

November 2016 Newsletter – Dealing With Emotions – Review

We need to create oases of tranquility, (and we can with God's help), where we can meditate on the Word of God. These areas we do this in will become oases of tranquility because we will be meditating on the Word of God. And, as we do so, we will find any of the flesh's emotions that have been agitated will start to calm down.

This is where we begin by confessing any known sins that we are aware of and then start asking God for wisdom on what's wrong. Perhaps we have internalized anger going on inside, but we don't know it. We've lost our peace, our mental attitude stinks and our body is tied up in knots. We don't know what the problem is, nor do we know why it is there. So we keep on praying to God for answers. And as the Holy Spirit reveals to us what's wrong and we confess it to God, then we recover our peace.

Maybe we're stressed out over what's going on in America, or the condition of our marriage, or going through a divorce, or a problem with the kids; maybe we're stressed out, or maybe we're anxious, or angry, so we not only confess it to God, start claiming the promises of God, then take doctrine and apply it to the situation. Such as, we're just “pilgrims passing through”. *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;”* 1 Peter 2:11

As believer-priests we can apply the reverse rationale: 1) We don't know what is wrong. 2) We don't know why our souls are agitated. 3) We then recognize that our souls are agitated. 4) We realize that we are in our emotions and not the new nature. 5) We've allowed stress to enter our souls. 6) We've reacted to pressure. 7) We realize that we must handle the pressure by faith in the Word of God. 8) We confess our known sins to God. 9) WE start claiming the promises of God. 10) We focus our attention back to Bible Doctrine. 11) The agitation is gone. 12) Peace is now in our souls.

Negative emotions are activated when under the control of the flesh nature. The old nature is in control when we are not under the control of the new nature. The new nature goes into operation when the believer is focused on the Word of God by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit. So faith in the Word of God is vital in this matter. *“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.”* Romans 15:13

This is where the doctrine of election is so beneficial to strengthening our faith. When we begin to see that our salvation is all from God, then our hearts can finally rest in faith and trust. The spiritual atmosphere of faith in the Word produces peace and joy in our souls and protects our souls from the negative emotions of the flesh nature. *“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”* Romans 11:5

The human activity of striving and trying always results in troubling emotions, but total grace calms the emotions. We must be considerate of the emotions, in that, we don't want to work them up, but we do not want to live in our emotions! *“So then it is not of him that willeth (wanting), nor of him that runneth (trying), but of God that sheweth mercy.”* Romans 9:16

Spurgeon, Hodges and the Reformers were against the free will doctrine of Arminianism because it led directly to legalism and legalism is a spirit of bondage that leads directly to fear, the agitating of the emotions. *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”* Romans 8:15

The reason why is that at the root of free will is the **uncertainty** that one has not really come to Christ, that he has not fully trusted in Christ, or that he has not fully exercised his free will. There is always that **nagging sense that there has been something left undone**. Arminianism brings "me" into the equation, while election looks solely to God and his grace!

The soul is divided between the conscious and the subconscious. Thinking and feeling takes place in both, but it is in the conscious mind where we are consciously experiencing our thoughts and feelings. It's sort of like a computer where the hard drive is the subconscious, while the monitor is our conscious.

The soul also has a self-defense survival mechanism where certain thoughts, feelings and memories are pushed down into the subconscious where we don't have to think about them, feel them, or remember them. We do this, and automatically so, because we are ashamed of them, embarrassed by them, afraid of them, afraid of the pain and hurt they bring, afraid of the repercussions that we might get from others, afraid of the loss of face, afraid of rejection, afraid of coming face to face with ourselves!

But these repressed thoughts, feelings and memories are not dead, perhaps dormant, but not dead. They are not conscious, but they are still there in the subconscious nevertheless. At best they are in a state of inactivity, but they are living energies that operate below the level of the conscious mind and they do have an effect on the soul and the body. The normal way that people handle their feelings are: repression, suppression, denial, dissociation, projection, transference, expression and acting out. But the way that God wants us to handle them is acknowledging them to ourselves and to him.

