

Being Honest With God About My Feelings A Bible Study On Psalm 13

3rd Step - Lesson 2

A lot of families operate by these unwritten rules: “Don’t talk. Don’t think. Don’t feel.” Children growing up in these families get punished for expressing any anger, or ridiculed for showing sadness or fear. All the members of these families learn at a young age that they’d better not even think about telling anyone outside the family about Mom’s drinking, or Dad’s sexual abuse.

The result is that these children grow up pretending they have no feelings, pretending that nothing’s wrong, and believing that even if something were wrong there’d be no need to talk about it; they should just handle it all themselves.

That’s tragic. And the tragedy is even worse when these children are told that God operates by the same rules, that you dare never question God, that you should always be in a positive frame of mind and sound properly religious when you’re in the presence of God.

The real God, the God of the Bible, isn’t afraid of honesty. In fact, he longs to hear his children express their real feelings to him, no matter how unpleasant those feelings might be. And he promises to meet people right where they’re at, without waiting for them to start thinking straight or living right.

THOUGHT QUESTION:

- Have you ever had a person in your life who would listen to you no matter what you needed to talk about, without rejecting you or judging you? What did that feel like?
- How would it feel to really believe that God listened to you that same way?

PSALM 13

1 [For the director of music. A psalm of David.]

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? 3 Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death; 4 my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. 6 I will sing to the LORD, for he has been good to me.

DISCUSSION:

1. Look at verses 1 and 2. David had been through some real pain and horror; what questions did he have for God about his experience?
2. Have you gone through painful times when it felt as if God had failed you or abandoned you?
3. Instead of punishing David for questioning him, God put David's complaint into the Bible! What does that tell you about how God feels about people being honest with him about their doubts and anger?
4. 1 John 1:7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." What does that tell you about not being afraid to "walk in the light" of being honest with God?
5. In verses 5 and 6 of Psalm 13 David expresses praise and confidence in God, right after he got done expressing his doubts to God. Do you find yourself feeling that same way: "I really do believe in Jesus and trust him, but at the same time I have questions and doubts about him"?

What does Psalm 13 tell you about having doubt and belief at the same time?

How does it change your attitude toward God, to realize that you can express your doubts to him without fear of him judging you or rejecting you?

CLOSING PRAYER: What do you want to say to the God who accepts you completely, along with your doubts and confusion?