

Bellefield
Presbyterian
Church
4001 5th
Avenue
Pittsburgh,
PA 15213
412.687.3222

God's Most
Glorified in Us
When We're Most
Satisfied in Him

BELLEFIELD.
ORG

Dear Bellefield Friends,

We may come to a passage like today's and immediately say, "I don't have the capacity and never will have the freedom to express my love and longing and yearning with Christ's affections for my brothers and sisters in the family of God our Father. Even to think about such expressions makes me blush! I didn't grow up that way." Well, I'm not sure the apostle Paul did, either. But the point of God's holy Word is that it is given so we can grow, so we can change, so we can emulate, what's on its pages. And this passage today is chock full of the nuts of free and holy expressions of our feelings for one another. I might not be doing that as well as I could. I want to improve on this for God's glory. But I need help, don't you? And that's precisely why, among other reasons, that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior: He gives the Holy Spirit to empower us for that which we think we cannot do. I'm willing, how about you?

In His Love, to His glory,—Pastor Geoff

Take a look at 1-4 below. Please underline here which you'll do this week....

1. Join/commit to a small group to live this;
2. Pray for any EGRers, if I know any;
3. Mull over this passage til God grips me by it in the power of the Holy Spirit;
4. I'm doing well; but am going even to do better for the glory of Jesus Christ.

3a: God's Call to Commitments to "Feelings"

1] We cannot significantly "yearn" (v. 8) for someone we don't know closely. Merely worshipping God on Sunday mornings isn't going to cut it here. So, one most relevant practical consideration is: *If you are not already in a small group fellowship, will you get in one or give us your name to connect you into one?*

2] If you **are** in a small group and have someone there who is EGR (Extra Grace Required) will you commit the next week to praying for them and for your love to deepen for them? (v. 9)

3] If your heart has moved toward general coldness, devoid of "feelings" for your fellow believers, & maybe a bit of apathy has hit you, will you commit to mulling over these rich Biblical doctrines of mutuality & Christian togetherness?

4] If you're doing well with expressing holy feelings, will you continue? And up the ante a bit? Will you commit with our leaders to making Bellefield the most holy "feeling" expressing church in Pittsburgh? Authentic and genuine, of course, not phony—but solidly attractive and real for God's glory in Jesus Christ.

Bellefield Presbyterian Church

Sermon Helps

Worship God

9/14/08

Philippians 1:1-11

"Feelings"—Part 1 of *God Glorified in the Joys of Deep Relationships*

On the one hand, Mary Gordon writes of her grandmother, "My grandmother was easy to admire but difficult to love... she was not given to displays of tenderness." But on the other hand, Morris Albert back in the 70's writes this smash schmaltzy hit: *Feelings, nothing more than feelings,*

Trying to forget my feelings of love. Teardrops rolling down on my face, Trying to forget my feelings of love. Feelings, for all my life I'll feel it. I wish I've never met you, girl; Feelings, wo-o-o feelings, Wo-o-o, feel you again in my arms. Well, wo-o-o, so where are you on this "feeling" continuum today? You with grandma or with Morris? In between the 2?



Dive into holy feelings today.

Sermon Moves @ a Glance
♦ God is greatly glorified by holy feelings expressed to one another in Christ. So:

1. Paul's feelings & ours;
2. Paul's focused inspiration, and ours, too, that summon these feelings;
3. Practical steps to get there for God's greater glory.

Holy Spirit Inspired "Feelings"

As Christ's disciples called into godly, authentic and deep relationships, God's grace upon us gives us freedom both to pursue and express holy feel-

ings about one another in Jesus Christ. To express holy feelings brings both joy to us, v.4, as well as praise & glory to God, v.11.

1: Paul's Feelings & Ours

Philippians 1:4, 7, 8, 9 Some people wear their hearts on their sleeves. Some people are more reserved & quiet. We all have our tendencies. But the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on Paul to give us the Word of God shows divine favor on holy feelings felt, held and expressed. Paul speaks of his "joy" over them; about how "it is right for me to feel this

way about you"; that "I hold you in my heart"; & "I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus." Quite a list of "feelings" freely expressed here.



Take the jump into feelings.

"You won't feel this way about everybody in Jesus Christ, but you should at least feel this way about somebody in Jesus Christ."

1a: So What's Happening with Us Here?

Let the Word of God convict us, change us and transform our discipleship relationships. It's one thing for me to say "I know you." It's a whole other things for me to say, "I have joy over you, feel this way about you, hold you in my heart, and yearn for you with the affection of Christ Jesus." Are we there? If not, why not? Have we ever even said such a thing to somebody who wasn't our mom, dad, wife or husband? Why not? It's highly Biblical.

So if we're not there, how to get there?

Bellefield remains committed to glorifying God with our 5 stated Biblical core values. The fifth one of those is glorifying God through "fostering deep relationships." We're tired of the superficial, the inane and the shallow. We want to be real. Distance doesn't glorify Christ; connections do. **We understand that passionate beliefs eventuate in changed behaviors** . So what about these beliefs?



Take some swings at feeling

2: Paul's Focused Inspiration & Ours, Too

Philippians 1:5, 7, 9, 11 Four foci come to the fore. (*Foci* = plural of *focus*.) We could say that the intangible of holy feelings rises proportionately with convictions over holy doctrine. Paul focuses on the fact of their "partnership in the gospel" with him, v. 5. That's a doctrine. He knows they are "partakers of grace" with him, v. 7—a doctrine again. He opens himself to a deepening of

these feelings by prayer for them v. 9. Here the reference to "love and knowledge" shows the inseparability of biblical content to inform love. Love is not mere sentimentality: it is anchored in divine truth. He finalizes stimulation to godly feelings by his passion for the God's glory & praise (v. 11).



How about 8 Golds in feeling?

2a: Presuppositional Closeness in Christ

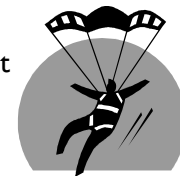
What a cherished heritage that bounders & borders our freedom to express our emotions in deep appreciation of one another. This letter launches itself in v. 1 with our being "servants of Christ Jesus" **together**. Not enough? How about that we're

saints **together** in Christ Jesus? Meaning not some Roman Catholic elitism, but rather the commonality of Christian brotherhood & sisterhood. Still not enough? How 'bout then that we're recipients of sovereign "grace & peace" from God, v.2?

"These solid theological foundations stated (my 2a) free us up from the fears of rejection, so that we can really go ahead and say out loud our holy feelings in Jesus Christ for each other.

3: Practical Steps to Get Us "Feelings"

Let us note something with gravity—so we give it full weight in our thinking about opportunities to glorify God in the expression of holy feelings: *this entire chapter, in every one of its uses of the pronoun you has that usage happening in the plural, not the singular. There is something fundamentally contradictory to living our Christian life disconnected and alone. Discipleship without relationships is no discipleship at all.* So again, what to do to glorify God here?



Let's aim to land biblically.