

February 2015 Newsletter – Dealing With Emotions – Review

One cannot emphasize how wonderful this concept is. God will actually remove from our souls, the pride, the bitterness, the hurt, the anger and everything else connected to the event where we reacted. But we must acknowledge to him our feelings, our hurt, our reaction, our anger. But to do this we have to be able to see it! And even in this we will have to not only deal with the inability to see these things about ourselves, but our unwillingness to see them.

But who is sufficient for these things? No one, but God is! That's why we need to keep on praying and ask God for the wisdom on how to handle these things. *“Is any among you **afflicted**? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.” James 5:13* *“If any of you **lack wisdom**, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” James 1:5*

What God often does is put believers through a similar situation in their lives, or some other situation that parallels what they went through in the past to bring up those old negative feelings that are hindering their spiritual growth and walk with him. These new situations, (tests, trials, pressure), create added pressure on our souls and they create tension in the soul; something we've been trying to avoid. What this forces us to do is get the doctrinal answers for our souls, thus creating growth and more faith.

God is the one who allows and arranges these trials to come into our lives and he supervises them all the way through. And even though they can be quite stressful and painful to go through; they are not there to punish us, but to free us from the things that are hurting us! Remember that for us to acknowledge our sins to God, we must first be able to see them and that means they will have to come up from the subconscious to the conscious mind and that can be quite stressful at times. Especially if these sins are repressed emotions.

In the case of buried emotions, which we acquired due to our reaction to something that took place in days gone by, it often takes a trial of similar circumstances that trigger something inside us and force these old negative feelings up to the surface of the conscious mind. Once they surface, then we can see them for what they are, acknowledge them to God and have them removed from us thereby freeing us from their destructive influence.

But what are emotions? Where do they come from? Are they spiritual phenomena? Or something else? Our emotions are a part of our human Adamic nature, but remember our flesh nature is fallen; it acquired a sin nature through genetics. The element of sin in our bodies was passed down generation to generation from Adam to us today.

We need to understand that the emotions of fear, anger, guilt, grief, jealousy, human happiness and human love concepts that we experience today were not originally present in Adam and Eve in the Garden before they sinned! They had no fear, anger, guilt, grief or jealousy before they sinned! And the two concepts of love and human happiness they originally had were changed into something different. **There is no way in the world that we can experience the love or happiness those two felt before they sinned. And neither could they after they sinned!** That was lost forever!

But God has done something different and infinitely superior for people, when they believe on Christ as their Savior. At the moment of their faith in Christ God creates a **new** nature inside of them; a new nature patterned after Jesus Christ. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17*

And what we experience in our souls is no longer emotional phenomena, but spiritual phenomena! There is no fear, no guilt, no grief, no envy and no anger; and instead of human love and human happiness we now have love, joy and peace! Along with longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Galatians 5:22,23

When we are controlled by the flesh nature, then the different feelings of the emotional complex come oozing into the stream of our consciousness. But when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, then spiritual phenomena come flowing into the steam of consciousness. The key for all believers in Christ is to remain filled with the Holy Spirit and not be controlled by the flesh nature.

And yes the flesh nature does produce negative emotions as the result of our reaction to unwanted stimuli, but it doesn't have to be stimulated to produce them because the flesh produces negative emotions constantly like a weeping rash! Remember, the old sin nature can do nothing but sin, nor does it want to do anything other than sin! And that includes the emotions. Getting the flesh nature to stop having emotions is like trying to get the flesh nature to stoop sinning. It can't and it won't!

There is only one way we can get out of the tyranny and control of the flesh nature and that is through the filling of the Holy Spirit, who, when we are controlled by the Spirit of God, will render inactive the flesh. And we are filled with the Holy Spirit, after having confessed any known sins to God, as we focus our mind in faith back again on the Word of God. *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”* Isaiah 26:3 The word for **trusteth** is the qal participle of *batach*, which tells us that this trusting God is to be ongoing and that when it is, then there will be peace in the believer's soul.

