

THE MOODS OF THE SPIRIT

by John L. Brasher

Brasher's exploration of the varying moods and movements of the Holy Spirit in the believer's experience, examining how the Spirit works through different emotional and spiritual states to accomplish God's purposes.

10 Chapters

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01 THE JOYFUL MOOD

01 THE JOYFUL MOOD In all our holiness meetings we have emphasized the joyous mood of the Spirit, and that He produces in us His own joy. In 1 Thessalonians 5:6 He speaks about the church at Thessalonica having "received the word with the joy of the Holy Ghost" -- not simply their own joy, but His joy, the working of that mood of the Spirit which is the joyous mood. We need not emphasize that side of it because I think we all have known it and heard about it and have been well taught concerning it. The fact is we have had that so impressed upon our hearts and minds that many people imagine that is all the mood the Spirit exercises, and when He does not manifest Himself in a joyous state they have lost their religion, which is a very serious matter. Therefore, I am undertaking to bring to your attention eight other moods which He has just as distinctly as the joyous mood.

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02 THE THOUGHTFUL MOOD

02 THE THOUGHTFUL MOOD The next one we mention is the thoughtful mood. You remember the Psalmist said in the 39th Psalm, 3rd verse, "While I was musing the fire burned." I heard a young brother say once that he had just discovered the interpretation of that after having studied very hard for years and this was his interpretation:-- that David was seated by the open fire and fell asleep and when he awoke the fire had all burned out. That was both interesting and amusing to me because I had always supposed that David meant that while he was meditating upon God's goodness his heart grew hot and then he said, "I spake with my tongue."

They who are to be deep Christians, must be thoughtful Christians. We must take time to get along and be thoughtful. There is a time to be stirred in our thinking as well as in our heart. If we are to fill up we must shut up. You must, if you would be deep Christians, sometimes be hushed. There is a silence as necessary for the soul as the moments of triumph and shouting in the great congregation.

One of the reasons we have no more great saints today is we have not time to grow them. We jump out of bed at the sound of the alarm clock, swallow some breakfast food, run all day, bolt to our lunch, hurry to supper, or dinner, at six o'clock, change clothes and off again for some engagement. Nobody can become a deep Christian that way. A soul needs its moments of meditation as much as the moments of shouting, and more.

There must be an observatory in your soul into which you often retire. If the governor is at your home, you will beg his pardon and retire to your own solitude alone with God. If you cannot physically get alone, you must learn that the Holy Ghost wants to shut you up sometimes until you do not hear what the crowd says, nor pay any attention to what they do.

I have before now, been so engaged by the Spirit in a thoughtful mood that on one occasion when Brother Yates, at the end of the third stanza of a song, asked me how I liked it, I had not heard it -- I did not know they had sung. Shut up with Him. Alone with Him in the midst of a crowd. Meditate until your heart burns. A woman came to Brother [Bud] Robinson and said, "I don't understand. I seem to have leaked out in my experience." He, said, "That is easy to explain. You keep your mouth open too much." She thanked him and he said, "You are welcome."

It is impossible to pour a barrel full of water if there is an open bunghole at the other end of the barrel. You can talk about holiness, until you get as empty as a last year's bird's nest. God wants you sometimes to shut up, even the best folks, and hold the floods within you until your soul swells with the sense of God.

I do not know why, I have naturally these moody times. I love to go in the twilight and be alone -- that pensive hour between the sun's radiant glory and the quiet songs of the night. I think it is because at that time Adam walked with God in the garden in the old trysting place and we have never been content without walking with Him again. There come times in your life when He shuts you up. And then, do not disobey Him, for the value of your soul.

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03 THE PRAYERFUL MOOD

THE PRAYERFUL MOOD

Then there is what the apostle called the prayerful mood. 1 Corinthians 14:15, "I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding." And once more he said, "Praying in the Holy Ghost."

