

FAITH OVER FEELINGS – PART 3

STEPS TO MORTIFYING SINFUL EMOTIONS & CULTIVATING GODLY ONES

- The process of having our emotions sanctified involves putting off ungodly emotions and putting on godly emotions by a renewal of the mind

Colossians 3:1-11 ~ Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him – 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. 12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Be Clear on What Constitutes Sinful Emotions

- Our culture dismisses sinful emotions as something uncontrollable or which stem from merely physiological or circumstantial causes
- Although the tendency might be to attribute sinful emotions to something outside ourselves, we must embrace God's definition of sinful emotions: anger, fear, anxiety, worry, discontentment, unforgiveness, bitterness, despair, depression
- We must let God and his Word define our emotions

Recognize When Sinful Emotions Manifest Themselves in Your Life

- We must recognize when they appear in ourselves
- “We need to identify honestly patterns of sinful emotions and emotional displays. We might need help doing that. We might find it difficult to location someone who is willing to be brutally honest with us, because of our sinful emotions. But it must be done. Without getting defensive, we must make ourselves vulnerable to the truth of Proverbs 27:6: ‘Faithful are the wounds of a friend.’ We should pray that God would help us to search our hearts and help us to see where we are falling short (Ps. 139:23-24). We need to pray for an open ear and heart if we are to change...Once we begin to identify the problem areas, we must isolate the patterns of our sinful emotions from all excuses and causes, both legitimate and imagined...Remember, seeing sin in ourselves is not easy. We are fighting self-deceit (Jer. 17:9) and self-justification...Our first line of defense is to say we are not that bad or our situation is not really a problem. Our second line of defense is to make excuses for why we act the way we do...All that this amounts to, no matter what the form, is fig-leaf theology, defense mechanisms that relieve us of our responsibility. This is a time for ruthless honesty in identifying our sinful emotions, focusing only on ourselves as the culprits.”¹

¹ Brian Borgman, *Feelings and Faith*, 98-99.

Repent of Sinful Emotions

- We must own them, taking full responsibility for them, and repenting of them

Proverbs 28:13 ~ He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

1 John 1:9 ~ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

James 5:16 ~ Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

- “There is a difference between sorrow for sin and hatred of sin: sorrow feels the burden, but hatred flings it away; sorrow loosens the heart, but hatred lets out the corruption; sorrow say, ‘Does sin pinch the soul this way?’ and hatred says, ‘No more sin then.’”²
- “Confession is an act of mortification, it is as it were the vomit of the soul; it breeds a dislike of the sweetest morsels when they are cast up in loathsome ejections; sin is sweet in commission, but bitter in remembrance.”³
- Marks of genuine repentance from 1 Corinthians 7:10-11
 - Earnestness – a desire to clear ourselves of sin
 - Vindication – a desire to restore the trust and confidence of others in you
 - Indignation – anger over sin and the shame it brings
 - Fear – of offending God and falling into sin
 - Longing – to restore broken relationships
 - Zeal – for God and his holiness
 - Avenging of wrong – wants to see justice done and sin avenged no matter the cost

Take the Thoughts Leading to Sinful Emotions Captive

- These wrong thoughts must be wrestled to the ground so that they don’t take on a life of their own and affect the emotions

2 Corinthians 10:5 ~ We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

Be Renewed in Your Mind

- “We mortify and cultivate the emotions through truth. It is the discipline of thinking God’s thoughts after him that aligns our emotions.”⁴

Philippians 4:8 ~ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

- Renewing our mind to cultivate godly emotions involves:
 1. Watching what we put into our minds
 2. Feeding our minds on God’s Word

² Thomas Hooker, *The Soul’s Preparation for Christ: A Treatise of Contrition*

³ Thomas Manton

⁴ Borgman, *Feelings and Faith*, 167.