And again we have this relationship of peace to faith found in Romans 15:13, *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”* **In believing** (*pisteuo*) is an infinitive, which tells us that the activity of the verb, which refers to the filling of the Holy Spirit, takes place within the sphere of something, in the sphere of believing. The peace provided by the Holy Spirit comes to us in the sphere of our faith in the Word of God.

In the process of Christian life and growth we will have to constantly deal with our emotions, some days more than others. So much emphasis is placed on the lusts of the flesh it often distracts us from the problem that emotions play in our lives. Most Christians think that there are only a few lusts that we have to deal with, when in fact there are around 28 lusts that the flesh produces! What they don't know is that emotional phenomena is not spiritual phenomena and when we are controlled by one or more emotions, then we are outside the spiritual life dynamic! Some groups incorrectly teach that emotions are spiritual phenomena and they aren't!

When God originally created Adam he created him with a body, which is flesh, and a soul, which is in the flesh, and a spirit, which is also in the flesh. The two lives that he breathed into his nostrils were soul life and spiritual life. *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* Genesis 2:7

Now the body, which has physical life, *bios*, was Adam's point of contact with the material world. His flesh body meant that he was not just in the world, but that he was connected to the material world. The spiritual life he originally possessed was his connection to God. But in his spiritual death due to his sin, he lost that spiritual connection to God. Theologians are split as to whether he died spiritually, or that he was spiritually disconnected from God. Most agree he died spiritually.

Adam was created with a **soul**, *nephesh*, which has the ability to think in different capacities, to choose and to feel. But what does it mean to *feel*? In a way feelings are the soul's ability to relate to one's environment and to other people on a non-physical, non-intellectual level similar to the concept of the senses. In the physical realm the **eyes** connect the soul to the existing world. The sense of **smell** further connects the soul to the outside world in a way the eyes cannot. Then there is the sense of **hearing**, which connects us to the external world in a way the eyes and nose can't. The sense of **touch** also connects us to the outside world in a way the others can't. And finally there is the sense of **taste** opening up another capacity for relating to the outside world.

Yet these are not emotions, nor are they thought! The emotions were Adam's soul *senses*, if you will, but they were more than that. They were the ability to operate on an higher level than the physical senses, which gave him the capacity for the enjoyment of his environment and for Eve. Adam's emotions gave him the capacity for **happiness**, a sense of euphoria. They gave him the capacity for **peace**, a sense of tranquility, contentment and well being. And they gave him the capacity for **love**; love of God and love for Eve.

It isn't accurate for us to use the word emotions when talking about Adam and Eve in the Garden before they sinned against God, because that would be trying to read back into the original couple before the Fall **our concept and experience of emotions today!** We can use the term **emotions** when talking about **our** feelings today, but when we refer to Adam and Eve we should use the terms: of having the unfettered capacity to enjoy life, the capacity to love and the capacity for happiness.

There is no way of comparing the soul's dynamics of emotions today with the soul's capacity before the fall. And the soul's capacity for love, happiness and peace was a separate dynamic from its spiritual dynamic with the Lord, but its capacity for these things proceeded out of its spiritual relationship with God. Once Adam lost his spiritual relationship with the Lord he also lost his capacity in these areas. He no longer had the love he had before, nor the peace of mind, nor the happiness he once had. Instead he experiences fear, anxiety, worry, apprehension, bitterness, guilt, shame, grief, sadness, depression and all the other emotions we experience today. We got them from him! Even the love dynamic Adam once experienced for Eve was on another planet in a different galaxy.

Now when it comes down to the salvation in Christ we enjoy today, God did not rectify, remodel, or renovate any part of the flesh. It is utterly corrupt and beyond repair. What God did for us is create an entirely different man altogether! *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new** (kainos) creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* 2 Corinthians 5:17 This passage refers to the new man as *kainos*, which has the idea of being new as to quality, while other passages refer to him as *neos*, which is new in time. God create an entirely new species of humanity patterned after the God-man Jesus Christ.

