

May 2014 Newsletter - Dealing With Emotions – Review Twenty

Oftentimes we are experiencing some physical pain of one kind or another. The more we think about it the worse it becomes. And it becomes a vicious cycle. One should also get their pains checked out by their doctors, but so often is the case that **our subconscious is using physical pain to distract our minds from our painful feelings!** Or from experiencing spiritual realities. Physical pain is a great “attention getter”. It is quite successful in getting us to get our minds off of painful emotions, because as painful as the physical pain is the subconscious considers it less painful than the feelings we have buried deep inside.

Doctrinal insight leads the believer to start thinking psychologically and not just physically. It sees patterns. It sees other things going on in all of this and asks the questions, “I wonder if this is just physical? I wonder if something emotional is going on here? I wonder if this is related to stress? I wonder if the defense mechanism of repressed emotions is behind this?” Now that we have gone from the phase of thinking physical to thinking psychologically, we go to thinking spiritual.

Over the years wisdom has taught us that stress in the soul, fear, worry, anxiety, apprehension, dread, resentment, anger, jealousy, guilt complexes and the repression of our feelings, which we learned in childhood, create pain, disease and all sorts of physical disorders. So by thinking psychologically and applying spiritual solutions, we will begin to have victory over this self induced misery and have a degree of relief. It is the spiritual life dynamic, which produces peace and joy in our souls, that keeps stress out of the soul, sin out of the soul, childhood problem solving devices out of our souls, and even protects our souls from the raging attacks of demons!

Twenty-one

We are complicated creatures and there were many various factors that went into our physical and emotional development, especially in the formative years of our childhoods. There is the matter of our genetics that we inherited from our parents. There is also the matter of how our parents raised us, or didn't. Then we go on to the community environment we were raised in. And then, was there any physical, sexual, or emotional abuse factors in our youth? Were we nurtured in love? Or were we abandoned, or neglected, to fend for ourselves?

* All of these concepts go into us **developing coping techniques** to deal with the things we had to go through and we take them into our adult lives. But, as Christians, **God has something far better for us to deal with our problems and that is living in the spiritual life dynamic. It's how we were able to cope with what we had to go through back then, but now we need to leave those things behind and live life by faith in the Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit.**

Many people regret, or are bitter, over the **past**, and others are fearful of the **future**. But Paul gives us a spiritual problem solving device and that is to **forget** those things that lie behind, (consider them of no consequence in the light of eternity), and to **press forward** to what lies ahead - God's plans for our future! “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, **forgetting** those things which are behind, and **reaching forth** unto those things which are before,*” Philippians 3:13

In a way the conscious mind functions as the parent, while the subconscious mind as the child. And the subconscious mind is still afraid of letting the conscious mind, the parent, see how it feels. So the subconscious denies and represses how it feels, so it won't be scolded or castigated.

Twenty-two

It is the spiritual life dynamic that protects the soul from stress in the soul, sin in the soul, false doctrine in the soul, garbage in the soul and the soul's defense mechanisms to handle problems. But in the absence of the spiritual life dynamic, which is activated by faith in the Word of God, under the filling of the Holy Spirit, then stress enters the soul, the sin nature is activated, and the negative feelings of the fear complex, anger complex, etc, start flooding the soul.

The spiritual life works like this: we are exposed to the teachings and promises of God's Word and we metabolize them by believing them. Now that they are in our souls we are able to apply them by faith. **Intake** of the Word by faith; **application** of the Word by faith. But when we fail to believe God's Word, or apply it by faith to our situations, then negative feelings come about.

In Genesis 15:1-3 we see that Abraham was **afraid** and **worrying**; the fear complex of the emotions in action. *“After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, **Fear not**, Abram: I am thy **shield**, and thy exceeding **great reward**. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.”*

This is a classic case of the emotion of **fear** arising out of a sense of perceived insecurity. A perceived sense of insecurity produces fear, and fear produces torment in the soul. Perceived insecurity is a sense where one feels vulnerable to threat, (real or imagined), to one's survival, or well being. The core of which is one's ego, the real man or woman inside, then in layers outward: one's body, one's family, one's home, one's business or finances, one's community and one's nation.

