

The **GIFT** *of*
FEELING



The **GIFT** *of*
FEELING

By
Lee Bee Teik

A Reconre Publication



Title: The Gift of Feeling
Author: Lee Bee Teik © 2004

Publisher: Reconre Sdn Bhd
(392098-D)
P.O.Box 91
70710 Seremban
Negeri Sembilan
Malaysia



1st printing 2004
2nd printing 2005

<http://www.reconre.org>

Design: Cornerstone Corporation Sdn Bhd
(455936-X)
27 SS20/14 Damansara Utama,
47400 PJ, MALAYSIA
Tel: 603-7726 6335
Fax: 603-7728 5335
www.cornerstone-msc.com
inquiry@cornerstone-msc.com

Printer: Akitiara Corporation Sdn Bhd
(390199-U)
1 & 3, Jalan TPP 1/3,
Taman Industri Puchong,
Batu 12, 47100 Puchong,
Selangor Darul Ehsan, MALAYSIA
Tel: 603-8061 9988
Fax: 603-8061 9933
www.akitiara.com
akitiara@po.jaring.my

No part of this booklet may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the author except in the case of brief quotations embodied in articles and reviews.

Booklets in this series:

- The Gift of Feeling
- Your Soul Print and You
- Understanding Burnout
- Understanding and Managing Stress
- Understanding the 8 Stages of Human Life
- Understanding Nervous Breakdown
- Mind Your Language - Everyday Uses & Misuses
- Lay Marital Counselling
- Tips on Family and Marriage

- A letter to youths (parents may peep if they wish)
- Understanding Adolescents
- Understanding Human Sexuality, BGR Issues and Sexual Trauma - why hurt so much and so long
- Understanding 21st Century Singles
 - Its Implications and Our Responses
- Freedom & Morality
 - Privileges and Responsibilities
- Guidance for Knowing & Doing God's Will
 - Careers and vocations
 - what's the difference?
- Understanding Addictions to work, alcohol, sexual habits & PEOPLE!
- Global Kids
- The Forgotten Teenagers - Christian Kids

Ordering more copies and further information:

Online Orders:

<http://www.ReconRe.org>

<http://www.Cornerstone.com.my/reconre>

Postal Order:

Cornerstone Corporation Sdn Bhd
27 SS20/14 Damansara Utama,
47400 PJ, MALAYSIA
Tel: 603-7726 6335
Fax: 603-7728 5335

The Gift of Feeling

Dear Readers Why Talk About Feelings?

You may be a teenager or an adult, according to the age classification of a person's stage in life. But there do not seem to be *stereotyped individuals*, only stereotyped groups of people. However, one thing we know ... each of us has the God given capacity to "*feel*" and to "*think*". It does not matter whether our classically assessed I.Q. is 50 or 150, we all know what it means to make a decision and act upon it, as well as what it is to feel down or up, wild or calm. However, though the world and church often respect the thinking ability of a person, they have often ignored the feeling ability of that same person. Therefore, many people suffer because their emotional inner selves remain hidden, unexpressed, repressed or suppressed. Is it a surprise then that, being out of practice in handling this special gift of feeling, many of us have neglected it so much and for so long that we do not know what to do when this gift of feeling cries out for attention. Result?

The world and church, through the ages but especially in our highly populated earth today, continue to turn and live with an increasing number of the seriously walking wounded on board them.

In my encounter with people in need over the last thirty years, it has gradually dawned on me that many relational conflicts arise out of the lack of appreciation of the feelings of the person(s) with whom we are in conflict. Yes, other factors are involved, no less the sin factor. But many wounds may be prevented from festering if we know where the other person may be coming from as a fellow human being; not just as a child, a parent, a spouse, a teacher, a pastor, a church member, a relative or a co-worker in God's huge family in Jesus Christ. For this knowledge about others and ourselves, we need to look at God in whose image we have been created.

**God once spoke to His children
through Isaiah:**

*“For a brief moment I **abandoned** you, but with
deep compassion I will bring you back.
In a **surge of anger**, I hid my face from you for
a moment, but with **everlasting kindness**
I will have **compassion** on you,’
says the Lord your Redeemer.*

*‘ To Me this is like the days of Noah,
when I swore that the waters of Noah
would never again cover the earth.
So now I have sworn **not to be angry** with you,
never to rebuke you again.
Though the mountains be shaken and
the hills be removed,
yet My **unfailing love** for you will not be shaken
nor My **covenant of peace** be removed,’
Says the Lord, who has **compassion** on you.”*

Isaiah 54:7-10

Does God have emotions?