Now, all prayer is cultural. All prayer will refine us in our soul and our thinking, but there are prayers that are wrought in us and we do not have to hunt for them. It is not a question of mental projection, but a soul outpouring -- not simply wordiness; not fluency in speech; but have you never had this experience that when you were praying you have all of a sudden been caught up in prayer and one petition came and the answer; then another petition and the answer; until you had completed praying, and you had in you a sense that it was done, that your prayer had not simply been uttered, it had been answered. That was true because He indicated every petition and you seconded His indictment and presented that to the throne of God. It is delightful when you get a mood like that. You cannot put it on. It is the Spirit's inwrought mood.

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04 THE INTERCESSORY MOOD

THE INTERCESSORY MOOD And then there is the intercessory mood. It differs from the ordinary prayerful mood. In Romans He talks about it in the 8th chapter and the 26th and 27th verses, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Here is the most profound realm to human experience, the realm of intercession wherein you do not make any petitions that you utter in words, but it is the groaning of the Holy Spirit in your soul. Did you ever get those inexpressible petitions on your soul and did not know what they were about? -- when you went to prayer you could not pray about them, you just had to groan, and if you tried to pray after this there came a check. You just groaned. You did not want to get simply on your knees, but on your face as low as you could get before God, and simply groan out what was in you, and after each groan you wondered that there followed another one.

I have had folks to come to meeting and say, "I have such a burden on my heart. I wish you would pray that I may get rid of it." No, I will pray for Him to keep it on you as long as He wants to. It is a sign you are in deep fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Don't you believe a word of the devil to the contrary. That is intercession.

Notice: He said He is making intercession for the saints. It is not a prayer for sinners. When the Holy Spirit is groaning in you like that He is praying for God's children. A long time before they ever discovered wireless, God knew all about it, and He knew where to find an intercessor who could, because of Spirit-likeness, effect most by prayer, for the one in need. The devil tells people about that condition, and calls it affinity. The Holy Ghost knows who you can help, but never lets you know anything about it, but puts the prayer through you which helps them. There may be a missionary in the field struggling, burdened, and ready to give up when all at once you get a burden and pour out your soul in groanings that cannot be uttered. God knows who needs the help and the Holy Spirit sees in you the human channel and He groans through you and your prayer goes to headquarters, in code so to speak. He, the Son of God, interprets your prayer before the throne and the petition is answered and poured out on the person away out yonder. You did not, nor will you, know anything about it until you get to Heaven where it will not in any way endanger your soul. The Holy Spirit is just groaning through you! Now, do not try to shout when you have a mood like that. Do not think you have to shout all the time. Just let Him groan it out through you. When it is all over with, you will be free and somebody will be helped. That soul out there needed encouragement and God knew it and He just brought you in and laid hold on you and prayed through you and brought belief.

After a while He will tell you about it, when you can stand it. When you get before the throne He may say, "This man was about to die from a broken heart and discouragement, but I put that groan on you that day and brought relief."

Now, an intercessor is one who has not any job to fix up for himself. You are never ready to intercede for others until your own business is ended. As long as you have praying for yourself to do you are not ready for intercession. So, if you never get any groan on hand perhaps there is something you need to fix up so that God can put a groan in you for that which He wants done in His kingdom.

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05 THE TEARFUL MOOD

05 -- THE TEARFUL MOOD

Then there is a pathetic mood, or the tearful mood of the Spirit. Elisha was weeping like his heart would break and Hazeal said, "What are you weeping about?" He said, "I know what you are going to do. The Spirit told me."

Jeremiah, my favorite prophet, preached in one community twenty years and never had a convert. They put him in jail; and he bought land in that neighborhood after twenty years of preaching. He was a great prophet. He had a tearful mood and said, "Oh that my eyes were fountains of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of Zion." This is the time when modern philosophy would have us believe that anybody who cries is a weakling. If your folks die you must not cry. It would be very impolite. Of course if you went to a theater you might weep a little. But to weep about anything worthwhile is to be tabooed. You must not show any sign of team. But did you know the human in us needs to be kept alive?