Now what led up to Abram **worrying**? When Abram had heard that Lot, his nephew, and company had been taken captive by Chedorlaomer, he armed 318 of his servants and went to war against the king and defeated them. Afterward the king of Sodom offered Abram all the spoils for doing so, a massive fortune that would have set him up for life. But Abram, out of faith and doctrinal principles refused it. *“And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:”* Genesis 14:22,23

Abram stood on a doctrinal principle of faith that reflected his trust in Yahweh to take care of him. He acted in faith and integrity in fighting against Chedorlaomer, and he acted in faith in refusing the spoils of war. But, as so often the case is with God's people, after we go back home and sit down in the quietness of our tents, we begin to think. We begin to think about our age, our health, our future, our earning potential in our old age. (Today that would be forty-five and above. Try to get a job today, when you're over forty-five). We begin to think about this fortune that was dumped in our laps that would have set us up for life and think, “What have I done?”

This is where *Yahweh* sovereignly and graciously appeared to him in a vision telling Abram that he was his shield and his exceedingly great reward! That he will **protect** him and that he will not only provide for him, but **prosper** him. *“After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy **shield**, and thy **exceeding great reward**.”* Genesis 15:1 The **shield** metaphor refers to Yahweh's protection of Abram, and all others who believe in Jesus Christ. And the **reward** aspect refers to God taking care of us without man's help.

Abram's trust in *Yahweh's* spiritual life dynamic motivated him to go out and risk his life in combat over a doctrinal principle. It also motivated him to stand on doctrinal principles when it came to money and security, But it started to ebb when he was alone thinking about his future and his age. So God spoke to him in a vision communicating to him to him doctrinal principles that he could live his life by in faith. He believed them and once again had his peace and confidence.

This principle applies to all of Abraham's children 4,000 years later. It is faith in the promises of God that create the spiritual life whereby we can face and overcome the various problems and trials we will go through in life. The spiritual life deals with these problems; the soul is protected; the sin nature remains dormant; negative feelings are never aroused and we retain our peace.

Twenty-three

In Genesis 30 we have another situation where the lack of faith in the Word, the absence of the spiritual life, sin nature activity, negative emotions aroused and the acting out of these emotions created a real problem in the lives of Jacob, Leah and Rachel. We know the story in Genesis 29 of how Jacob fell in love with Rachel and how beautiful she was with a great shape. And we know how he labored seven years for her hand in marriage. And how Uncle Laban did the “bait and switch” routine and gave him Leah instead. And how he had to work another seven years to get Rachel. So he worked fourteen years in total to get Rachel. But I don't think she appreciated Jacob's sacrifice of fourteen years, as we see in the passages, because she was self-absorbed and full of emotional sins.

But there is also an indication that Rachel was involved to a degree in idolatry for she stole her father's idols! **Images** is *teraphim* and refers to Laban's household gods. “*And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the **images** that were her father's.*” Genesis 31:19 “*And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my **gods**?*” Genesis 31:30 “*Now Rachel had taken the **images**, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.*” Genesis 31:34

In Genesis 29:17, “*Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.*”, we see that Rachel was lovely in form and beautiful, but Leah had weak eyes. “*Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful.*” NIV The word **tender**, *rak*, meant moist, red, weak, infirm, or dull eyes. It was regarded as a defect.

This is an all-familiar theme in families where one of the sisters stands out more beautiful than the others. The **beautiful sister** usually thinks she's better than the others. She's pretty; she's got a good figure and she can get guys to do what she wants them to do. While the **plain sister** is never an object of desire. The plain sister often grows up feeling not loved, not wanted, not pretty, lacking self esteem and pretty much feeling down about herself.

While the prettier sister becomes lifted up in pride and arrogance thinking she's better than the others. She becomes narcissistic, (as Satan did), and often ignores the spiritual dynamic because she doesn't think she needs it. Beautiful women that lack integrity, modesty, humility and a reliance on the spiritual life dynamic will always grow up to being self-absorbed and making other people's lives miserable, especially their husbands! Even Proverbs 11:22 says, “*As a jewel of gold in a **swine's snout**, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*” “*Like a gold ring in a **pig's snout** is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.*” NIV

When people look at beautiful women, or handsome men, they think that they've got it made. But there are problems that come with being **plain**, and there are problems that come with being **beautiful**! Each creates their own separate psychological dynamic in the soul, with accompanying feelings, that need to be recognized and dealt with. The plain woman will grow up feeling less than the others around her, while the pretty woman will grow up feeling better than those around her!

