

Session 1: Anchored In Feelings and Emotions

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- Ships need an anchor to ride out storms so the ship does not get blown off course. The anchor also protects the ship from hitting rocks and reefs and becoming shipwrecked.

Hebrews 6:18-19 - *hope as an anchor of the soul.*

“The certain hope of our future salvation is an anchor to steady our souls while we wait on God in present storms.” Quote from Bible.org.

I. All of us have feelings and emotions that affect what we believe and what we do.

“Emotions’ source is always in our perception of reality. Feelings always follow what we believe to be fact.” **(Bob Kauflin)**

- We have our own set of perceptions that inform our belief system that stem from our emotions.

What are feelings and emotions really?

Emotions defined: The root word of emotion is ‘motere’ the Latin verb meaning to move.

- All feelings and emotions are in essence inclinations to act and react. God designed our emotions to put us in motion.
- They represent an inner response that motivates outward action.

What is their source?

- The scriptures teach us we are made up of two distinct aspects. A body, or outer person and a spirit or inner person.
- Our speech, behavior and actions are an expression of your inner life. Our brain reflects our hidden inner thoughts. Our emotions tell us our condition.

Luke 6:45 *“The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good...for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.”*

“Choices are made in the heart not our brains. God instructs our hearts, our inner man. He uses our minds as we read the word, but he brings revelation to our hearts.” **(Elyse Fitzpatrick)**

What are the purposes of our feelings and emotions?

- God has given us feelings and emotions to help us be aware of the condition of our inner person, our heart.
- Our emotions reveal what our faith and hope is in. They reveal what we believe about God.

“Instead of seeing emotions as only evil or fallen, we need to understand that God designed emotions to play a crucial role that forces us to do a double check, to look outward and inward. Emotions are our “inner sentinel” that connects us to our inner and outer world.” **(Robert Kellerman)**

- God designed us so that our emotions submit to and respond to our beliefs and convictions about Him. God does not intend that they control us.

“When it comes to emotions, we seem prone to extremes, even in the Christian world. For some, we act as if emotions are a result of the Fall, therefore, we stuff them or ignore them. For others, we act as if emotions are king and allow them to rule us.” **(Robert Kellerman)**

II. Emotions are part of God’s original design.

- We are created in the image of God. And God is an emotional God. After creating Adam with emotions, God proclaimed what He had created as “very good.” Genesis 1:31.
- Emotions allow us to laugh, love, be passionate, and even grieve.

***Psalm 17:11** “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*

- God is saying that our emotions are part of us that is fearfully and wonderfully made!

“God create our emotions to work in harmony with our other two most fundamental faculties: the mind and the will. Just as our minds enable us to think and our wills enable us to choose, so our emotions enable us to respond.” (**Carolyn Mahaney & Nicole Whitacre**, *True Feelings...God's Gracious and Glorious Purpose for our Emotions*)

III. Biblical truth should inform our emotions.

- God intends for us to obey with our emotions as well as our actions.

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

- When we contemplate all that God has done for us by sending his son to die for us it becomes the foundations for our love and our obedience.

Philippians 4:4 *“Rejoice in the Lord: again, I will say, rejoice.”*

Psalms 9:2 *“I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.”*

Romans 12:15 *“Weep with those who weep.”*

Deuteronomy 6:5 *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”*

Col. 3:15 *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.”*

1 Peter 1:8 *“Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”*

“True religion, in great part consists in the affections.”
(**Jonathan Edwards**)

IV. God’s intentions for our feelings and emotions broken by sin.

- When sin entered the world every aspect of human life was affected. We are no longer the way God created us to be. We are out of order.

Ephesians 4:17-19 *“Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.”*

- No longer depending on God properly leads to hard hearts which leads to callous emotions. We are not evaluating our hearts properly which leads to self-sufficiency. We therefore either have out of control emotions or over controlled emotions.

“There is a saying that goes like this, you do what you do, you feel what you feel, because you think what you think.” (**Amy Baker**)

- What you believe to be true will rule your heart and affect your emotions.

V. Sinful use of our feelings and emotions.

- Our emotions can affect our bodies and our bodies can affect our emotions.

- Medications, illnesses, injury and constant pain certainly cause distressing feelings and emotions.
 - Lack of sleep, working too much or eating wrong foods have an effect.
 - As women, we all know hormones are a huge factor.
 - Caffeine, sugar and alcohol cause a change in feelings.
 - And in some cases, chemical changes in the brain cause feelings that do not register properly in your brain.
- As real as these circumstances are they are not an excuse to let our feelings control us.

Romans 12:9 “*abhor what is evil*”

Ephesians 4:26 “*be angry and do not sin.*”

- Our emotions are created for the glory of God but we can often use them to make everything about ourselves instead.