Jesus was human the perfect human -- as well as the perfect Deity -- and at the grave of Lazarus, and over Jerusalem's lost opportunities He poured out His tears. I would not take a gold mine for those two words, "Jesus wept." How human He was and how He came up close to those who needed Him. The human cry. He wept.

You know when women argue with us we laugh, and if they scold we take a walk and get out of the way; but if one breaks down and begins to cry, then we surrender. Anybody would be a brute who would not break down at a woman's tears. That is her greatest argument; and I do not want you to think it is a weak argument or that I am reflecting upon them. I am saying it is the finest thing left in humanity, a woman's tears, and we men have been thrown out against the world until it is hard for us to have tears -- so that we are a little less human than she is and anything that would take that fine, delicate thing away from woman, whatever it is, will lose the race more than it can know. A tearful mood -- a time when you feel like tears -- Christian folks, you have not backslidden or sinned or lost any of your folks by death, yet you feel like you could wring tears out of your fingers. I have gone to the pulpit when I was full of tears. God somehow, that time, seemed to break folks up and melt all hearts. What a wonderful musician the Holy Ghost is, and how He knows when to put His finger on the right key to bring out the harmony. If we only knew how to be more submissive to Him, what marvelous and fine things He would accomplish.

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06 THE PLEADING MOOD

06 THE PLEADING MOOD And there follows the pleading mood of the Spirit -- 2 Corinthians 5:20. Paul had it when he said, "We beseech you." Now Paul did not always beseech folks. There were times when the lightning leaped from his eyes and his words were like dynamite, but he said that day, "We beseech you."

There is a time when you can beseech folks. A preacher is not going to beseech sinners until sinners are convicted or he will get ahead of the Holy Spirit. Finney never made a call to the inquiry room as long as sinners could look at him. The minister who is under God and leads the revival and preaches to sinners will get up to Sinai's thunderings, and that comes with judgment to the sinner's heart and he breaks down and his will breaks down, and then he can say, "I beseech you." You gain by doing so. You go when God sends you with a tremolo stop in your voice and tears all over your soul and pleading in your heart, and the sinner will respect you. An old woman went out in a meeting to deal with a skeptical man and said, "Oh, doctor, won't you come to the altar? If it does not do you any harm it cannot possibly do you any good." He came and was saved. The preacher went to him and wanted to know what he had said that had brought him to Christ. The man said, "You said nothing, but when that old woman came back and said what she did not want to say, there was something back of her words to which I paid attention and I saw God in her. I heard God pleading with me through her, and I came."

There are times when He makes you a pleader for Him. I think you have had acquaintance enough with me to see there are not many times when that comes my way, but sometimes I break up myself and what you think is iron seems to turn to the softest kind of material and I am just tender.

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07 THE WRATHFUL MOOD

07 THE WRATHFUL MOOD But here is one now that may startle you. It is the wrathful mood -- the wrathful mood of the Spirit -- not that it makes you want to hit somebody. That is carnality, but I am talking about that holy sense of the soul in its cry against wrong and injustice and sin.

God has put in every one of us a sense of fair play, the sense of justice and rightness, and we do not want to see it outraged anywhere. If you should find a man abusing a child and not feel indignant against him you are a backslider. If you find any one oppressed and do not feel resentment in you, you have no moral character. Whether it be individuals or nations, your soul rises up against it. You have to hate wrong as much as you love righteousness to be a balanced Christian. You have to hate iniquity as much as you love righteousness, for that is the balanced character of Jesus. The soul that cannot hate as hard as it can love is not balanced. I do not mean to hate folks but to hate sin and wrong, and get hot in your soul against it. You won't stand for it.

I remember once in Little Rock, Arkansas, the pastor whom I was assisting in the meeting came down by the hotel and took me to the mission, and as we turned around the corner and came along to an alley, there was a saloon there. Just as we got in front of the saloon a little man intoxicated came running around the screen and a great burly man came after him, got him by the collar and held him down on the cement and planted his knees on the fellow's breast.