Jacob loved Rachel. Actually he was in love with her. This presented a problem for Leah for she knew that Jacob didn't love her and this compounded the problems she had of being second-best behind her sister. If she felt inferior to her sister in the looks department, one can see how this would fuel the fire. But it was God who gave her the first child; he gave her more children than her sister, and the Messiah came through her union with Jacob, not her sister! In his grace God was bestowing great honor on her.

But in Genesis 30:1 we see that Rachel, (probably for the first time), became jealous of her sister because Leah had borne Jacob four sons and Rachel none. *“And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.”* You see, it wasn't enough for her to be beautiful, more beautiful than her sister; it wasn't enough to have men look at her all the time; and it wasn't enough for her to have a husband that loved her – she wanted it all! In her self-centered narcissism Leah wasn't even a consideration for her.

Having children in those days for women was really a big deal. It was something that would give them “bragging rights” among the other women as they walked around town. And it still is! Especially if the kids are successful in the things of the world. But we can see how totally self-centered, jealous and competitive Rachel was with her sister.

We can also see how her narcissism manifested herself in her emotional tirade against her husband! *“Give me children or else I die!”* Kind of over-dramatic isn't it. She manifests no Bible Doctrine, no humility, no divine viewpoint, no spiritual life dynamic and demanding in her placing unrealistic demands on her husband.

She was so self-absorbed that all she thought about was **herself**! It mattered not to Rachel that Jacob had to sweat and slave like a farm animal for fourteen years to get her. So Jacob had had enough from this out of control female, who happened to be his wife and beautiful, so he snapped back in anger laying everything out plainly for her, saying, *“And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, **Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?**”* Genesis 30:2

And even after God allowed her handmaid Bilhah to bear a son, she still didn't learn her lesson! She still was in **competition** with her sister! *“And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I **wrestled** with my sister, and I have **prevailed**: and she called his name Naphtali.”* Genesis 30:8 *“Then Rachel said, “I have had a great **struggle** with my sister, and I have **won**.” So she named him Naphtali.”* NIV

Rachel demonstrated no doctrinal capacity of soul, no humility, nor positive volition toward the things of the Lord, but rather a self-absorption and a childish outburst toward her husband. She should have been content with the things in her life that God had provided for her. She was a beautiful woman, a nice figure, a husband who loved her, her needs were being taken care of and she belonged to God! She should have concluded in her own mind that, for whatever the reason, she could not have children and be content with that! She should have taken the matter to the Lord in prayer and let him work it all out in his own time. But instead, she lashed out at her husband and blamed him, (as so many women do), and made life miserable for him. But we see Jacob set her straight in the matter.

Twenty-four

The spiritual problem solving devices from God are more than sufficient to protect the soul from the outward pressures of life. They can only get into our souls, if we open the door and let them in. We open the door and let stress into the soul whenever we stop relying on the spiritual problem solving devices to handle our problems. When we decide to handle our problems using our own ideas in our own strength, then we turn from faith in the promises of God to handle our problems. That's how we open the door and pressure rushes right past us and becomes stress in the soul.

In the biography, "The Arms of Krupp", it talked about the life of the villagers back in the 16th century and how the wolves would come into town every night and prowl up and down the streets of the town. As long as the townspeople would stay inside their homes and keep the doors locked, then they would be safe. No one was so foolish as to open the door to their home. And so it is with our souls. We need to keep the "doors locked" with the spiritual life dynamic to keep the problems of the world outside.

The Word tells us that **it is the peace of God that protects our souls from stress, not anything that we might be able to do in our own works and strength.** *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* Philippians 4:7 The peace of God functions as a fortress wall designed to protect those inside.

The lesson we need to learn is that we can't protect our souls from **stress**, only God's peace can! And the same thing goes for protecting the soul from the **anger** complex. We're offended, or we didn't get our way, so in pride we react with anger. It is the spiritual life dynamic and the spiritual problem solving devices that God supplies that will protect our souls from the anger complex, as well as, all the other emotions of the emotional complex of the soul.

God in his grace has provided a spiritual solution to protect our emotions. His way works; ours doesn't! His spiritual solutions that help us with our problems, pressure and stress are grace solutions and they are doctrinal solutions. Doctrinal solutions means that God, in his grace, supplies to us Bible Doctrine for us to apply to our problems. But most Christians will try to handle their problems in their own strength and will always fail. **There is nothing that we can do that will replace the peace of God!**

What this means is that we are going to have to find out what God's spiritual, doctrinal provisions are and start applying them to our lives. Things such as: Cast your burdens on the Lord; put it into the Lord's hands; pray without ceasing; forgive one another; trust in the Lord with all thine heart; confessing our sins, etc..