Of course, He has! The above words in bold are loaded with feelings that reveal to us God's heart of love and kind discipline. He can be angry and compassionate. He knows what it means to be abandoned by His people and what it means to abandon them. Feeling is part of God's personality.

Definition

I gather that we believe that we know all about feelings as we all have them. However, we often forget to discover what we are born with until, perhaps, when we complain about someone's lack of consideration for someone's feelings. For example, we may blurt out:

*“Terrible guy... has no feelings at all!
How could he suddenly leave
the poor girl in a lurch
after having promised to marry her!”*

It is generally accepted that the capacity to feel is the ability to receive some sort of stimulus e.g. when my finger is pricked by a thorn, I feel pain at the spot; when someone scolds me publicly, I feel embarrassed. We accept that to be able to receive and be aware of an external stimulus is an essential ingredient that our Creator God has bestowed upon mankind. Often, it is to signal some danger that could be avoided

or lessened e.g. when my hand accidentally touches a hot iron, I pull my hurting hand away from it. If I am unable to feel the pain of high heat, my skin may be badly damaged. This is what befalls many patients afflicted with leprosy if left untreated until a late stage of the disease.

However, having assumed the ownership of this ability to feel, we often forget that, just like many other good things God has graciously given us, it comes to different people in unique shapes and sizes. This forgetfulness may cause unnecessary relational problems if we expect everyone to have the same variety of emotion ... to use them in the same manner.

Further, when we focus on this capacity to feel as a gift, what are we trying to get across? Why not call it one of the many mysterious gifts showered upon us without our asking for it?

I hope that this little discussion on “*the gift of feeling*” (the phrase being borrowed from Dr. Paul Tournier’s title of his book “*The Gift of Feeling*”) will encourage many to use this specific gift with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. Then we and others we serve will blossom more fully as fellow humans created for the glory of the deeply emotional Father of all mankind.

What is the Gift of Feeling?

Firstly

The gift of feeling is the gift of *concern for the person, of tenderness, of compassion and of relationship*. It speaks of the call to identify with others in their joy or sorrow, in their weakness or strength. Though it is not unreasonable, sometimes, it functions at the mysterious and seemingly irrational level.¹

For example, a father will naturally feel more for one of his children who is more like him in personality. Hence, when this particular child offends him, he is more likely to be less angry with him than with another child. This may happen repeatedly even if, in his mind, he knows he cannot show favouritism for or prejudice against any of his children.

In contrast,

*The gift of thinking is the gift of concern for objects, truth cold facts and products, a concern for that which may be impersonal.*²

Secondly

Feeling is that part of us which *we cannot change at will but which we can control, by God's enabling.*

This understanding of our human capacity to feel is specially needed when, after we have forgiven someone for hurting us, we still have bad feelings surfacing towards him/her. In such situations, we are called to control our feelings till God has changed them to good ones and in His time. Meanwhile, we continue to pray for the good of the aggressor and do good to him/her whenever opportunity arises. One day, we will be surprised to discover that we no longer react to him/her in the same negative manner any longer!³

Four Reasons WHY We Need To Seriously Consider God's Gift of Feeling

Firstly

We need to think about our ability to feel because our church, nation and world are moving forward in time into **the impersonal technological age** of the multimedia-super-corridor where position, brains, prestige, looks and money come before the needs of the person. Already, young people today, especially urban kids, do not think very much of adults who do not use the computer language like they do. We wonder what the next generation will be like when these become the leaders in churches and society. Will they have any of what Shakespeare called "*the milk of human kindness*" left? For us in Malaysia, with the rapid pace of technological advancement, do you think that we will not fall into the same trap as the developed nations, inside or outside the church?

In our schools, English literature, a subject that encourages the student to think and feel with the characters in the stories under study, has been hardly taught for over two decades.