For those in Christianity, who are trying to pass off emotions as spiritual phenomena, are confusing the flesh with the spirit. Or those who are saying that the Spirit of God works through human emotions are those who are trying to put new wine into old wine skins. Human emotions come from the flesh nature and are not to be confused with spiritual phenomena. If we had it before we were saved, then it is not a part of what God created anew in us!

Perhaps the problem lies in those who confuse spiritual phenomena with emotional phenomena is that whenever they have been truly filled with the true Holy Spirit and experience the love, joy and peace of God, they mistakenly assume that these are emotions, when in truth they are not emotions, but spiritual phenomena produced by the Holy Spirit in the new nature.

There is the flesh and the things that belong to it and there is the Spirit and the things that belong to it. And the flesh is totally **incapable** of producing any spiritual concepts! It not only is incapable of doing so, it is **unable** to do so! If it could do it, then it wouldn't want to; and if it wanted to, then it couldn't. "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*" Romans 8:7

There is no way that the emotions of the flesh nature, which are able to be happy can produce the spiritual **joy** that God has for us. There is no way that the emotions of the flesh nature, which is able to produce human love can produce the spiritual **love** of *agape*. There is no way that the emotions of the flesh nature, which are able to be peaceful can produce the spiritual **peace** that God has for us.

The **flesh** produces: "*Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings,*" Galatians 5:20,21, along with pride, and the emotions of fear, envy, grief, guilt human love and human happiness. But the **Spirit** is life and peace! "*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*" Romans 8:6

Romans 8:7 gets into the source of our problem, "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*" The mind of the flesh is **enmity** (*echthros*) toward the God. It is not subject to the Law of God, or the will of God, neither can it be in submission to God. It doesn't want to and it isn't able to. So how in the world could it ever produce any spiritual phenomena? The answer is it **can't!** That's why God had to create something entirely new! Which he did in the new nature of every born again believer in Christ.

The word **enmity**, *echthros*, which has the ideas of bitterness, resentment, hate, implacability and irreconcilability, along with the actions of a war being waged against you to thwart everything you want to do, or to destroy you. The flesh is not only God's enemy, but ours as well! So it is no wonder that we have problems in living in the spiritual life that God has provided for us! "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" Galatians 5:17 And to state or think that it can produce spiritual phenomena is absurd beyond measure! How can the enemy do what you want it to do, when it is totally opposed to what you want to do?

Repression, suppression and denial are some of the ways the flesh keeps from acknowledging our sins to God, but so is tension myositis syndrome. These are just a part of the warfare that the flesh uses, in addition to the lusts and pleasures of the flesh, to keep us from living in the spiritual life of peace and joy. As long as we are in a state of denial, as long as the subconscious directs our attention to some physical problem, then we will avoid being conscious of our sins, hence avoid confessing them to God.

Now one should always have any physical problem checked out by a doctor, but the subconscious frequently uses a physical problem to divert the conscious mind's attention away from troubling emotions. An interesting phenomenon in this area is that whenever the individual is able to see through the physical subterfuge, then the unconscious mind will create another problem in the body to get the conscious mind to focus on it. The key to getting on top of this is the same as the key for getting on top of the problem of dealing with our lust, pleasures and emotions is that we need doctrinal information, which sheds the light on these problems so we can overcome them. Bible Doctrine, plus confession of sin and the filling of the Holy Spirit will ultimately give us the victory over these things.

We've been discussing the emotions and the negative impact they have on our spiritual life, on our bodies, and on our social life. Now we need to see the impact that **pride** has on our emotions in the areas of fear, anger, guilt, grief, envy, human love and human happiness.

Pride is the mental attitude that sees itself above others, above other people, above other believers, above authority and above God. It rejects authority; it rebels against authority; it resents authority and refuses to submit to authority. It is anti-grace, anti-faith and anti-doctrine.