“The deepest issues of the human struggle are not issues of pain and suffering, but the issue of worship, because what rules our hearts will control the way we respond to both suffering and blessing.” **(Paul Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemers Hand*)**

James 1:14 “*But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*”

“The bible teaches us that our “feel likes” are frequently desires of the flesh. Most of our “felt needs” are idolatrous desires.”
(David Powlison)

Anger

- Anger usually comes from a heart that we are not getting something that we feel we deserve. We usually blame something or someone outside of ourselves.
- We become more aware of the effect on us and we are unable to really analyze the situation. We are looking outward not inward.
- Let us ask ourselves some questions that may help us discern our hearts. What am I wanting right now that I am not getting? Respect? Love? Approval?

Romans 8:28 “*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purposes.*”

- If I am being controlled by my emotions what are they telling me is true about God?
 - Wrong thinking: Perhaps that he is not watching out for me.
 - Right Thinking: Psalm 23 tells me he is my shepherd caring for me.

Fear

- What am I fearing right now?
- What am I dreading?
- Where is my hope at this point?
- What are they saying that I believe about myself?
 - Wrong thinking: Perhaps that I deserve a trouble-free life.

- What do these fears say about what I believe about God?
 - Wrong thinking: Perhaps that he is not trustworthy. That he is not good. That he won't protect us from harm or danger.
 - Right thinking: That God is near and I can cry out to him and he will answer and secure me.

1 Peter 5:7 “Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith...”

Discontentment

- Discontentment by definition is dissatisfaction with one's circumstances.
- With our electronics, so close at hand Facebook, blogs, Instagram and Pinterest can inform our expectations of our lives as we see others and assume they have the perfect life.
- We could ask ourselves questions like:
 - What would make me happy?
 - In what is my hope right now?
 - Am I doubting God's goodness to me?

“The heart of every person is a fount of competing desires. We rarely do anything with one simple motive. Most of the time there is a battle within. The desire that wins will shape your behavior.”
(Paul Tripp)

“Trust and obey, then feelings line up.” (**Rosaria Butterfield**, *Secrets of an Unlikely Convert*)

VI. God is recreating us in His image.

- The good news of the gospel is what makes this imminent in our lives. Jesus died for us, suffered a death we deserved to die to satisfy God’s justice to fully pardon us.
- He not only pardoned us but he adopted us as sons and daughters and He became our father. But that is not all He has done for us. He changes us into a different person, a new creation. He gives us a new heart, a new spirit and a new identity.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 “*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.*”

2 Corinthians 5:17 “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*”

Romans 6:9-11 “*We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must **consider** yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*”

- This command is that of right thinking. To think of yourself rightly.

Romans 6:22 “*But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and it end, eternal life.*”

VII. Making our feelings and emotions work for us in a redeeming way.

- Rather than trying to ignore, deaden or elevate the importance of emotions God wants to use them to alert us to what is going on inside of us.

Feelings can alert us that our desires are wrong.

“Remind yourself of who you are and what you are. You must talk to yourself and say: ‘I am not going to be dominated by you, these moods shall not control me, I am going out, I am breaking through.’ Shake them off.” (**Martyn Lloyd-Jones**, *Spiritual Depression*)

Psalm 42:5 “*Why are you cast down, o my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.*”

“If we want to know supreme joy there is only one thing to do. Really seek him, seek Jesus and turn to him. Don’t commiserate with yourself, go directly to Jesus and seek him alone and ask for his help.” (**Martyn Lloyd-Jones**)

Matthew 6:33 “*Seek you first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you*

Application: When a sinful emotion happens, what do you do with it?

- Admit and identify what you feel. Name what you are feeling accurately. I am angry...I am offended...I am anxious or worried. I am afraid...I am discontent.
- Cry out to God! Honestly share your feelings with him. We can do that because we have a Savior who can relate to our problems.

Hebrews 4:15-16 *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

- The psalms are full of many honestly shared emotions and feelings.

Psalm 69:1-3

Psalm 10:1

Psalm 13:1,2

- Use your emotions to examine your heart.
 - What am I wanting right now that I am not getting?
 - What would make me happy?
 - What hope has been crushed?
 - What am I believing about God?
 - Am I trusting God, believing his word or believing my feelings?

I John 1:9 *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

VIII. Conclusion

“When we lose heart, when we feel helpless to change our emotions, we must remember the gospel. God, who did not spare his own Son to save us from our sins (Rom. 8:32) will not leave us to drown in our emotional rip currents. There is no feeling too strong from which he cannot save. There is no person who has drifted too far that he cannot reach. The Life-guard of our souls has come, and he will rescue us.”

- God’s word and his truths are the anchor of your soul in times of troubling emotions and feelings.

Matthew 11:28 “Come unto me all you who are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”