Many English language teachers do not know how to teach literature as a subject. The students who long to take literature, as a subject for Form 5, are often disappointed; they are not allowed to do so without a teacher to supervise them. But in smaller towns, it is near impossible to find even one teacher willing and able to do so. Thirty years ago, most students in Form 5 would take it as an option. Many thoroughly enjoyed the tragedies and humour portrayed by those characters. The indirect call to think and feel with others has been soaked within our souls through teachers who excelled in helping us interpret the words and behaviour of the characters in the stories.

Further, it has been observed that the time taken for the change from the agricultural to the technological era in the developed western countries was in terms of centuries but the time to be taken by Malaysia to become developed seems to be only a few decades. Hence, there is a real need to balance the strong emphasis on the twin intellectual-technological growth of our young people with the emphasis for personal emotional growth as well. Let us make this a triplet growth instead ... intellectual-technological-emotional. We cannot run away from the fact that people have the faculty to feel.

Nevertheless, we must add that, in our nation, due to our history, the early awareness of increasing crime rate as well as learning from the social history of the more developed nations, we are urgently encouraging one another to help our neighbours as ourselves in various ways. Hindsight, together with foresight, is valuable indeed. Compassion, related to the gift of feeling, is also constantly fanned through the portrayal of a morally decaying society through media coverage. However, we do not want to discuss the *gift of feeling* only from a degenerative viewpoint. We need to view it from the positive angle of teaching ourselves to use it constructively for the long term good of individuals in our community.

How?

For a long time now, the world at large cares little for committed friendly relationships. Relationships are often used to get power, pleasure, prestige, comfort or money. Not many people accept people, listen and talk to them just for themselves. Yet, ironically, it is relationships that last, not earthly pleasures, status, power or money. However, when the care of another person is sacrificial and real, God's presence is there because He is the personal Triune God of Community seen in the face of the historical Jesus of Nazareth (*Matthew 25:31-46*).

Currently, in Malaysia, professionals in the field of child psychology are calling for the assessment of children's emotional quotient (EQ), not just their intelligence quotient (IQ). This may be a step in the right direction for the recognition of the value of persons ... to direct our attention to a child's emotional needs and abilities rather than merely to his/her intellectual abilities.

Case History

Mr. and Mrs. Y are nominal Christians who live in Malaysia. While the wife accused the husband of infidelity, the husband expressed that all she wanted was pleasure and material comfort. There was no willingness to accept the facts of their individual brokenness and work on themselves first. Hence, after an initial breakthrough in their marriage, after a few months, both were back to square one in their torn and tattered marriage relationship. While one continued in his infidelity, the other went online to start looking out for a sexual relationship with someone of the same gender in Singapore. Compassion for each other seemed to have died. Both openly denied the role that God could play in their personal and married life, thus depriving themselves of the very source of the grace of forgiveness and reconciliation. The initial raised hope of parental

reconciliation was dashed for their two deeply grieving wounded teenagers, forgotten in the midst of adult failure to nurture their tender emotions.



Secondly

We need to talk about the gift of feeling because this gift has been *universally misunderstood*, especially by men, and *rarely assessed positively* by both men and women. Consequently, feeling, as a part of our humanity, is usually *under-appreciated* by those who have a lesser share of it and is consequently, at some time in life, *misused* by all when it finds its uncontrolled release from within their souls. It is often classified as a weak point, rather than as a strong point, in assessing someone for a prominent position in the commercial or educational world.

However, we must be careful in alluding to such classifications because the true strength of one's feeling is in its gentleness and tenderness in encouraging others, not in relation to wishy-washy thinking as a contrast. Wishy-washy thinking is a weakness that can result from a misuse of our gift of thinking; it is definitely NOT a strength of feeling! If we watch our Master Jesus

and listen to His words as in the beatitudes of Matthew chapter 5, we will see that gentleness, effectively used, is a source of strength and not of weakness ... *"the meek (gentle) will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5).*

Therefore, it is my aim in this booklet to highlight our gift of feeling with the hope of it's taking the right place in our personal and community life.

Feeling may be Controlled but Not Changed at Will

In 1989, while I was grieving for my father who had just died in China, I walked into a church service where the worship leader was urging the congregation to clap and rejoice. As soon as I heard that, my heart could not take it any more; I had to leave the hall, sit outside, and cry. *In my mind, I knew that their rejoicing was right and had nothing to do with my grief. Yet, I could not change my mood or feeling at will to fit into the general atmosphere of joy.* Thankfully, I could control my sorrow long enough to get out and burst into tears.