Most of us are content to keep our feelings buried down into the subconscious, "let sleeping dogs lie", after all there's a reason why we pushed them down there in the first place! But oftentimes in life certain circumstances and events will come about that trigger these old feelings and we will not be able to keep them buried any longer. Old memories, old hurts, old thoughts and feelings will start to rush to the surface where the conscious mind has to experience them. Now we have to deal with them. This usually happens in our adult life where childhood trauma with its memories, thoughts and feelings, which we repressed to protect the soul, and it did protect the soul back then, will surface in our adult life. **But what was protective in our childhood becomes destructive in our adult life.**

The thing we need to keep in mind is that the problem with the flesh's emotions can prevent us from living in the spiritual life dynamic, so we have to learn to deal with them. We do this by not neglecting faith, the promises, Bible Doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit. We must learn how to deal with the various emotions that pop up along the way, as we are walking in the spiritual life. The flesh's emotions can prevent us from living in the sphere of the spiritual life dynamic and they can even cause us to turn around and go backwards! So we have to deal with them, so we don't live in them!

One of the major mistakes that Christian churches make today is confusing emotional phenomena with spiritual phenomena. They are **not** the same! One is produced by the flesh, while the other is produced by the Holy Spirit operating in the new nature. We need to understand that our fallen natures had emotions before we were saved and they still have them **after** we were saved! The thing that changed is that we all acquired a **new nature** that God created in us at the moment we believed on Christ as our Savior. *"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 God did not revamp, restore, or rehabilitate the old nature we inherited from Adam, but created something entirely new and different in us; a new nature patterned after and from Jesus Christ himself; a new species of humanity.

The emotional complex of the soul is made up of: fear, anger, guilt, grief, envy, human love and human happiness. While the spiritual phenomena that the Holy Spirit produces in us is listed in the NT as: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, hope, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, forbearance of one another, and forgiving one another.

Before Adam and Eve sinned they did not have the emotions of: fear, anger, guilt, grief and envy. They did have the “emotions” of love and happiness, but there was no way that we could ever know what that felt like for they experienced those two “feelings” in a sinless state. The five senses of: sight, sound, touch, taste and hearing were how their inner souls related to their external world. But their two “senses” or “emotions” were how their inner souls related to external souls.

Before the Fall Adam and Eve only had two feelings, love and happiness, but after the Fall these two feelings became twisted and distorted. Also after the Fall Adam and Eve acquired five other feelings: fear, anger, guilt, grief and envy, which they did not have before. We see **guilt** and **fear** revealed when the Lord entered into the Garden and Adam said to him, “*And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was **afraid** (fear), because I was **naked** (guilt, ashamed); and I hid myself.” Genesis 3:10*

And we certainly see **anger** with Cain in the time that he and Abel both brought their offerings to the Lord in Genesis 4:3-5. “*And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he **had not respect**. And Cain was **very wrath**, and his countenance fell.*”

The word for **had not respect** is *shâ'âh*, which meant to turn the head away from. When the Lord did this Cain reacted with pride, negative volition, bitterness and anger. Now the word for **anger** was *chârâh*, which was the strongest form of anger, but when used with the word *m^e'ôd* it intensified it even more! **Cain became instantly furious!**

Cain's offering was one of human good, which was a denial of human bad; he was saying in effect that he was not sinful and really didn't need to be saved. But when the Lord rejected it he instantly erupted in anger. (Whatever happened to how good you were?) Later on when the Lord instructed him in the way of grace he rejected that and in his fierce anger he went out and murdered his brother.

So now we have the concepts of: self-righteousness, negative volition, rejection of Bible Doctrine, rejection of grace, human good, disobedience, arrogance, bitterness, jealousy, anger, rage, denial, self-justification and murder. We even see guilt in him in Genesis 4:13, “*And Cain said unto the LORD, My **punishment** (*'âvôn*) **is greater than I can bear.***” Some translations have *'âvôn* as guilt.

As God instructed Cain in the OT, as what to do, so he instructs all of us how we are to get right with him through faith in his Son, Jesus Christ, if we're unbelievers; and for believers he instructs us as to how we are to live in the spiritual life. It's a strict protocol provided to us by his grace. But, as with Cain, many out of their pride and sense of human good reject God's protocol plan of grace!

The protocol plan of God's grace as brought out in Bible Doctrine is whereby the problem is **defined**; the solution is **outlined**, and the path we are to follow **clarified**. When God asked Cain, “Why are you angry?”, he was revealing to him that he had an anger problem and told him what the biblical solution was to handle the problem, which was to offer the proper sacrifice.

