



**Big Idea:** Your emotion can be an indicator or an editor.

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:26a NLT, John 11:32-33 NLT, Ephesians 4:26 NIV, Psalm 34:18 NLT, Isaiah 41:10 NLT, Matthew 8:23-27 NLT

## INTRO

[Talk about a time when you experienced an emotion and either ignored it, distracted yourself with something else, or created an entirely alternate narrative to cope. My story follows as an example.]

My mom was pretty awesome. She worked at my high school, and all my friends loved her. In fact, even students that I didn't know loved her. She impacted everyone she encountered because of how kind and loving she was. When she was diagnosed with breast cancer, it rocked my world. Then cancer spread to her bones, and she eventually lost her life to it. However, as devastated as I felt, I watched my dad crumble as he lost the love of his life. I saw my little sisters crumble from the loss of their mom. Something inside me decided that I had to be the strong one. So, when anyone asked me how I was I would tell them, "I'm good. She's at home with Jesus. I'm good." It was a lie. I didn't intend to lie, and I didn't even realize I was lying. I truly thought I was good. Fast forward two weeks after my mom's death, and I woke up with a migraine, a stomachache and I could barely walk. After throwing up, I think I cried for almost four hours straight. I had lost my mom, and I was not okay.

## TENSION

I'm not sure why I tend to ignore my feelings.

I'm not alone though. Author Mike Foster says there are three unhealthy ways to deal with your pain and emotions. You can medicate, amputate, or fabricate. Medicating is when you turn to anything (legal or illegal substances, food, work, video games, social media) to distract you from what you're really feeling. Amputating is simply ignoring what you are feeling and pretending that it doesn't exist. Fabricating is when you create a narrative in your mind to tell yourself something different than what is going on, so you don't have to deal with reality.

So often so many of us just try to get over things. We try to “fix our feelings” or pretend like everything is okay rather than stopping and feeling what we are feeling.

Here’s the thing, though: our feelings are not evil things that need to be fixed or stopped. They were meant to be felt, and when we’re preoccupied with trying to fix them, we can’t feel them.

## TRUTH

And it gets complicated, because people around you praise you when you control your emotions, and you look healthy. We think we’re in control, and we have it together, but the truth is we are missing out on the gifts of God that are meant to keep us in relationship with Him. When we just cope, we drift from deep and meaningful relationships with both God and others.

In Genesis 1:26 it says

*Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us.”  
Genesis 1:26a NLT*

God created each one of us in His image and likeness, and God feels emotion. All throughout the Bible, we can read about His emotions from compassion to anger to jealousy to rejoicing and other feelings in between. If God feels emotions and created us with them, they must be good gifts.

If you turn to John 11, you’ll see that Lazarus, a good friend of Jesus, passed away, and Jesus went to visit Lazarus’ sisters who were also good friends. I want to read you a couple of verses about what happened when Jesus arrived and met the sisters.

*When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. John 11:32-33 NLT*

I don't know if you've ever lost someone close to you, but it hurts. Jesus met Martha and Mary where in their point of pain and empathized with them. In verse 35, it even tells us that He wept with them. Weeping is different than just crying. It's the kind of ugly snot filled cry someone has when there's deep pain.

Spoiler alert: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and He knew He was going to do that when He got to the house of the sisters, Mary and Martha. However, before He did that, He chose to stop and not only feel the feelings with Mary and Martha, but to feel His own feelings. He was more than empathetic, He felt sorrow for His own loss. He acknowledged His pain and their pain and wept with them. He didn't go beyond what they were feeling. He also didn't correct them for the feelings they had. He comforted them.

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus can be found asking people questions. He often got people to name what was true about the deepest part of their souls. Some examples of this are when He met the Samaritan woman at the well. She was so guilty and ashamed that she went for water at the hottest time of day when no one else was around. Jesus met her in her brokenness and asked her what she wanted. Then, there was Peter who lost his footing and started to sink because he was afraid of the waves in the sea as He was walking on the water with Jesus. Jesus saved Him from drowning, and asked Peter why he doubted. Jesus asked people questions like, "What do you want?" or "What are you afraid of?" or "Why did you doubt?" He knew that people must learn to name their pain and share it in order to heal from it.

Feelings in and of themselves are not bad. It's what we do with them that can cause problems.

Paul said this to the Ephesians,

***"In your anger do not sin" Ephesians 4:26 NIV***

The emotion of anger is not a sin. We are told to be angry and not sin, because the emotion of anger is different than sinfully lashing out in anger. Emotions are divinely built into us on purpose and for a purpose.



**Big Idea:** Don't let your emotions overtake you.

**Scripture:** Isaiah 48:10 NLT, Romans 12:2 NLT, I Samuel 17:32-40 NLT, Joshua 3&4, Revelation 12:11a NLT

1. How are you feeling today? [See if they can use a word other than fine or good like we learned last week in the feelings wheel.]
2. How does it make you feel to know that God understands our emotions?
3. Can you share a time in your life when God showed up and helped you through?
4. What is a “Goliath” situation you are going through right now? How does it make you feel?
5. What are some ways we can focus on God rather than our emotions when we're in a “Goliath” situation?
5. What is one thing you can do this week to make sure we are led by God when we have big emotions rather than letting our emotions lead us?

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