

The Season of Pentecost

Spiritual Transformation #4: Renewing Our Emotional Life

INTRODUCTION

⁶ I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning. ⁷ For my sides are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. ⁸ I am feeble and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart. ⁹ O Lord, all my longing is before you; my sighing is not hidden from you. ¹⁰ My heart throbs; my strength fails me, and the light of my eyes-- it also has gone from me. (Psalm 38)

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR EMOTIONS

A. We Share Them with God

¹ *But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things And the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel. (Joshua 7)*

⁵ *... as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. (Isaiah 62)*

B. They Are an Essential Part of the Good Life God Wants Us to Have

Good Emotions Make Life Worth Living -

²⁴ *There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God (Ecclesiastes 2)*

¹² *I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; ¹³ also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil-- this is God's gift to man. (Ecclesiastes 3)*

C. Our Emotions Must Be Acknowledged and Dealt with

Deny them, but they don't deny you.
They go underground: Guerilla warfare against your soul!

D. They Are the Seat of Our Motivations

1. They are the source of our willing & desire
2. We'd like to think: We rationalize, we choose, we feel good about things; but to the contrary - *we feel, we choose, we rationalize*

II. THE PROBLEM OF DISORDERED EMOTIONS

A Lesson from the Cretans:

³ For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. ⁴ *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,* ⁵ *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,* ⁶ *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior* (Titus 3)

III. WE ARE CALLED NOT TO STOICISM BUT TO EMOTIONAL MATURITY

⁵ *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, (Ephesians 4)*

A. The Goal:

A spirit of *sophrosune* - reasonableness, sound judgment, or moderation: *having one's emotional life under control of one's rationality or thinking*

B. Emotional Maturity Is a Gracious Gift of the Spirit

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age (Titus 2)

C. The Journey toward Emotional Maturity Is Powered by the Love of God

³ *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,* ⁴ *and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,* ⁵ *and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.* (Romans 5)

⁸ *Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, (1 Peter 1)*

IV. HOW ARE YOU DOING IN YOUR EMOTIONAL LIFE?

¹⁶ *So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day....* ¹⁸ *as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4)*

Practice the practices that lead to emotional health:

A. Body Life:

We were made to live in community - as others enjoy life we also live life more fully through them.

B. Bear One Another's Burdens

1. Finding comfort/ giving comfort in the "dailies" of life

¹¹ *Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13)*

2. Getting counsel: emotions are deceiving.

⁹ *Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel. (Proverbs 27)*

⁸ *Poverty and disgrace come to him who ignores instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is honored. (Proverbs 13)*

3. Sharing our deep grief

C. Find Absolution when Needed - *all may, some should, none must*

²³ *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (John 20)*

D. Practice Setting One's Affections where They Cannot Lead to Sadness

¹⁹ *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, (Matthew 6)*

³¹ *... and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. (1 Corinthians 7)*

¹¹ *For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits. (James 1)*

E. Take an Occasional Fast from News outlets TV, Radio, and Internet

F. Care for the Physical Body

Extended periods of Depression – longer than 4 weeks – see your doctor