

# EMOTIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. "Emotion": "An intense mental state that arises subjectively rather than through conscious effort & often accompanied by physiological changes; a strong feeling: the emotions of joy, sorrow, reverence, hate, and love." (American Heritage Dictionary).
- B. Isaac Singer said, "The very essence of literature is the war between emotion and intellect"
- C. Study needed because of extremes in religious world
  - 1. Excessive "emotionalism" rely on feeling ignore truth  
What's "felt in heart" placed above Scriptures
  - 2. Stoic faith, cold, emotionless religion with empty, exercises

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTION IN OUR RELIGION

- A. Appreciate value of emotions in efforts to go to heaven
  - 1. Get excited and emotional about gospel message
  - 2. Unmoved emotionally, check spiritual pulse
- B. All great Bible characters were emotional.
  - 1. Moses' anger burned, broke tables of stone Ex 32:19
  - 2. Joseph's emotions/feelings for brothers Gen 45:1-4
  - 3. Joshua tore clothes & fell to earth on face Josh 7:5-7
  - 4. Jesus displayed emotions many times Jhn 11:33-36; Lk 19:41-44; Heb 5:6-8; Jhn 2:13-16
  - 5. Paul emotional. Acts 20:31; Acts 17:16; 2Cor 7:5-7

### II. PLACE OF EMOTION IN PREACHING AND TEACHING

- A. God intended gospel to be informative and inspiring
  - 1. "Power" from Greek word "dunamis" we get words "dynamo," "dynamic" and "dynamite" Rom 1:16
  - 2. Gospel moves out of complacency, and to heaven
- B. Avoiding "zeal without knowledge," some go to other extreme of "knowledge without zeal" Rom 10:1-2
  - 1. Avoiding emotionalism, to no emotions at all
  - 2. Some preaching legalistic, sterile & without emotion.
    - a. Informative, but do not "move" or "inspire"
    - b. Sound like technical, statistical data to listeners
- C. Peter preached with great emotion in Acts 2
  - 1. Yes, much of sermon hard facts; yet he intended to reach specific hearts and he did Acts 2:23b, 36-37
  - 2. Peter gave answer we give; but we give it to people not asking question - people not made to feel guilt of sin enough to really want the answer

### III. PLACE OF EMOTION IN DEALING WITH SIN.

- A. First, we should be emotional about our own sin
  - 1. Godly sorrow produces repentance 2Cor 7:10
  - 2. Peter realized his sin and wept bitterly Matt 26:75

- 3. Can become "past feeling" Eph 4:17-19; Jer 6:15 feel no shame, remorse, or guilt for their sins
- B. Second, feel grief for those who are lost in sin
  - 1. Jesus felt compassion for lost, confused masses
  - 2. Paul great concern for kinsmen Rom 9:1-3; 10:1
  - 3. Grieve for millions lost without gospel Psa 119:136

### IV. PLACE OF EMOTION IN WORSHIP

- A. We must worship God in spirit and in truth Jhn 4:24
  - 1. Denomination and some brethren forget "in truth"  
We often forget the "in spirit" part
  - 2. Just going through "the motions of religion," without heart involved, is vain worship Matt 15:8-9
  - 3. Notice the emotion as seen in Neh 8:12.
- B. Emotions involved in various aspects of worship
  - 1. Taking Lord's Supper worthily involves emotions
  - 2. Prayer - must feel reverence and awe
  - 3. Give cheerfully, with joy and gratitude in our hearts
  - 4. Sing with spirit & understanding

### V. PLACE OF EMOTION IN DEALING WITH BRETHREN

- A. Love one another fervently 1Pet 1:22; Rom 12:10
- B. Feel what others feel 1Cor 12:26; Rom 12:15
- C. Consider this emotional scene Acts 20:36-38

### VI. WARNINGS REGARDING EMOTIONS

- A. Emotionalism has place in Christian's life; however, becomes wrong when it is the end in and of itself
  - 1. It is the by-product, not foundation of our faith
  - 2. Emotions must not modify or become basis of faith
- C. Emotions must always be tempered with self-control
  - 1. Self-control in all things Gal 5:22-26; 2Pet 1:5-11
  - 2. Some religious groups today, go to extremes
    - a. Jesus emotional, but always in control
    - b. Spirits of prophets in subjection 1Cor 14:32
- D. Emotions should never come from artificial means.
  - 1. Turn down lights, clap hands, instrumental music, etc.
  - 2. Emotions flow from truth, not from men's devices

## CONCLUSION:

- A. Faithful always emotionally involved in Lord's cause
- B. Emotions major role in early Christians, and must today need hatred for sin and false doctrine; grief for those lost in sin; deep love for brethren in Lord; sympathy for lonely and distressed; fear of eternal torment; longing for heaven; and emotional in our worship
- C. Indeed, we need to get emotionally involved in our religion

(By David J. Riggs -- revised by JLH)