Scriptures abound with verses calling, directly or indirectly, for the control of our feelings which are often expressed through our speech.

Example

The writer of Proverbs 15:1 observed,

*“A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger”*



Thirdly

We need to bring this gift of feeling out into the open because *it is significantly different from the gift of thinking* in almost as much as many women are different from many men. This does not mean that women don't think or men don't feel. This is because the Creator has endowed these two groups of people with various amounts of both gifts so that, as each uses his/her gifting faithfully, all may reflect His perfect humanity and give glory to Him for His wonderful creativity.⁴

However, in many men, feeling is a largely latent undiscovered, unexpressed and unused gift. Why? This is probably because the men's world at large commonly does not think very much of the gift of feeling except in a rather negative way.

Gifts from our Creator God are like little seedlings to be nurtured. They will grow if we use them responsibly; if not, they will become stunted. Those who have a taller seedling of thinking than feeling, for example, need not only pay attention to the thinking function, but also need to make extra effort to nurture and utilise the feeling seedling. Conversely, those with a taller seedling of feeling need to make extra effort to nurture their thinking function too. In this way, one day, both will be able to enjoy both types of mature seedlings as our character (defined as how we use our gifts) becomes perfect like Christ's ⁵.

Three Differences Between Men and Women

i. Statistics in the general population ⁶:

In the general population, 50% are more thinking, while 50%, more feeling. But among men, 60% are more thinking than feeling while among women, 60% more feeling than thinking.

ii. On the whole⁷, a Man is

- ♂ More objective
- ♂ More thinking
- ♂ More leading
- ♂ More task orientated

while a Woman is

- ♀ More subjective
- ♀ More feeling
- ♀ More supportive
- ♀ More person or relationship orientated

iii. Many men are unable or do not want to show their true feelings.

Even if they do, it is more often when they are angry than when they are gentle. Others do not recognise their deeper emotions because they have been suppressed for so long. No wonder that many cannot give their real selves back to God ... because they do not know who their hidden selves really are deep inside. They are sometimes described as the “*frozen chosen*”.

Practical Consequences from the Misunderstanding of Such Gender Differences

Men's Distorted Views of "Feeling" Men

In most cultures, men run homes and society and hence have the authority to make decisions in the way they know best i.e. through the use of their thinking capacity. Men who are more feeling are sometimes looked down on by their own gender, given less prestigious jobs and kept at that level unless they fight back or ask for a change. However, Asian men seem to have retained more of the gift of feeling rather than repress it. It took a former Australian classmate's question to alert me to this fact. He asked, "*Bee, why do Chinese male film stars cry so much?*" Though at that time I felt embarrassed on behalf of my fellow Asians, I now see it as our redemption. That was over 20 years ago ... by now, we can see that the James Bond's macho image has already influenced us backwards in our emotional growth as persons.

Distorted Views of Women in Work Places

Further, the late Paul Tournier (a Christian European doctor-counsellor) observed that though men give women a chance to speak up now and then, they sometimes do it in a condescending way. Women are often left feeling that, though they might get what they want in the end, they have been made to feel that they are people of less worth than the men. Why is this so? This is because many men's view is often that women's achievements are reached through their underhanded feeling way. In my experience, this happens in the medical profession as well. For example, if a male doctor gets a promotion, he must have worked hard for it; however, if a feminine looking female doctor with the same abilities gets a promotion, she must have got it because her feminine behaviour pleased those in authority over her. Such subtle insinuations and attitudes do not glorify the One who created women in the first place; they do not nurture the family of God and hence the larger society. This is because, taken to the extreme, such attitudes are likely to hurt someone deeply and unnecessarily.

For Paul Tournier, who has written many books to help us understand the meaning of persons, he only deeply appreciated God's gift of feeling, especially to women, after his beloved wife died in old age. As a result, he wrote one of his last books called "*The Gift of Feeling*" as a legacy to men so that they will appreciate women more, and as a legacy to women so that they will help men surface their feelings for the common good in our world today.⁸

Family-Social-Religious-National Consequences of Women's Mistaken Response

On the other hand, *women*, in the midst of trying to undo certain prejudices, have also misunderstood this special gift of building relationships and of tenderness and concern for the persons entrusted to them. They too have fallen into the trap of believing in the wrong assumptions of a male dominated church and world in believing that their gentle ways are a sign of weakness instead of strength. What are some of the results?

