



# Wellbeing

*God's Plan For Your*

## Emotional Wellbeing

**Date:** Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January

**Speaker:** Becky Stamps

**Key Verses:** Matthew 26:36-46

### Talk Summary:

Jesus deals really well with this difficult emotional time. He has an 'inner circle' of close friends with whom he can be honest - he also honestly expresses his emotions and needs to God. He asks for the help and support he needs and chooses to take his emotions to God - he doesn't hold back, isn't embarrassed (in front of God or close friends).

His prayer is especially interesting: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as you will." God is a close, loving Father who cares about how you feel; at the same time, Jesus acknowledges (as we must) that what we want might not be his plan. Jesus brings his emotions to God but also allows himself to be calmed, changed and made courageous by God so that he can make the next right decision, rather than being completely swayed by his emotions.

There are (at least) two possible wrong ways of thinking about emotions in our culture: mistrusting or being afraid or embarrassed about them, and relying on them as guides to truth in and of themselves. Mistrusting or suppressing emotions can make it difficult for you to be honest about yourself, not listening to or reflecting on what's really going on inside you and around you, often leading you to make poor choices or to mental, emotional and physical problems. On a wider scale, such as in a work or education environment, it can create dishonest, negative and toxic environments. For Christians, it also makes it difficult to relate to an emotional God who wants to get close to you. Relying on emotions, however, can cause just as many problems. It's especially easy for charismatic (Holy Spirit-experiencing) Christians to imagine that their emotions are the right things to follow, that you should 'follow your feelings' or that if you're experiencing an emotional reaction to something (good or bad) then that must be the Holy Spirit, God speaking to you. This can make us easily swayed by feelings that

come and go, and may be affected by a whole host of different things (physical comfort/discomfort, human relationships, past experiences) and not God at all. The Holy Spirit isn't only in your emotions - reason, community wisdom, friends etc. Just because it feels good doesn't mean it's God, just because it feels bad doesn't mean it isn't. Jesus did not make his decision in Gethsemane based on how he felt!

Instead of with pitfall, we were encouraged this week to do the following when we feel strongly emotional about something:

1. Feel it. Allow yourself to be emotional, accept that's how you are right then. Suppressing, condemning, not helpful. Let God meet you where you are.
2. Express and reflect on it in a safe way. Journal, talk to others, listen to music that helps you feel/express, go on a walk and make a voice memo of your thoughts, create something... invite God in directly or indirectly. Not just 'deal with' e.g. mindfulness but also...
3. Walk through. If you need to, take steps to control so you don't outburst/hurt yourself or others. God keeps us safe & has good outcome. PROCESS - where is this coming from? Why? What truth does it point me to?
4. Take counsel. Bible, friends, God especially. But don't assume because you feel it, it's God, and don't assume, because you're emotional it's not God. Emotions are symptoms, not the problem in themselves (or the solution).
5. Stick with it. Keep pressing into your relationship with God, celebrate your wins, your growth,
6. Share it. Seek to create an emotionally healthy culture around you which will be a light in a dark place, for you and others. You can share and work through, so can they. You are Jesus' Kingdom come in a small and imperfect way, but come nonetheless. A you who is emotionally healthy, or growing in emotional wellbeing, is a living promise of a better world.

## Worship

*Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.*

*(Small group worship resources can be found at [bvc.so/sgworship](http://bvc.so/sgworship))*

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

*If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:*

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

## Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What from this week's talk/Bible passage stood out to you, and/or you found challenging? Why?
- Follow Jesus: What does this passage teach me about God?
- Live life to the full: What does this passage teach me about myself?
- Make a difference: What is God inviting you to do or change as a result of what we have discussed? (You can give everyone a minute or so in silence to write it down) Spend some time praying for one another.

## Witness

*We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus.*

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?