

Emotional Turmoil: Getting a Grip on God's Truth

Women's Seminar
Grace Bible Church March 22, 2013

Introduction: waves

1. Hebrews 6:13-19. The anchor is Jesus Christ and His gospel
(1 Tim 1:1; Col. 1:5)
2. Homework: Memorize Hebrews 6:18-19.

Worldly Perspectives

1. How many? 6, 8, 17, >100
2. Bad and need to be suppressed
3. Irrelevant and unnecessary
4. Morally neutral (Rogers)
5. Most important thing about us
 - a. determine our duty (can't because I don't feel like it; had to because I felt like it.)
 - b. determine truth for us (its only true if I feel it to be true)
6. Personality types / temperaments: "It's just the way I'm wired" Is that what should rule? Vs. Holy Spirit rule.
7. Therapeutic Society in search of wellness: Emotions Anonymous
8. Biological Reductionism-materialistic determinism: Emotions due to brain structure or physiology...the body rules. Evolutionary perspective
 - a. We are subject to our emotions
 - b. Medical model
 - c. THE answer: Chemical fix

Theological Perspective: 10 fingers of truth for a solid grip

First Hand: Emotional Doctrine (fingers 1-5)

1. God is emotional: Isaiah 62:5
 - a. God delights in His Son (Isaiah 42:1)
 - b. God delights in justice and righteousness (Psalm 33:5)
 - c. God rejoices in His people (Zeph 3:17; Isaiah 62:5; Jer. 32:41)
 - d. God grieves and has sorrow (Gen 6:5-6; Jer. 2; Hosea 11:8)
 - e. God experiences anger and wrath (Psalm 7:11; Romans 1:8)
 - f. God feels compassion and tenderness (Psalm 103:13; Isaiah 49:15)
 - g. God is loving (1 John 4:8; 16)
 - h. Jesus showed emotions

1. compassion (MT 9:36)
2. joy (John 15;10-11)
3. grief and sorrow (Luke 19:41; John 11:35; Hebrews 5:7)
4. Jesus got angry (Mark 3:5-6)
5. Zeal for God's house (John 2:13ff)

HMWK: Go back and read each reference listed in these notes about God's emotions. Spend a moment pondering the importance of God being emotional. How does that change how you have perceived Him?

2. Emotions are essentially spiritual: John 4:24
 - a. Inner man, outer man (Rom. 7:22; Eph 3:16; 2 cor. 4:7; 2 Cor. 4:16; Mt. 10:28; Rom. 8:10.)
 - b. Emotions come from the inner man

HMWK: Memorize 2 Corinthians 4:16

3. Created in the image of God: Genesis 1:26-27
 - a. Emotions are normal!
 - b. Commanded to be emotional...
 1. joyful/rejoicing (Phil 4:4)
 2. loving (Mt. 22:37)
 3. fear (1 Peter 1:17)
 4. peaceful (Col. 3:15)
 5. tenderhearted (Eph 4:32)
 6. mourn over sin (James 4:9)
 7. self-control (1 Cor. 9:25; Gal 5:22; 1 Pet. 4:7)

HMWK: Read all the commands God gives about how we are to feel. Compare that with how your heart feels. Write out emotions you need to change to follow God's word.

4. Emotions are fallen, but redeemable: Romans 3:23-24
 - a. Fallen Minds (Romans 1:21;28; 8: 6-7; Eph 4:17)
 - b. Fallen Wills (Romans 7:14-25)
 - c. Fallen Emotions (Jer. 2:13; John 3:19)
 - d. Redeemable minds (Romans 12:2; Eph 4:23)
 - e. Redeemable wills (Phil. 2:12; 1 John 2:17)
 - f. Redeemable emotions (1 John 2:15-17; Eph. 5:1-2; Mt. 13:44; 1 Peter 1:8; John 6:35)

HMWK: Memorize Romans 3:23-24; Ephesians 5:1-2.

5. The Workings of Emotion: Proverbs 4:23
 - a. Genesis 4:7 The example of Cain. Do right → Feel right

- b. Sorrow, anger and deep grief can be the right way to feel: feel like God feels about things
- c. John 13:17 Jesus washes the disciples feet
- d. Matthew 5:3-12
- e. Emotions express the desires and thoughts (evaluations) of a person and influence motives and behavior
 - 1. Emotions are responsive: they are an indicator of what is in the heart: (example of snow in the spring) 
 - 2. Emotions are preparatory: anger, guilt, sorrow, joy motivate behavior
 - 3. Wrong thoughts and desires → wrong emotions
 - 4. Desire/thought/emotion relationship: I feel what I feel because I think what I think and want what I want in my heart. My emotions will change according to whether I perceive that my ruling desires are met, or unmet.
 - affirmation
 - attention/approval
 - money
 - control
 - pleasure
 - love
 - achievement
 - health
 - 5. Submitting my desires to God. His will, His glory, pleasing Him, loving Him, enjoying Him becomes my one ruling desire → appropriate emotions.

HMWK: Memorize Genesis 4:7; John 13:17; Matthew 5:3-12.

Second Hand: Handling Emotions through truth

- 6. Epistemology: determine your source of truth John 17:17; 18:38
 - a. Experience can be an unreliable source of truth: experience must be interpreted by God's word.
 - b. We are not to judge God's character by our experience (Job 38:2,4; Job 40:2, 6-8.)
 - c. We can expect suffering (Romans 5:3; James 1:1-3; 1 Peter 5:9; Phil 1:29). We don't have to understand everything before we believe. That's faith.