Pride is in the hearts and minds of every human being and we acquired it genetically from Adam and Eve and ultimately from Satan, who is the king, or epitome of pride. *“He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.”* Job 41:34 *“Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”* Ezekiel 28:17

Pride's relationship with **anger** is that we get angry when we don't get our way, or when we have to do what we don't want to do, or when we don't get to do what we want to do, or when we're hurt, or insulted, or offended. Pride and the rebellious will are wrapped up together in the flesh. Having to go through what we don't want to go through; having to do what we don't want to do; not being able to do what we want to do are the first part of the concept and deal with things outside of us. The second part deals with our **reaction** to these things, which comes from pride and the rebellious will.

So it is our **pride that reacts to the unwanted situation**, which triggers the emotional reaction of anger, or the anger complex of: 1) bitterness/resentment, 2) fuming anger/intense burning anger, 3) malice - the desire to hurt others in some way, 4) maligning others by slander, gossip, 5) arguing, 5) vicious arguments, the desire to hurt others with words, 6) then into physical violence of every category.

The initial reaction to something unwanted in our lives is what **bitterness**, *pikria* in the Greek, is all about. And from that reaction, then we go off into the anger complex spiraling ever downward into one worse form of anger followed by another. So we know that we are not filled with the Holy Spirit and that we've reacted to something along the way on our journey through life and that pride is involved.

Now we need to see the role that pride plays with the emotion of **fear**, but before that we need to understand how we can deal with our pride and effectively check it altogether. We will never get pride out of us permanently for it is resident in the flesh nature, but we will be able to apply the doctrinal solution so we can deal with pride when it arises in us.

The biblical counterpart and solution for the mental attitude of pride is having a mental attitude of **humility**! So the question is how do we get a mental attitude of humility? The answer sounds simplistic, but it is the answer – **by humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God!** *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”* 1 Peter 5:6

But how does one humble themselves? We see all sorts of things people do to **act** humble, or to portray themselves as being humble; the way they talk, the way they dress, the way they act, the way they carry themselves, which are nothing more than an outward show of humility, which is the essence of what hypocrisy is all about. But humility goes much farther than that; it really addresses one's mental attitude! One's outer appearance is never the issue. Remember pride is a mental attitude and so is its counterpart humility. People can appear to be humble, but be as arrogant as can be on the inside. So how do we humble ourselves? And in what area?

In 1 Peter 5:5, “*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God **resisteth** the proud, and **giveth** grace to the humble.*” it says that God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Or God is opposed to proud believers, but gives grace to humble believers. Now we all want God to bless us in our lives, but this passage teaches us that this is all conditioned upon our mental attitudes! If we are proud, then he is opposed to us and everything we want to do in life. But if we are humble, then he will pour out his grace on us. He then goes on to tell us how to be humble.

The next verse says, “*Humble yourselves therefore, (in light of his opposition to man's pride), under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.*” 1 Peter 5:6. Verse five gives us the **solution** for pride by having a mental attitude of humility; and verse six tells us **how** to be humble by being obedient to God's rule over us.

Verse five tells us to be **clothed with humility**, *tapeinophrosune*, which is a composite of two words: *tapeinos* – humility, and *phrosune* – one's mental attitude. So we are to adopt the mental attitude of humility. In verse six we have “*Humble yourselves therefore, (in light of his opposition to man's pride), under the mighty hand of God,*” - ταπεινωθητε ουν υπο την κραταιαν χειρα του θεου. The word for **humble** is the arist passive imperative of *tapeinoo*, which is a command to start doing something, which would be to start humbling yourself under the mighty hand of God by doing what he says!

The word for **therefore** is *oun* and it tells us to go back and think about what has been previously stated, draw a doctrinal conclusion from that, then effect a doctrinal application. Which tells us that seeing that God is opposed to proud believers, but gives grace to humble believers, we therefore all need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

The word for **mighty** is *krataios* and is a power word like *ischuo* – to have the power to prevail in something, such as a battle because one has the strength to overcome the situation or the enemy; and *dunamis*, which denotes the inherent strength of something, but *krataios* referred to the power of a ruler, which power would be found in his army, money, or wisdom.

