

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, September 18, 2011
Two Sides of the Coin

God created us with three dimensions to our life: body, soul, and spirit. Our spirit is our essence of life and the place where God resides in us. Our soul is comprised of our mind, will, and emotions. Our body is our physical being. We need all three to function the way we were intended to. For the sake of brevity I want to say that I believe we get tripped up all the time by our emotions. They run hot and cold and affect our actions. The body is tired and the emotions say, "I don't feel like going to church today." We can really run with this here. "I don't feel like I love my wife anymore." "I don't feel like anything good is going to happen in my life." But faith is not dependent on feelings. Faith looks beyond what is seen. **2 Corinthians 5:7 (NASB)** ⁷ *for we walk by faith, not by sight*— Faith also requires action. It is not just a passive belief. We believe God and therefore we **DO**. There are times we want God to do something for us because we are in need and cry out to him, yet don't see our part in the equation. In **2 Kings 4:1-7** There was a widow in desperate need who asked the prophet for help. He asked her what she had in her house. She said, "Nothing at all, except a little oil." He then told her to borrow as many jars as she could and pour the oil into them. Her obedience enabled her to experience a miracle of provision as she sold the oil, paid her debt, and lived on the rest. She had to trust the word of the Lord. God is working in your life, no matter how you feel. We act upon our faith in that presupposition and use what we have. When things look like they're going south, we trust in the one who says he will never leave us or forsake us. God is for us! Let's act like it. Let's silence whatever negative voices are clamoring for attention by declaring the promises of God. He says in **Isaiah 55:8-11 (NIV)** ⁸ ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.*** ⁹ ***"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*** ¹⁰ ***As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,*** ¹¹ ***so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.***

This brings up a very important point. We must know the promises of God in order to have faith in them. If all we have is the sum total of our experiences in life and do not have a knowledge of the Bible, then we can only draw upon that reserve. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that he needed to study. The writer to the Hebrews described the Word of God in **Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)** ¹² ***For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*** Notice that it helps clarify our thinking. Our feelings can be telling us one thing, but the Word of God gives us a fresh perspective. Things are not as they appear to be! The psalmist wrote in **Psalms 119:11 (NIV)** ¹¹ ***I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*** The prophet Isaiah revealed that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, and neither are our ways his ways. He goes on to say in **Isaiah 55:10-11 (NIV)** ¹⁰ ***As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,*** ¹¹ ***so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*** Jesus combated the devil with the Word. **Matthew 4:4 (NIV)** ⁴ ***Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"***

The two sides of the coin are God's part and our part. Both are essential. However, our part must be based upon the tried and true Word of God, not how we feel about it. We can get so deceived by our emotions and then find that the subsequent choices we make have consequences that we didn't count on. We will reap according to what we sow. Let's make good choices based upon what God says. God always wants to help us, but he wants to do it in a way that undergirds who he created us to be. **2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)** ³ ***His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.*** ⁴ ***Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.***