Since the mid-20th century, especially in western (and westernised countries like ours) many women have often used their feelings negatively. In trying to prove to themselves that they are equal to men, many women are confused over the

issues of equality of status and differences of roles. Having more of the feeling or thinking gift is a matter of roles, not status. However, generally, modern women have equated status with roles. This is never meant to be. Men and women are equal in status before God, full stop. It is a fact. Therefore, in the pursuit to be functionally the same as men, they have neglected the positive use of their feelings, especially in child-rearing.

This has resulted in the negative effects of the extreme western-secular feminist movement which has left the society, in some countries, with the disastrous result of millions of today's adults who grew up without a mother's tender loving care.

*“The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world”
seems to be true both ways-for good or for bad.*

However, this does not mean that we are letting fathers get away from the atrocities that some have committed through the misinterpretation of the words that *“men are the heads of families”*. Many have taken their functional family headship as ownership of property. Hence, they grant themselves the authority to do anything they fancy with their wives and children.

On the other hand, many women cannot control their overflowing emotions and cause havoc at home, in church or in society. Even though it may be true that they are like the necks that turn the heads, tensions abound when feelings are allowed to have a free go in daily lives. We just have to keep reminding ourselves not to let our feelings run wild. For us women, we need to ask God for grace to sort out our emotions and to use our minds fruitfully; according to our Creator's will and for the good of others, especially the men and children in our care. Our responsibility is to use our minds to control our emotions so that they can be used to nurture others and not to tear them down.

The gift of feeling, related with the gifts of gentleness, relationship and especially of compassion, is vital for church spiritual growth.

We must not put our feelings aside for fear of rejection; we must ask the Lord to sanctify this gift entrusted to us for His glory. We need to persevere and ask God for wisdom as to how we are to use this precious gift for Him, remembering that the way we use our gift is determined by our character.⁹

Remember

To help someone feel the real person in him/her does not mean that I am encouraging that person to be soft and weak like jelly.

It means bringing God's healing grace into his/her life ... so that he/she can move on in the abundant life with rejoicing in Christ i.e.

*become more human, as human as the perfect Son of Man one day!
After all, Jesus did weep.*



Fourthly

I believe we need to consider the gift of feeling seriously because, most importantly, *the ability to feel is not only a gift of God to mankind but part of God's nature.* Hence, to reflect the true nature of God our Maker, the gift of feeling, more in women, has to be used together with the gift of thinking, more in men. Eventually, negative feelings in our broken selves will be filled with positive feelings that come from the heart of God whose compassion reaches out to our sin-sick world.

Let us see what God's word has to say about His heart ...

In Jeremiah 8:17-21, God's feelings were expressed through His prophet thus:

*“My joy is gone, grief is upon me, my heart is sick ...
For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt,
I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me.”*

In Isaiah 66:13, God described Himself as playing a feminine role:

*“As a mother comforts her child,
so will I comfort you and
you will be comforted over Jerusalem.”*

In John 14:5-9, towards the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, He sadly pleaded for understanding from Philip when, just after Jesus had told the disciples that those who knew Him would have known the Father, Philip still demanded ...
" Show us the Father, and that would be enough for us."

Jesus answered him, *"Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

His longing was for His disciples to feel with Him in His effort to show them who God really was to Him.

Therefore, we see that though the gift of feeling is traditionally attributed to women, Jesus displayed, with equal depth, the ability to be objective and intellectual in His dialogue and relationships with others and at the same time, accepting and kind. We admire Him for His calmness in the midst of chaos and His ability to make decisions in the face of prejudice. Yet, He was able to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice.