HMWK: Memorize John 17:17

If you have been judging God by your experience, you can follow Job's example. Pray this prayer found in Job 42: 2, 6.

² "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." ⁶ Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

7. Repentance (Isaiah 30:15; Eph 4:22-24)

- a. What repentance is (put off with Godly sorrow) 1 John 1:8-9; Pro. 28:13
- b. What to repent of
 - unbelief
 - ruling desires (idols)
- c. How repentance looks

HMWK:

- *Read Psalm 51 and 32. Note the aspects of the godly sorrow of David. Read 2 Samuel 15. Note the aspects of worldly sorrow of Saul.*
- *Which type of sorrow describes you?*

- *Ask God to reveal what your emotions are saying about the thoughts and desires of your heart.*

- *Start a journal of upsets whenever your emotions start 'waving':
What was the situation?
What was I thinking and feeling?
What did I want?
What did I do?
What would godly thoughts, feelings, desires and actions look like?
Take what you have written in your journal to the Lord in a prayer of confession and asking for help.*

- *Ask God to form Christ-like emotions in you—so that you begin to feel about things the way God feels about them....rejoice at the right things, sorrow at the right things.*

8. Renew your mind: Biblical examples of handling emotions (Eph 4:23)

- a. Paul (2 Cor. 1:8-10)
- b. Abraham (Gen. 22; Hebrews 11:17-18)
- c. David (Psalm 6; Psalm 16)
- d. Jeremiah (Lam 3: 19-25)

HMWK: Read Psalm 119 –Note all the verses that mention how God’s word brings the Psalmist stability in his emotions. For example:

- *Shame – vv. 6,31,80*
- *Sorrow – vv. 28,143*
- *Comfort – vv. 50,52,67,71,76,107*
- *Faint – vv. 81,82,123,131,147,148*
- *Rejoice – vv. 14,16,20,24,25,35,40,47,70,72,92,97,103,111,129*
- *Righteous Indignation – vv. 53,128,139*

Read Psm 42, 43 and 77. Note how the psalmist ‘gets a grip on truth’ by recalling, remembering, and counseling himself.

9. Growth in emotional obedience: Changing thoughts and desires (Eph 4:24)

Proverbs 23:7 As a man thinks, so is he...

- a. Determine to believe God’s character
- b. Determine that God’s commands define duty
- c. Determine to believe God’s promises
- d. Determine to believe in God’s power
- e. How? 2 Cor. 10:5

Hopeless thoughts to thoughts of hope

Thoughts focused on self or circumstances to thoughts of God and His will

Thoughts of self-pity to thoughts of thanksgiving

Preach the gospel to yourself every day

HMWK:

- *Study one attribute/day for the next 3 weeks*

Suggested titles:

The Attributes of God , A. W. Pink, or The Knowledge of the Holy (Tozer)

- *Gospel Primer Read 1 section / day*
- *Meditate on ‘hope’ Scriptures: Rom 8; 1 Cor 10:13; Psm 119:165; Psm 23; Psm 73:23-28; Psm 16; 2 Peter 1:1-11.*

10. Handling emotions through truth: Sue’s story

What Sue learned:

- a. Biblical characters who suffered the emotional turmoil of despair: Elijah, Jonah, Jeremiah, Sons of Korah, Job, Tamar, Solomon, Cain.
- b. Heart dynamics associated with emotional turmoil
 - Idolatry
 - Unbelief
 - Do wrong→feel bad
 - Guilt and/or perfectionism
 - Depression cycles

- c. Biblical principles that spoke to her turmoil
 Jesus Christ provides sufficient resources to enable godly living.
 (2 Pet. 1:2-4)
 Your purpose in life: to glorify/please God (2 Cor. 5:9-10; 1 Cor 10:31)
 --To become like Christ (Romans 8:28-29; Gal. 5:22-23)
 --The goal is a treasure!! (Mt. 13:44)
- d. The process of change
 Become aware of your disturbed emotions (keep a journal of upsets)
 Turning to God for help
 Walking in Biblical hope
 Walking in the Light (1 John 1)
 Grow in walking worthy: the specific put off/put on
 --in thought life
 --in behavior

Final HMWK:

- *Begin to take your thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.*
 - a. *Give 3 examples of 'speculations' and 'lofty things raised up' from your own life.*
 - b. *Describe the process meant by 'taking every thought captive'.*
 - c. *What would it look like to implement this verse in your life?*
- *If you have believed any of the lies that Sue believed, look up the passages that were referenced for each one. Make a list and begin memorizing them.*
- *Write out three examples of times this week when you are able to replace wrong thoughts with right thoughts. What was the result?*
- *Study the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18-19. Ask questions about the text. For example: Why did Elijah run? What was he feeling? Had God told him to run? (v 3-4). Where was Elijah's focus? How do you know? (v 10, 14). What were God's cures for Elijah? How did Elijah respond to God's instructions? What was the result of his obedience?*
- *Make a list of 5 ways you can chose to put on love for someone in your life. (maybe someone who is a source of anxiety, depression or anger for you). This may mean praying for that person, writing a card, making a meal, or any other tangible expression of giving. From the list, chose at least 2 that you will do this week.*
- *Memorize 1 Cor 10: 31. What is your purpose as a Christian? What changes need to be made in your life to conform to your purpose?*

SUMMARY