

# Bonus Lesson #1: Negative Emotions

Healing Streams Ministry, Savannah, GA. All scriptures are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

By now perhaps you are seeing that the negative emotions we live with on a daily basis are actually something that the Lord wants to help us live without! Not that we can keep them from ever showing up, but we can certainly learn how to show them the door. So let's pause in the teachings to explore the realm of emotions. **Your emotional state** holds the key to:

- Your enjoyment of daily life
- Your ability to enjoy the Lord
- Your ability to be guided by God
- Your physical health
- Your relationships with others
- Success in work; fruitfulness in ministry

**“Emotional Intelligence”** is the ability to understand one's own emotions and those of others and to act appropriately using these emotions. It includes the ability to exercise sovereignty over one's own emotional state, carrying every negative emotion (that seeks dominance) captive to Christ and being restored to confidence, trust and peace—His emotional life.

## Emotional ABC's:

- We are sovereigns over our own hearts.
- We can actually rule over our emotions, rather than be ruled by them.
- Left to itself your emotional state will tend to overrule your reason, will and desires.
- No one can put an emotion in you and keep it there.
- You alone get to decide what goes in, stays in and goes out.
- All negative emotions are lying to you.
- Even positive emotions will lie to you at times.
- All emotions tell us a lot about what we actually believe to be true.
- There is a thought/belief at the center of every emotion.
- Find out what it is telling you and deal with.
- Don't make other people to blame for what you are feeling or you will never get free.
- They don't hold the key to what is in you—you do!
- What you really believe and therefore what you feel is between you and God.
- God has made it that way so that no one can have power over your inner emotional state.
- No one, not even God, can change your emotions or your beliefs without your permission.
- Your will is free. You are free.

**Good news: you are sovereign over your emotions!** When it comes to your emotional state you are in charge. It may not feel that way at times, but no one else on the planet can force you to have a feeling or keep it in you if you don't want it. You get to choose what you are going to believe in mind and heart—and what you deeply believe ultimately determines what you will feel. Your present emotional reactions are the product of what your heart believes to be true—based on past experiences. These beliefs can be changed! You are actually created with an ability to rule over your emotions—but not as a tyrant. The victory is not won by force of will, but by learning to agree deep down with what you know to be true that God is showing you. As new beliefs become rooted in you, your emotions begin to change.



Ignoring negative emotions doesn't work. Be honest about what emotions you are really feeling. Take a good look at them. Don't try to push them down, deny them, or hide them. You are not responsible for what goes off inside of you (so don't bother denying your feelings or feeling guilty for having them), but you are responsible for what you do in response to the feeling that just showed up. Will you let it rule over you or will you carry it captive to Christ so that He and you can begin to rule over your feelings?



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In carrying your emotions to Christ, how quickly can an emotional state be shifted? In a heartbeat! How do you shift your emotional state? By getting your eyes back on something about the Lord that releases you and re-empowers you. Just image Jesus showing up RIGHT NOW. Would seeing His love for you shift your emotional state? Of course it would. Well... active faith enables us to see Him—and get the shift—whenever we exercise it.

**What good are negative emotions?** Your negative emotions will never help you to rightly understand other people, yourself, God or the world you live in. They are no good at telling us about what is really real or really true from God’s perspective—and His perspective is the only one that counts or that will be proven right in the end. Why keep holding on to an emotional life that will never be vindicated as truth? So what good are they?

Negative emotions are accurate indicators of our internal (usually hidden) belief system tucked away in the core of our hearts. This is often the unconverted part of us and it needs to hear and be taught to believe the gospel truths that we are beginning to believe (like trusting God, surrendering to God, forgiving others, accepting yourself, etc.). **It is not enough to believe these things only in your head.** Once your heart begins to believe them, your emotional response to people and situations will shift, but until then there will be a battle on the inside to believe truth. And that is because negative emotions lie against the truth.

**Negative emotions lie to us and misdirect us**—why would an emotion do that? From the perspective of spiritual warfare, the negative emotion is like a glove; the evil spirit is like an invisible hand manipulating the glove. Consider anger with God, hopelessness, fear, self-hatred, and anger with others as you study these four lies that negative emotions promote:

- 1) The negative emotion wants to convince you that it has a right to stay.
- 2) It wants to focus you on something or someone else as the problem for why you are stuck with that emotion. It never says: “I’m the problem. Just get rid of me!”
- 3) It wants to make you think it is up to you to do something about it. It pressures you to be your own savior. It never reminds you to cast that care on the Lord.
- 4) It wants to get others to agree with it—that it has a right to be in you and should be in you until that problem “out there” is fixed.

God has set this thing up so that no one and nothing on earth can control your emotional life but you! Whenever negative emotions or emotional pain come on you (apart from true grief):

- A. It is ALWAYS coming from the enemy’s sins against you—so learn to immediately recognize and get indignant at the enemy as the true source (not other people)! AND
- B. If it sticks to you (beyond a day) it is ALWAYS your sin—so learn to recognize your responsibility and carry that negative emotion to Christ to be set free as He shows you.
- C. If you are having a hard time getting free, then the snag is likely coming from deceptive programming the enemy has worked into your innermost beliefs—seek the Lord.

**Negative programming** comes out of past painful experiences of sins against us combined with our own wrong reactions based on false or ungodly beliefs from the fallen nature. These are the strongholds that we have built up over long periods of time and they still trap us at times in the mindset of the old nature. In the lessons to come we will be exploring the strongholds that negative emotions form upon our flesh and show the ways in God that these can be brought down. We really can be the head and not the tail.

**And the Lord shall make you the head, and not the tail; and you shall be above only, and you shall not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God... Deuteronomy 28:13 AMP**

