

LifeGroup Study Guide
Week of 13 January 2019

1. When you think about your life these days, what are the things that stir up the greatest amount of *feeling* within you? Politics, a relationship, ideas, sports, something else? Are the feelings that arise more positive or negative? Where do you think that these feelings come from? Why do you think that some things in life have the ability to make us feel both very good or very bad?

2. How would you describe the feelings that you feel as you go through your own *spiritual* life? Do you find that there are both positive and negative feelings in this part of life as well? Why do you think that is? Why do you think God has created a world where spiritual feelings exist like that?

3. Read Luke 10:21, Matthew 9:36, and John 11:5, and John 33-36 (and the surrounding context). What were some of the feelings that Jesus experienced in his own life? When we consider that Jesus experienced both positive and negative feelings, and with great intensity and over a wide range, how does that shape the way that we understand our own feelings and what God created them to be?

4. In John 10:1-6, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, talks about the way that *his* sheep hear and recognise his voice. Do you think that this passage has something to teach us about our emotions? What is the method – or the practice – by which we can recognise which of our emotions are from God, and which are not? What are the practical ways that we can improve at that kind of discernment? Compare James 1:13-15.

5. Read down further in John 10:27-30. How does Jesus describe the connection between actively experiencing him (hearing his voice) and eternal life? How do our emotions fit in here? Why are our spiritual feelings (including both positive and negative ones) important in our Christian life? Compare 2 Corinthians 7:10 and Hebrews 10:23-25.

6. When we are looking for something to create a positive feeling within us (to cheer us up, or to bring us closer to someone else in friendship) we often have good ideas about where to start. What about in our Spiritual life? Do you think that there are things that we can do to make ourselves open to the good spiritual feeling that closeness with God brings? What are some good ideas about places to start? How would you feel about putting a couple of those ideas into practice this week?