But, as we know, Cain was arrogant, negative to Bible Doctrine, negative to grace, full of human good and self-righteousness, and full of emotional sins, among which were anger and jealousy, so he went out and murdered his brother Abel. His pride motivated him to reject God's protocol on how to get right with him and instead substitute his own ideas on how to do that, which God promptly rejected.

The dynamic for Christian living for NT believers today has already been provided by God and he is inflexible in this matter. It's just like worshipping God. How are we to worship God? Does God give us all a choice in the matter? Does he allow us to establish in our own works and our own ideas of how we are to worship him? Or does he clearly state how he to be worshipped? Christ made this patently clear in John 4:24, "*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must (dei – must, absolutely have to), worship him in spirit and in truth.*"

People in their churches have concocted all sorts of religious fal-de-ral they employ in their "worship" of God,, but God never authroized that! What he did authorize, and there is no going away from this as to how he is worshipped, and that is through the true filling of the true Holy Spirit and the teaching of Bible Doctrine!

The same thing goes for Christians in their walk with God. It is God who has provided us new natures; he has indwelt us; he regenerated us through faith in Christ; he gave us both Jesus Christ and the faith to believe in him; he has given us his Word; he has given us the local church and a man with the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher to teach his Word; he has provided us the filling of the Holy Spirit; he has provided confession of sin; he has provided for us all that is needed to live in the spiritual life dynami. All we are to do is walk by faith in him and his Word.

There are **four** major areas in the flesh that cause believers problems in living in the spiritual life of the new man: 1) stress in the soul, which we have allowed to come into us from the outside world; 2) sin in the soul, which comes from the sin natures of these bodies; 3) false doctrines in the soul, which we have accepted from non-doctrinal sources; 4) the inner conflict of the defense mechanisms of the soul in the area of repressed emotions.

Life has always had its share of problems and problems bring stress with them, if they are not handled by faith in the Word of God, or, as many would say, leaning on God for the solution. For the believer living at the end of the Age the pressure, problems and stress will intensify like no other time in history. So it is vital that the believer needs to learn and apply how to deal with the conflict going on at that time via faith in the Word, prayer and the filling of the Holy Spirit; the increased pressure (tribulation), OSN operation, false doctrine and apostasy and a world gone mad during that time mandates that we all live in the spiritual life dynamic.

When people go through traumatic trials in their lives, even from years gone by, they have a tendency to repress the hurt, then dissociate and distance themselves from it, even maybe deny it ever happened. There in the subconscious it is now "out of sight" "out of mind", or so we thought, until something triggers it and it comes to the surface. Now they're going to have to deal with it, but how?

This is where Christ's grace comes in. 1 Corinthians 10:13, "*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*" As God provides a spiritual provision to bear the trial, and as God provides a spiritual provision for us to bear our burden in life, so God also will provide a spiritual provision along with dealing with our problems!

Sometimes we will be thrown into a situation where there is no way out of it apart from learning and applying the doctrinal truths that God wants us to learn and dealing with our own internal problems. It won't go away; we couldn't avoid it; we can't get out of it, so the only option we have is to learn and apply the truth, which will be our only means of getting through it to the other side. We will have to do it by faith, but faith has to have its object, which is Bible Doctrine.

It is the trial which often brings these buried feelings up to the surface; feelings from recent events and even feelings from things gone by in our lives.. Now the believer will have to apply the doctrinal truths that pertain to such things to deal with them. Remember, we cannot solve our emotional problems with our emotions. We can only solve them with doctrinal solutions. We must also remember that oftentimes this dynamic of surfacing feelings and the subconscious trying to repress them causes tension in the soul. This tension can create a problem called tension myositis syndrome, which will bring in various physical problems to get our minds on them instead of on the psychology of the problem and dealing with them through the spiritual life dynamic.

We are all familiar with the problem Christians face with the world system, the flesh nature and the devil. Inside of us is our human spirit (created in us at the moment of salvation); it is surrounded by the soul; and the soul is surrounded by the flesh nature body; and the body is surrounded by the world; and over all that outside of us is the devil. So there are a lot of things that can cause us problems.

