those subjects which cannot be studied in a laboratory. And philosophy has three theories regarding the mind. By the way, theories is all philosophy has of the mind. Theory one, the mind is something separate from the brain. In that case secular man does not know what it is. Theory two, the brain is the mind. In that case it is all material. Theory three, all is a matter of mind, and there is no other reality.

In this study on feelings it will be helpful to understand both the material and the immaterial parts of man. When it comes to the immaterial parts of man, the secular world can only philosophize. Let me show you why. (PP. 1). Here is the usual way Christians describe the make-up of man (Show). Here is the way I like to show the same concept (PP. 2).

So let me explain. Go to 1 Thessalonians 5 (read 23). There we have the spirit, soul and body mentioned. These are the three big possessions of every person. They are not the person. They are the possessions of the person. The real person is 'self'. The person is distinct and separate from every other person, so we call him or her an individual.

Now let me show you the problem why secular man cannot answer what such immaterial parts as the soul, the spirit, the mind and the self are (PP. 3). The body is

physical. The soul, the spirit, the mind and the self are all spiritual. These parts cannot be analyzed in a laboratory. So even omniscient Google cannot answer without philosophizing, what the mind, the soul, the spirit, and the self are. Only the body is that which we can study scientifically. All the other components are immaterial and outside of the realm of the microscope.

Now, in my understanding, the feelings ultimately are registered in the mind. And so we must answer what the mind is. I have told you this on numerous occasions that I can find no special word for the mind in either the Hebrew OT or the Greek NT. The NT has words for parts of the mind such as the *phreen* or the *nous*. But when the Bible speaks of the mind, it uses the word 'heart'. By doing so, it takes a bodily part which we can understand to teach us something in the immaterial realm. We will see more of this later.

-Explanations of the immaterial parts

Now let me give you some good news. These immaterial parts that all of mankind outside of biblical truth can only philosophize about are explained to us in Scripture. So let me explain those briefly as I see them. Before I do that, let me take you to a most fascinating verse. Turn to Hebrews 4 (read 12). Now let me read to you what this verse says literally, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and *to the division of spirit*, and *to the division of joints* and *to the division of marrow*, and is a discerner of the thoughts and *a discerner of the intents of the heart*."

-the soul

Now we need not study what the body is, so we begin with the soul. The soul, as I see it, is the immaterial interface between the body and the self. It takes the data which comes through the body, and sends it to the real person, the self. We will see more of this later. But the heart or the mind, and the parts of the mind such as data processor called the *phreen* in the NT and the storage part of the mind called the

nous and the memory called the *mneeme* are parts of the soul. So the Word of God not only knows what the soul and the spirit are but it can divide them into their parts.

- The heart

Now let me say something about the heart, and there is so much to say here. The heart is that which we call the mind. And the heart, which is the mind, is, according to Jeremiah 17:9, "... deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?" It desires bad information. It longs for it.

Brother Joe spoke of the ministry called "Caring For The Heart." Maybe a better ministry would be "Crucifying The Heart". I have not read anything in the Bible about caring for the heart. I have read about caring for souls. That is what Jesus does and what pastors are to do. 1 Peter 2:25 says, "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

-the self

Now let us consider briefly what the self is, at least as I understand it. The self is the real you. The self is not the body, the soul, or the spirit; nor is it all three of those together. It is the real person, the real you. That is what we mean by the pronoun *you* or *I* etc... We go to Genesis 1 (read 26-27). A big question theologians have discussed in all centuries is what is the image of God in man? If you look at the diagram, I believe it is the self. The self is the real person and the president of the entire being, and is that which is in the image of God.