Basically the definition of a **problem** is anything that we don't want in our lives! **Stress**, which is internal, comes about as the result of us reacting to our problems, or trying to handle our problems in our own strength, instead of applying doctrine to the situation. People tend to control their lives so they can create an environment where they feel comfortable, safe and secure, as well as creating an environment where they can control what happens to them in life. Whenever anything that comes into our lives that "upsets the apple cart" then that's a problem, which induces stress.

We have no control over the things that happen to us in life. To think we do is **delusion**. The only thing we have control over is how we **respond** to them. We can either react with our emotions and the works of the flesh nature, as most do, and get stressed-out, or we can respond to the situation by applying the Word of God to it.

Twenty-five

God has provided every believer in Christ his or her very own, unique, spiritual life called **godliness** in the Bible. It is our protection from the cares, the pressures, the allurements, the temptations and the stress found in the world system. It is also our protection from the flesh nature, including the seven feelings of the emotional complex, and the attacks of Satan.

The word for **godliness** is *eusebeia* and to understand what it is we need to see that when we believed on Christ as our Savior God created in each believer a new nature. “*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 “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will **begat he us** with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*” James 1:17,18

The next thing that we need to see is that our new natures are **strengthened** and **renewed** by means of *epignosis* doctrine, which is the Word of God that we have learned, understood and metabolized by faith. “*And have put on the new man, which is **renewed** in knowledge after the image of him that created him.*” Colossians 3:10

Another important aspect of us living in the dynamic of our own spiritual life is the filling of the Holy Spirit. And I mean the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, not what is being presented today in so many heretical churches. “*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but **be filled with the Spirit**,*” Ephesians 5:18

The **fruit** of which is love, joy, peace, etc., not the undignified, unbiblical activities of these false churches where people are running around, acting crazy, barking like dogs, howling like wolves, etc.. “*But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*” Galatians 5:22,23

There are also the concepts of sitting under the teaching of the Word of God by a Pastor-Teacher in a local church and confessing our sins to the Father. “*If we **confess** our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” 1 John 1:9 But these three: the new nature, the filling of the Holy Spirit, and Bible doctrine metabolized by faith are the essence of living in the spiritual life.

The definition of **godliness**, *eusebeia*, is not just the presence of a new nature, which every believer in Christ has, but the presence of the spiritual life dynamic in the soul of the believer in Christ and its application in their life. God has given every believer in Christ the spiritual equipment, if you will, but for them to have a life of godliness, the spiritual dynamic must be activated, as detailed before, and then they must apply it to their life situation.

Presently we live on earth in human bodies. This is the material reality of our existence. But we also have new natures in us, in which we are to live, and that is the spiritual reality of our existence. Sort of like a bubble inside a bubble. The material reality is temporary, the spiritual reality is eternal. The spiritual life inside us is a part of, or belongs to, a spiritual reality of a different dimension and place. In fact, the spiritual reality is the true reality for all believers in Christ. Not that the material world is an illusion, but that the spiritual world we belong to is much more real to us than anything here on earth. It is a part of eternity and we belong to eternity!

So what that means is that greater importance and emphasis must be given to the spiritual life of which all believers are a part of. And when the material world comes pressing in on our souls, which it does, then we overcome it by occupying ourselves with the things that pertain to the spiritual life. We're to set our minds on things above, not on things of this earth. "***Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***" Colossians 3:2

To **set your mind** is the imperative mood of *phroneo* telling us that we're commanded to do this and that it is a mind-set. In this construction it tells us that we're to shift the way we are looking at things and adopt a spiritual perspective. Many Christians view the material world around them as their reality, so they become occupied with it, pursuing after the things that the world has to offer, and adopting the world's viewpoint on life. It has become their reality! But the true reality for all believers in Christ is the spiritual reality!

After we're dead and gone, after this present material universe, (material reality), is destroyed and gone, then only the spiritual reality will endure into eternity. So what is needed for Christians is a shift in thinking. We need to adopt a different perspective, a different viewpoint. We have to start thinking that, even though we live in a material world, we belong to a spiritual world and that spiritual world is our true reality.