Before the Fall

(Genesis Chapter 1 & 2)

Indeed, God has both male and female characteristics in His personality. No wonder that, when He gave us the story of creation, He used words that reflected His image to us. For example, the word "adam" in Genesis 1:26, in Hebrew, does not necessarily refer to the male person but to human beings as made in the image of God. It seems that man or woman alone does not reflect the true image of God but *man and woman together portray the true image of God*. It is only in chapter 2, with the completion of the creation of woman out of the human person that the sexual identities were differentiated

The task of not only reproducing but also taking care of the world was given to both man and woman, not just to one. Further, no mention was made, before the fall, of who does what. It was only after the fall that roles became defined, as men and women, presumably, began to argue and calculate who is to do what and confused themselves in the midst of the debates. If only the special gifts of thinking and feeling were used peacefully. Let me explain:

After the Fall *(Genesis Chapter 3)*

Consequent to the fall as described in Genesis chapter 3, the curse indicated the imbalance of the use of man's and woman's personal giftedness. *Man* no longer trusted woman's thinking and focussed only on her gift of feelings.

“They are too easily carried away by their feelings-lah!”

However, man, in rejecting feeling as a beautiful gift from God, also could no longer use his gift of thinking harmoniously any more. The tendency to dominate and rule rather than to love his wife has been obvious and infectious since then. Instead of regarding his woman as an equal in God's eyes to be loved and cherished...

Man lost respect for her partnership in making major decisions and left her to swim in her emotions ... instead of helping her feel safe enough to think clearly.

For woman, she was initially to enjoy her womanhood with the special gift of feeling. She was to express that gift through being the willing supporter of her husband, as they take care of God's world together, and the nurturing of children. However, after the fall ...

Her feeling was turned into an over dependence on him for emotional support. Her desire was to be after her husband was a curse, not a command, as often taught by zealous religious mentors

What Could have Happened?

Before the fall, both man and woman were to have their emotional fulfillment in God and God alone; so it is for those of us who have been saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

However, woman, in trying to respect her husband (who was often seen as an absolute authority figure, even above God), became *over-concerned with trying to please her husband* (or men generally), in order to regain his respect and acceptance as his equal. In today's world, this is often achieved by an excessive need to prove herself through her profession in society. Professions are neutral and good for society. However, when professions become a stumbling block to our children's well being, then we have to do some hard thinking!

Tragically, somewhere in history, traditional and recent Christian literature have both taken the *consequences of God's curses* and taught them to His people *as biblical rules*. Sometimes, disastrous consequences follow, even in Christian homes.

However, where the effects of these curses have been practically cancelled by the truth of the grace of God, whether in society, church or home, the harmonious relationships in men-women teams, which reflect a truer image of God's character, are beautiful to behold.

Feeling then become the tendon attached to the muscles of thinking that move the limbs of families and society.

**What then shall we do
with God's precious gift of feeling?**

Application

The Redemption of the Gift of Feeling

Generally, as men or women, let us accept with thanksgiving the gift of feeling, using it together with the gift of thinking to worship Him and to edify others, controlling it so that we do not allow our feeling capacity to become a weakness that may lead to sin.

As a specific example of the need to redeem our feeling function, let me recount a story which Paul Tournier wrote about his life ¹⁰ ...

Paul was the second child of an elderly pastor who married a woman much younger than himself.

When Paul was born, four years after his sister, his seventy-year-old father was overjoyed to have a son at such a late stage in life. His sister was not very close to him, he discovered later, as she was rather jealous of his presence. Two months later, his father died.

When he was six years old, his mother died of a serious illness. A kind uncle and aunt brought them up. His uncle made sure that he grew up following his father's ways, so much so that when he asked his advice before he was married, the uncle answered something to the effect,

*“You are your father’s son
- imagine what he would like you to do
if he were here - and do it.”*

I think he must have had a hard time trying to imagine what his late father would have done. How could he when he had never consciously met him before?

Paul never spoke about his real feelings for a long time; it was all bottled up unintentionally. He was thus a loner who did not appear interested in others or take part in any school activities. His academic results were mediocre.

When Paul was sixteen, a kind literature teacher invited him to his home where they engaged in *intellectual discussions*. Suddenly, Paul felt that someone was interested in him by giving him so much time and freedom to brainstorm. Never before had anyone welcomed him so much. Feeling special, he began to blossom as a student and soon became a leader in youth movements in Europe. Nevertheless, their friendship remained relatively distant.