As I see it, the self resides in the soul, and the soul resides in the body. We will see some of this



later. The self, though resident in the soul, is the president of the entire human being; body soul and spirit. So Paul prayed, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you (there is the person or the self) completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- The senses

We are now going to look briefly at the physical senses, since they are so important to feelings and we will see more of this later. Now we say that man has five senses, and sometimes we speak of a sixth sense. We will look at that later as well. So let us talk about the five senses of the body, which biblically are the senses of the soul. For the sake of time, let me give only one Scripture for evidence. Go to Luke 12 (read 16-20). You might read the account of the rich man and Lazarus and see what they did and said after they died and you will find that after death man still possesses his senses.

Now, what is a sense? A physical sense is the vehicle that lets in information from the physical world to the mind. The senses gather information from our physical surroundings and send that information to the self. These are the five senses we are familiar with. Sight lets in visual information. Hearing lets in many kinds of vibration information. Taste lets in flavor information, touch lets in information of things that contact the body. Smell lets in chemical information. The loss of any sense seriously handicaps us and can be dangerous to our life.

So let me give you an example. You are walking down a trail. Certain vibrations indicate that something cracked behind you. That is sound. You turn in time to see a bear come out of the bush at you. That is sight. That sets all kinds of neurons and synapses to work which, and according to scientists the information goes to one side of the brain, which in turn sends it to the other side for interpretation. It then goes to the mind. Now the self, which happens to be you, decides if it is wise to play dead or to run. You see,

the data flows in, a decision is made, and returns as an action (PP 5).

Let me make a brief application here. You have all heard the computer expression, "garbage in garbage out." I have warned of the internet. At your fingertips is information that you can choose to let in. And if you do it will produce garbage actions. All five senses can create tons of feelings, feelings which can easily lead one to hell. The kinds of feelings produced can be boiled down to two kinds; negative or positive; excitatory or inhibitory. Many bad things create excitatory feelings.

Now you, the real you, the self, makes the decision to let information in or keep it out. The self is responsible. We tend to want to blame our wife or our husband or our past or anybody but ourselves for the things we do. But the self is responsible. It is I or you who will stand in judgment for what we have done. And once we choose to let garbage in, it will do its work.

- The spirit of man

And now I ask, what of the spirit of man? I have said that it is only the one who studies the Bible that has insight into this realm. Now let me pause here to ask you, how can the Lord help us to understand the immaterial realm, since we cannot think in the immaterial? It is my conclusion that He does so by using things in the material that we do understand to show us how it works in the immaterial. For example, to call the mind the heart, helps us to understand the immaterial processes of the thoughts by the way the heart is the central part of our body in the flow of blood in our bodies. Let me give you evidence that by the heart, the Bible often means the mind. Go to Proverbs 23 (read 6-7). Thinking takes place in the heart. We know that does not refer to our physical heart.

Let me give you another example from Jeremiah 11:20 from the KJV which handles these concepts literally, "But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy

vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause." The Lord is the One who tries the reins and the heart. Then listen to Jeremiah 17:10, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

The reins are often connected to the heart in Scripture. What in the world are the reins? I had a French girl in Bible class years ago. When I was teaching through this I said, "I can't understand why the KJV calls this word reins." The Hebrew word means the kidneys. She said, "Oh, that's simple. It's the French word for kidneys." And so it is.

Now I ask you, what do the kidneys and the heart have in common? Well, they process blood. As the heart and kidneys process the ever moving blood, so the heart and kidneys process the ever moving thoughts. And what does our mind do? It processes thoughts. But the kidneys have a different function than the heart. They clean the blood. And God tries our thoughts to see how clean they are. Discernment and discarding bad stuff is the idea behind the reins or kidneys. That is what we need to do.

Let me give you another example that God uses the material to communicate the immaterial. I must read from the KJV again. Here is Philippians 1:8, "For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." Philippians 2:1, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies..." Colossians 3:12, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering..." Philemon 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. Philemon 1:12, "Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels..." Philemon 1:20, "Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord."

Modern translations do not translate literally, and therefore we lose some of these important connections.

But why the word bowels? You will find that the bowels in Scriptures used like this refer to the emotional part of man. And why does it use the bowels? Because this is where the emotions affect man, and why we get such things as ulcers.