When we get our eyes on the things of this world and not the things above, the emotional complex of the soul will become activated triggering fear, anger, guilt and the rest, which will eventually trigger all sorts of physical problems. And it all goes back to stress in the soul. The physical world puts **pressure** on the soul, and if that pressure is not handled by faith in the Word, then it will convert to **stress** in the soul; and stress in the soul triggers the emotional complex of the soul. It makes one want to ask himself, I wonder how many of my physical problems I am suffering from are as the result of unresolved emotions and stress in my soul?

Twenty-six

A very important negative factor in the believer's mind-set is **pride!** Pride is the mind-set that has a great, negative influence on one's emotions. **Pride** deals with the idea of height, while **humility**, the *tapeinos* word group, deals with the idea of lowliness of mind.

Tapeinos was used of one who was poor, or one of little social importance and influence. From there it was used of the mind-set where one was in obedience to God and conformed their behavior to the laws and doctrines of God. The humble believer did not see himself above God's commands, while the proud believer saw himself above them. So **humility speaks of the mind that is in agreement with and subject to reason conforming itself to the teachings (reason) of God**, while **pride**, which is the mental attitude that sees itself above all that, does not. Therefore, pride does not submit to God and his Word in obedience.

So what does all this mean to us? It means that God already has a spiritual provision to prevent the negative emotions that the OSN generates from affecting our souls, or deal with them if they are already activated. The key to our success in dealing with the negative emotions, which all of us have because of the OSN, is directly related to whether we have a mental attitude of **pride**, or one of **humility!** If it is one of **pride**, then we will reject God's spiritual provision to deal with our emotions and seek alternative approaches. If our attitude, though, is one of **humility**, then we will seek to apply God's spiritual provisions.

Our success or failure in dealing with stress and our negative emotions is directly related to our application of Bible Doctrine to the situation, or our failure, or refusal to do so, and all that is linked to the believer's personal pride or humility.

The childhood self defense mechanism skills of repressing or suppressing our feelings, which may have helped us cope with, or even survive, certain situations of our childhood, become counter productive in adult life when it comes to applying spiritual and doctrinal provisions that God has given us for the peace and well being of our souls. And Christians tend to take these coping mechanisms of their childhoods into their lives as Christians.

When we consciously, or unconsciously, push our feelings down into the subconscious what we are doing is denying that we feel a certain way. And in denying them we are doing the exact opposite of what one of God's spiritual problem solving devices call for and that is confess them to God! *"If we **confess** (acknowledge, admit) our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:9

Fear is a feeling and when we're afraid we are to confess our fear to God. But if we repress or suppress that feeling of fear, consciously or unconsciously, then the reverberation of the feeling of fear will spread throughout our souls turning into apprehension, worry, anxiety, dread and the rest of the fear complex to the place we will be living in a state of fear! We will be fearful and our souls will be tormented. *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because **fear hath torment**. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."* 1 John 4:18

Anger is a feeling and when we become angry or bitter we are to confess our anger to God. But if we repress or suppress our anger, whether consciously or unconsciously, then that feeling of anger will reverberate and spread throughout the soul going from bitter resentment, to burning anger, to vindictive malice, screaming, arguments and even violence if not stopped.

Feeling guilty about something is a feeling, and if and when we do, then we are to not only confess the sin that we think it's connected to, but also the feeling of guilt as well. But if we repress or suppress the feeling, then it too will spread throughout the soul and turn into a guilt complex and eventually the believer will develop a shame index where he or she can get to the place where they become ashamed of who they are as an individual.

Now if we're **consciously** aware that we are having certain feelings, it does make it easier to deal with them because we can acknowledge them to God, receive our forgiveness and cleansing from him, thereby removing them from us. But if we're **unconsciously** repressing them, then it makes it more difficult because now we have to figure out what in the world is going on inside our souls.

Twenty-seven

If we're not aware that we are pushing what we are feeling down into our souls, things such as, fear, anger, guilt, grief, envy, etc., then how in the world are we going to be able to deal with them? How are we going to bring them to "the light of day" so we can confess them to God? Looking for clues and seeking solutions are vital to the process. Clues, such as, the lack of peace in our lives, being in a negative mood all the time, physical discomfort. And one of the biggest things that will help us is asking God for wisdom in the matter.