

God's Emotions

Commentary for June 1, 2010 — Does God Have Feelings?

Someone once said, "God gives us children so we can irritate them for decades. After they grow up, they get to irritate us for decades." That is the negative side of the love that we often show children. We never intend to irritate our parents or our children; it is something that comes along with being a child or a parent.

Imagine how much we irritate God our Father when we disobey Him and Christ our elder brother when we disobey our Father. We irritate them because we are hurting ourselves through our disobedience (sin) to God and injury (evil) to our fellow children of Adam. Remember, sin and evil are two different ways that we hurt ourselves. Sin is not evil and evil is not sin. Scripture differentiates "sin" from "evil," although most evil that people commit against other people is sin. Every human being is as much a child of God as you are His child.

God has feelings about His children, which is the subject of this month's article by Dr. Ernest L. Martin, "Does God Have Feelings?" Indeed He does. First read the "[June 2010 Newsletter](#)," which has very relevant information on this topic, and then dive into Dr. Martin's highly enlightening article.

Parents' Thoughts

We all tend to forget in our roles, first as children and then as parents, how much time and effort parents spend thinking and caring for the needs of their children. Of course, I am thinking about loving parents. Even today my wife and I spend a great deal of time alone and together thinking about our two daughters even though they are grown and successful. We not only think about them, but we talk about them often during the day. And yes, sometimes we worry (less and less as time goes on), but we examine, think about, analyze details of their lives, both reflecting on their time growing up and now as adults. This is a normal part of love.

None of us were aware and therefore we do not think much about how our parents fussed about us when we were infants, cared for our every need, worried about our every snuffle, and suffered when we were in pain or injured ourselves severely.

Any parent who ever had a young child of theirs die, a hole remains in their heart. Indeed, it would not be unusual for such people to secretly resent God for allowing that tragedy to occur. Such are real human feelings, true human emotions.

God the Father and Christ think the same toward you, the same as parents everywhere think and feel about their own children. In spite of what most people think, God the father is very compassionate, and compassion is a very real and powerful feeling. The apostle James stated that God has this emotion:

"Lo! we are counting those happy who endure. You hear of the endurance of Job, and you perceived the consummation of the Lord, for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord."

• James 5:11 Concordant Version

In Ephesians 2:4–7 the apostle Paul tells us that God shows (1) His mercy, (2) "**His great love,**" (3) His grace, and (4) His "**kindness toward us,**" all coming "**through Christ Jesus.**"

Each is the result of a strong emotion. If God was impersonal and had no emotion or feelings, then these words of Paul would be lies.

But as the apostles and all of the Old Testament tell us, God does have emotions. He does have feelings. His feelings are not just expressed as anger about the sins we commit against His righteous laws. His feelings are also expressions of love toward us. Yet He reserves the right to have compassion and mercy on whom He chooses and when He chooses (Romans 9:15, 18). Eventually our Father shall show mercy to everyone:

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as you in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.”

• *Romans 11:29–32*

What is the ultimate way God showed His feelings and His love toward us? God shows His love to us in the actions of His only-begotten Son, through Christ’s death for you and for me. God’s reconciliation with us is important to Him. It is a highly emotional thing for God:

“But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

• *Romans 5:8–10*

How much does God love the world? He loves it so much that He gave His only-begotten Son to be judged, die, and be resurrected from the dead for you and for me, so that all in the world shall all ultimately be saved (John 3:16–17). Christ performed this action as an act of love on His part (Ephesians 5:2). God’s emotion comes through to us:

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. ...

And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. Herein is [here is the reason:] our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.”

• *1 John 4:10–11, 16–17*

Nothing shall ever separate us from the deeply emotional love that God our Father has for us (Romans 8:35–39). The concern that Jesus had for the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem is shown in Matthew 23:37 and Luke 13:34. His emotional expressions of a caring elder brother mirror God the Father’s feelings.

God does not have children so He can irritate us. Similarly, nothing we do irritates God once we are reconciled to Him through Christ. Our relationship with God our Father and Christ Jesus our elder brother will not have any irritation from either us or them — ever — once we are resurrected to be with Christ, are part of Him, and seated with Him at the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 1:20, 2:6 and Colossians 3:1). As firstfruits with Him we will be an additional example of our Father’s love, as Christ is an example to us now. There shall be no negative aspect of our love of them or their love of us. Love is a chief attribute of God. Yes, God has deep feelings.

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