

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. 5:7-8; 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. John 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 8:8-12.
- 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. By-product of faith, 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.

(From a sermon by David Riggs -- revised by JLH)