It was all done just as I stopped opposite and I sprang to him and said, "Get off him." He said, "You don't know what he called me." I said, "It does not make any difference. Get off him," and the police came and took the little man; and I said, "Take him," but I could not make him do it.

Someone said, "What would you have done if he had not gotten off?" I would have helped him off. "Would not you have lost your sanctification?" Not unless I had let him abuse that man without a protest from me. I would have been contemptible if I had not. We run that thing of non-resistance in the ground. If it is a personal affront, God will give you grace enough to bear it, but you have no business hiding behind Christian perfection when the helpless are to be protected.

I once said to a fellow who was enthusiastic about non-resistance, "Suppose some man came in and began to abuse your sister or your mother." He said, "I must not do anything, I am sanctified." I said, "You are just soft." If you think that is sanctification you are just soft. It would be my business to lay him out with anything I could get my hands on in the interests of the defenseless.

God save us from this cheap sentimentalism, that has a notion that because we are Christians we must not protect anyone else. Mine will not work that way. I have taken abuse from others but I do not propose to see any kind of a brutal ruffian impose upon anyone else who is defenseless as long as I am able to help or protect them.

It is also true of nations. America can lose her soul by getting beds that are too soft, by getting too many automobiles, and by letting other nations trample upon weak nations. The above arises out of the natural instinct for justice and fair play and natural indignation against wrong. But you say,

did anybody in Scripture ever have a wrathful spirit? Yes. The following is an instance of holy wrath and indignation wrought in Paul by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 13:9-12 we read: "Then Saul (who also is called Paul) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." This is that same Paul that said, "We beseech you." It is the same Paul, but the Holy Ghost is talking in a different way. There is a lot of difference between these moods. We must be pliable enough to let Him play however He will, for one string music is monotonous. There is a wrathfulness needed in everybody without which you have not a perfect moral character.

However, when I am talking about this mood of the Spirit it is something that works in you against sin and cries out against wrong like Jesus did. He would not stand for the temple to be prostituted by selling doves and changing money and having cattle and sheep in the courts of His house. He said, "It is written my house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves," and they went out, for His Holy wrath was stirred and they dared not stay.

I went to my pulpit to preach once and I was so hot with wrath against sin I was dangerous to touch. The wife of one of my best friends came to talk with me and I cut her off quite short, and she said playfully, "Now I will tell John." I said, "Tell him anything you want to. Do not bother me now." Sin got a drubbing that day like it never had in that place, and after it was over any one could have approached me.

One day at a certain town the boys said they were going to give me a dose of stale eggs and I went and prayed until I wanted them to come on. Then I went back and preached. All of a sudden God, unexpectedly to me, poured out through me a vial of wrath against sin and I went home to bed that night without any missiles. The Spirit had put the fear of God upon their hearts. That is why holiness preachers can say things for which men not filled with the Spirit would be stoned. It is because the Spirit pours wrath through them and the sinner is filled with conviction and fear. God has a way of putting the wrath of the Spirit on a man until it looks awful dangerous to be a sinner, and he is not going to waylay you to flog you, but will hunt a place of prayer.

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08 THE PREEMPTORY MOOD

08 THE PREEMPTORY MOOD The preemptory mood -- taking command of the situation -- Elijah had it, and the king did as he said. God's Holy Spirit spoke through Elijah. Paul was in a ship during a storm one day and took command and said, "Stay on board," and they all minded him.

I have seen preachers command an altar service like the captain does the deck of his ship, under the power of the Holy Ghost. Everybody said, "We will obey," because the Holy Spirit was talking.

John Inskip used to command his services like a sailor the bridges of a ship. He had a testimony meeting one day and he said for everyone to talk as briefly as they could so everyone would have a chance to talk. A man arose and said, "The Bible says where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Inskip said, "That gives me the liberty to tell you to sit down," and down he sat.