Later, at thirty-four, another older man invited him to his home. This time, the senior friend told him about himself, the intimate things of his life as a person in Christ. He was in a religious movement in those days where they were to encourage one another to love and obey God, not just talk about Him or study His word. *Paul's heart was warmed.* His feelings were given a new freedom he had subconsciously waited for so long, without his realising his need before. Paul described his experiences thus:

"...when I visited him my host spoke about his own intimate life with a simplicity and courage that I had never met before. When he finished I really felt I could not talk to him about my activities but about myself, about my personal life. It was the first time I had ever put into words what I had suffered in being an orphan, and I was in tears as I did so."

He went on to compare his friendship with the teacher with his friendship with this new friend. God had used the teacher (a non-believer) to stretch him intellectually. This teacher never revealed his private life to him. God used this new friend to help him be truly personal and emotional, more whole as God's child.

The Challenge

*Whether we are women or men,
the challenge for us is to appreciate and restore
the gift of feeling to our families, society,
nation and world.*

The Feeling Gift is the ability to value people, to form loving relationships according to God's truth and grace, to be aware of our walk with God and to relate this friendship with our Father God to the social arena of today's world in families, classrooms, churches, work places, shopping malls and social gatherings. We are facing an increasing over-respect for the intellectual and impersonal world of increasing information technology. It is an era where revenge may come at the tapping of computer keyboards, where starving millions fight for what little food is left for them, where lives are lived at the expense of others and where power struggles leave us wondering who is right or wrong.

Dear Readers

What is our response to the God of thinking and feeling, the God of truth and grace (undeserved mercy)?

If we have not yet opened our heart's door to God's gentle knock, will we do so and let Him fill us with the security of His everlasting love. He wants to forgive our sins against Him, to heal our wounds, to fill our emotional tanks so that we may become channels of blessings to our family and friends, even as Paul Tournier's new friend was to him. Others may need to apologise to God for being ashamed of His gift of feeling so tenderly given to us.

If we have known God's deep and pure love for some time, will we reach out to touch someone else's life with His gift of feeling so that they too will be filled with His healing grace and truth? No instrument is as effective in God's hands as forgiven and healed individuals who have gratefulness flowing out from their lives to their neighbours ... for Him. Let us together utter the prayer of one such grateful brother, Francis of Assisi

Heavenly Father,

*“Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there is hatred let me bring Your love;
Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord;
And where there’s doubt, true faith in You.*

*O Master, grant that I may never seek –
So much to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love with
all my soul.*

*Make me a channel of Your peace.
Where there’s despair in life
let me bring hope;
Where there’s darkness, only light;
And where there’s sadness, ever joy.*

*Make me a channel of Your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving to all men that we receive;
And in dying that we’re born to eternal life.*

In our Lord Jesus’s Name we pray..
Amen.



References:

1. *The Gift of Feeling*
by Paul Tournier, Delachaux 1979;
English Translation, SCM
Press Ltd and John Knox Press 1981
2. *Ibid*
3. *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*
by Lee Bee Teik,
Reconre Sdn Bhd 1997
- 4 *Your Personality and Your Spiritual Life*
by Reginald Johnson,
Monarch UK 1997
5. *Ibid*
6. *Please Understand Me, Character
and Temperament Type*
by David Kiersey & Marilyn Bates,
Prometheus Nemesis Book Company
1983.
7. *Ibid*
8. *Ibid 1*
9. *A Passion for Holiness*
by J.I.Packer, Crossway Books 1992
10. *Ibid 1*



<http://www.reconre.org>

About the Author

Dr. Lee Bee Teik (MBBS, Monash University) practised medicine till she turned fulltime homemaker.

She is married to Dr. Hwa Yung and they have three adult children.

Having heard God's call for her to write in 1992, Bee Teik has penned books on prayer, pastoral counseling and her experiences as a Malaysian Christian woman.

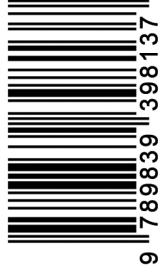
This series of 18 titles, classified under the overall theme, *On Being Human*, is drawn from the positive feedback from her seminars.

She may be reached at lbt_reconre@hotmail.com

The **GIFT** of **FELING**



ISBN 978-983-9398-13-7



9 789839 398137



<http://www.reconre.org>