Now let me make one more observation for the ministry called, "Caring For The Heart." Their ministry centers around caring for people's emotional hurts. But the Bible does not use the heart to speak of the emotions, like we do in English, it uses the bowels, and that for a very good reason.

-Understanding man's spiritual parts

So, we have looked at my suggestion that God uses physical, material things to communicate spiritual truths from the immaterial realm to us, let us now go to the illustration that I believe God used to show us how we, as human beings, work as a whole.

So let us now go to 2 Corinthians 5 (read 1-4). Now I ask you, what does the tabernacle in these verses picture? What is our earthly tent? Our body, of course. Now go to John 1:14 (read). Now notice it says the Word, which is Jesus, became flesh and He dwelt among us. The word 'dwelt' would literally read, *He tabernacle among us*. He became flesh in order that He might tabernacle among us.

Now I want to recommend to you that the OT tabernacle is God's OT illustration of the whole of man. So here is what I recommend. The tabernacle building itself is a picture of our body. Let me just mention that all of the tabernacle, the fence around it, the doors, the altars; all of these things picture spiritual truths. For example, there was only one entrance into the enclosure around the tabernacle. The colors on this one gate are all significant, but the one doorway shows us there is only one way to God, and God dwelt in the inmost part of the tabernacle, which was inside the enclosure.

Now it is interesting that the number five is stamped all around the tabernacle. Go to Exodus 26 where God instructed them on how to build the tabernacle (read 26-27). There you have the number five, signifying the

five senses on three sides of the tabernacle. Now look at verses 36-37 (read). There you have the fourth side, and it has a curtain, and five pillars. The only doorway in has five pillars, picturing the only five ways into the body.

Now all of this is physical, and we can understand it from a physical point of view. But I recommend now that the first room in the tabernacle, called the holy place, represents the soul; and our soul is to be a holy place. As I understand all this, the soul is the interface between our physical surroundings and the self. It can take in physical data and send it through the brain, then the mind, to the self, and the self decides what to do with the information.

Now then, we are ready to consider the spirit part of man. If the physical tabernacle structure pictures the body, and the first inner room the soul, by the same tokens, the final room pictures the spirit of man (PP. 6). You will see that the flow of information from the body goes to the self via the body. But there is a flow of information that goes to the self from the spirit.

Now let me redraw that diagram to fit the tabernacle (PP 6). Now you will note that the five senses of the body allow the entrance of information from the outside world to the self. We saw five avenues of information, which are the five senses.

I now recommend that we receive a lot of information from another place than through the body. Sometimes this is called a sixth sense. For example, we may be somewhere where we think we are all by ourselves. And then we begin to sense someone is watching us. We got no information through any of the five senses, but we sense this. And we look around to find that someone is actually watching us. We got that information through a sense, but it was not any one of the five senses.

Or we may have heard voices in our head, or we have heard of those who hear voices in their head. Where do they come from? Or someone may have what we call ESP. What is that? It is extra sensory perception. And what

is that? It is being able to take in information that does not come through the senses.

For example, clairvoyance. Clairvoyance is the supposed ability to perceive things or events either in the future or beyond normal sensory contact. Such things are usually referred to as the sixth sense. For example, you may have a friend who has gone missing. Clairvoyants will often be consulted and they may see in their mind where the person is.

Or we may do wrong, and we feel very badly about that. Where do those feelings come from? We want to answer these questions in the next message and then deal with the problem of feelings with relations to faith.

Well, I have given you all this information so that we can deal with feelings in the Christian life with deeper understanding in the next message.

CONCL: And so, in conclusion, in this message we considered the brain, the mind, the soul, the heart, the self, the senses, and the spirit of man. Then we looked at how the Bible helps us understand the immaterial parts of man, and it does so, using things from the material realm we can understand. Well, in the next message we want to look more particularly at the feelings because our feelings can greatly affect faith, which is our subject.