Some folks will think you are conceited and angry because you command the situation. That is not true. God puts in some men's hearts the power to command situations.

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09 THE EXULTANT MOOD

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One other mood, and that is the exultant mood. This is the mood of the Spirit when you have whipped every devil in sight and have plenty of ammunition left. It is the mood you feel when you climb up on the last trench and the enemy is gone. You have your guns drawn and you look around to see if there is anyone else to give battle, and you have triumphed over all your enemies.

You know Paul said we are more than conquerors. Brother Ruth said that was illustrated by David and Goliath, "For David went down to kill Goliath and used one stone and was a conqueror and had four left. Since he had ammunition enough left to kill four more giants he was more than conqueror."

It is a great thing to be a conqueror, but to be more than a conqueror means you have whipped everything in sight and have ammunition enough left for many more if they were in sight.

It is that kind of spirit that the children of Israel had at the Red Sea when Pharaoh's horses and soldiers lay at the bottom of the sea. Moses wrote a song about it and Miriam sang about it, and they shouted, because every Egyptian soldier was at the bottom of the Red Sea and later many of Pharaoh's army drifted onto the shore on the other side. There was no other army in Egypt and they said, "Sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously." That is the mood they had. That is the mood that Mary had the day when she visited Elizabeth and after they had talked together about God's dealings with them until their hearts burned. Elizabeth spoke beautifully. Then Mary broke out in that wonderful Magnificat and said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name."

What did she care now about those gossips that hung over the back fence and said, "I hate to tell you, but did you know about Mary. It is perfectly awful. We thought she, etc., etc." The same kind of liars have existed in all the centuries; but what did she care when she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord and henceforth all nations shall call me blessed."

You need not censure your Catholic neighbors for calling her the blessed virgin. Do it yourself. God selected a pure virgin to be the mother of our Lord. We do call her blessed and revere her, but we do not worship her. It was the exultant mood that she had.

It is that mood they have in the 19th chapter of Revelation where the white robed throng begins to sing a hallelujah chorus, when they break out and say, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and the bride of the Lamb has made herself ready."

Oh, the wonder of it! -- the last vestige of false religion, false government, false ideas, false theology, and false philosophy, cast down, overthrown, destroyed forever! -- God's Church vindicated, truth enthroned forever, the saints safe through eternity, and the white robed bride of

the Lamb brought to the Lord! -- false religion forever dethroned, never to be exalted again -- false philosophies overthrown, never to be resurrected again -- the white robed are singing hallelujah and millions of angels join, and all the blood-washed around the throne join in the hallelujahs because of the everlasting overthrow of wrong and the everlasting enthronement of righteousness! The day is coming when wrong will forever be overthrown and righteousness shall be enthroned, and that forever. Sometimes, not often, you will have symptoms of that exultancy. Glory! You will have a symptom of that once in a while when you have whipped everything in sight. The devil gathered around but we prayed and God answered and they all fled and there was no one in sight, but the Lord and His triumphant hosts.

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10 CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION May the Lord help us to see that God wants to so fix us up with such symmetry that we will not be one-sided. He wants to play on us in different keys and bring in to us the different moods that our soul needs for its culture and development. He said, "I will guide you with my eye." You want to get where you can be guided with a look. My father was not unkind but there was something about him when he looked, I moved. If I was engaged in any sort of conduct he did not approve of, he just looked and it was all over. And I am glad he did that way; and I am glad I had reverence and respect enough for him to do that way. He guided me with his eye.

If my talk was a little too voluminous compared with the rights of other folks, he looked and I was less fluent in speech.

God wants to get us all like that so when His Spirit comes in we will be guided by His eye. When He wants to play on us tearfully or pleadingly, we will submit; when He wants to groan in us, we will groan, and when He wants to strike the wrathful mood we will let Him, and when He wants us to sing over our enemies, He will put the exultant mood in us until we will be exultant in every fiber of our being. Amen.

* * * * * THE END

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