It is these external things: the world, flesh and devil that put pressure on our souls and if they are not handled by living in the spiritual life, then the **pressure** they bring will come into our souls creating **stress** in our souls. Stress in the soul isn't sin, but it will be readily converted into sin in the soul and the first sin(s) in the soul that will arise will be: 1) the emotional complex of the soul, 2) the lust complex of the soul, 3) false doctrine in the soul, 4) the inner conflict, (which brings more stress), of trying to live life and solve our problems by using childhood defense mechanisms of repression, dissociation, denial and acting out our feelings.

For example, let's take a look at living in the end times, or apostasy, or under a tyrannical regime somewhere. Pressure abounds all around the believer; the solution is to live in the faith rest life in the power of the Holy Spirit. But if he doesn't, then he has stress in the soul with fear and anxiety now in the soul. He needs to confess his sins and get back into the faith rest drill with the filling of the Holy Spirit and he will recover spiritually.

But if he doesn't then the result of fear in the soul will be as described in Luke 21:34, "*Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.*" Fear and anxiety will cause people to turn to such things as drugs and alcohol to cope with the pressure. But there is only one solution for pressure and stress and it's recovering the spiritual life dynamic of Christ's peace.

When the pressures of life are not met with prayer, faith in the promises, concentration on Bible Doctrine, confession of sin, having a personal sense of destiny, the filling of the Holy Spirit and peace, then the result will always end up with stress in the soul. And if not remedied doctrinally, then that stress will be turned into sin in the soul. And the first sins in the soul will be the emotional complex of the soul and the first emotion that will come into play now will be the fear complex usually followed by the anger complex. And if we're at this place, then we need to wake up and realize that we are caught up in the grip of our emotions and remember that we can't solve an emotional problem with our emotions; we must turn back to the spiritual life dynamic as the solution.

If it makes more sense to handle pressure and stress outside our souls, instead of trying to deal with them in our souls, then why don't we? The answer is the flesh nature; the flesh doesn't want to utilize spiritual problem solving devices for it wants to do things based upon its own strengths and abilities! Which are always ineffective in our spiritual warfare leaving us with failure and misery. But misery can be a motivator to apply doctrinal principles.

Man acquired the emotional complex after the fall of Adam and Eve. Prior to that they did not know what the feeling of **fear** was, nor did they experience the feeling of **anger**, nor the feeling of **grief**, nor the feelings of **guilt** and shame, nor the feelings of **envy** and jealousy. And the feelings of human **love** and human **happiness** they had before the fall were but a hollow memory of something they used to have, but not sure of what it was. But God has provided us something infinitely superior to that in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The problem we have is that our emotions block off the filling and ministry of the Holy Spirit; they block off any flow of spiritual phenomena through our souls! When we allow the outside pressures of this life penetrate into our souls, then we now have stress in the soul, which will activate the fear complex of the soul. If we react against things that are going on around us in life, then we will activate the emotional complex of anger in our souls.

In the Garden, before the fall, Adam and Eve had no pressure, no stress, nothing to react to and no emotional complex to deal with. But after they sinned they acquired a fallen nature and emotions. And after they were cast out of the Garden, they pretty much reacted to everything going on around them. Why? Because they were now vulnerable; they were now insecure, they were afraid; they were angry and ashamed.

But God has given us something to rise above all that; he has given us a spiritual provision in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is our provision for dealing with the pressure of living in this world and in these bodies; he gives us the inner sense of security and peace in our souls accomplished through the faith rest drill of faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word. He is also our provision for dealing with provocation so we don't react to people or what's going on around us and thereby we are able to retain our peace.

When the Lord told the disciples that he was going to leave them and return to heaven they became very sad. But he also told them that he was going to send to them the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who would indwell them and every other believer in Christ living around the world. This would guarantee that physical proximity to the Lord was no longer an issue concerning our inner peace.

The problem that so many of us have is that somewhere in our souls we have an emotional reaction to something that was done to us, said to us, or said about us, or something that was taken from us, or denied us, which reaction is bitterness that leads to anger, which also prevents the filling of the Holy Spirit and any spiritual phenomena from taking place in our souls. "*You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.*" 2 Corinthians 6:12 NASB

So what has to be done is to root this problem out, to get at the bottom of it and let it go. It is the Pastor-Teacher's job to teach the doctrine to facilitate that and it is the believer-priest's responsibility to take these matters to the Lord in their own priesthood for their healing. All of us have the responsibility to deal with our own emotional issues so we can deal with things that prevent spiritual phenomena from flowing through our souls in the filling of the Holy Spirit.