The word for **hand** is *cheira* and is a figure of speech for the rule of God over his universe, which includes us as well. **Under** is *hupo*, which denotes the superiority and authority of God's rule over us, therefore we are to be under his rule. And the word for **humble yourselves** is *tapeinoo*, which meant to submit to God's authority by obeying him. It meant that one was to look around and identify who the authority is and submit yourself to their authority. In our case it's God!

This is one of the best passages in Scripture for dealing with the mechanics of how to deal with one's pride and how to be humble. And we do so by submitting to the Father's rule over us. We do it by 1) understanding that the principle of authority does exist in the universe, something that Lucifer and 1/3 of the celestial beings rebelled against, as well as the first couple here on earth; 2) we are to be in submission to that authority; 3) we are to recognize **who** the authority is; 4) we see that it is *Yahweh* the eternal God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; 5) and our submission to his authority is demonstrated in **obedience**.

The mental attitude of **pride** says, I don't have to submit to God, I don't have to do what he tells me to do. The mental attitude of **humility** not only recognizes that he does have to be in submission to God, but actually does so by doing what God says. The power and will to do that comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit. “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” Php. 2:13

Doctrinal believers know that they are to be under the authority of God's Word, where they learn it, live by it and seek to make it the standard of their faith, but also by which they live their life. But there is another area where we have to submit to God's rule over us and that is in our hearts. Most of the ancient Israelites refused to do that. They had the outward religious show, but their hearts were far from God. *“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have **removed their heart far from me**, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.”* Isaiah 29:13

And we see some of this going on still today in NT Christians. We might let God rule in our businesses, but only so we can make more money. We might let God rule in our homes, but only so we can have some peace and quiet, which is fine. And we might go to church on a regular basis, give our money and help out in our submission to God and that's fine also.

But have we ever considered that God's rule over us is not just to the externals of our lives, or what lies on the surface, but down to the deepest level of our core of existence? To our souls? And this is where we get down to living life in the sphere of the spiritual life dynamic, which he has created and given to every believer in Christ. One that effects our minds and our hearts!

That means, under the concept of humility, (inner humility not the outward show), in this matter of submitting ourselves to God's rule over us, we are to confess our sins to God, live in the filling of the Holy Spirit, claim the promises of God by faith, apply Bible Doctrine to the situation, press forward in dealing with the scar tissue garbage in the soul and go on to spiritual maturity. All so Christ can be sanctified in our hearts. *“And let the peace of God rule **in your hearts**, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye **thankful**.”* Colossians 3:15

And it is through spiritual regeneration where we were created anew by the indwelling Holy Spirit when we believed on Christ as our Savior, and through the filling of the Holy Spirit where he controls us at a given time and not our flesh natures that we are able to do what God wants us to do and actually do it! *“Therefore if any man **be in Christ**, he is **a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* 2 Corinthians 5:17

So when we get into the area of our feelings from the emotional complex what we are dealing with is phenomena from the flesh nature. Whether it is fear, or anger, or guilt, or envy, or grief, or wanting human love, or wanting human happiness, what we are dealing with are feelings and these feelings can and do keep us outside the spiritual life! And there is only one way to handle them and that is confess our sins to God, recover the filling of the Holy Spirit and focus our attention once again back on the Word of God.

Now when we are filled by the Holy Spirit, he produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance in our souls. He produces the **spiritual love** of *agape* the **spiritual peace** that Jesus Christ gave us, **spiritual joy**, not human happiness, **patience** in dealing with people and ourselves, **gentleness** in our souls not harshness, intrinsic **goodness** in us, **faith**, **meekness** where we do not resist God or his dealings with us, and **temperance** where we exercise self-control over ourselves. And also **hope**, the confidence of good things awaiting us in the future.

So the key in all this, when dealing with our emotions, is to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit and get back to living within the sphere of *agape* love! It might be a struggle for us to extricate ourselves from whatever feeling we have been caught up in, but the goal is to get back to spiritual love.