

A Biblical Theology of Emotions

Selected Scriptures - NCBC, January 31, 2021

Main Point: **God created you with emotions so you may reflect His image and enjoy Him forever.**

- Emotions are a gift from your Creator – Gen. 1:27
- Emotions communicate what you love or worship – Phil. 1:7-11
 - Emotions expose your worship – Mt. 6:21
 - Emotions enliven your worship – Mt. 13:44
 - Emotions energize your worship – Rom. 12:11
- Emotions are affected by many different influences – 2 Cor. 1:8
- Emotions are confusing because of sin's influence – Tit. 3:3

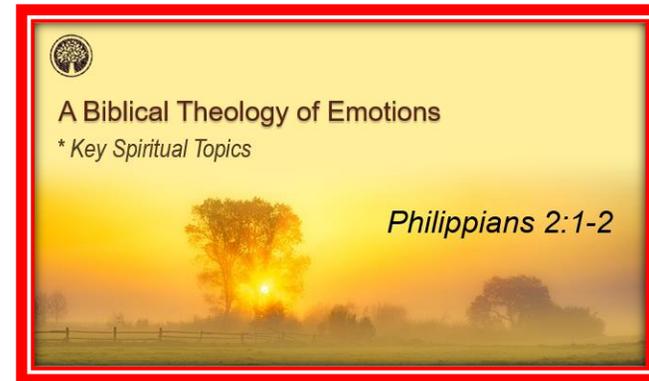
Application: **Don't waste your emotions but engage them in submission to Jesus!**

- Your greatest need is for a new heart with new loves. – Tit. 3:4-7
- Prayerfully engage your emotions through faith in Jesus – Gal. 5:16-26
 1. **Identify:** What am I feeling?
 2. **Examine:** How does this expose what I love or worship?
 3. **Evaluate:** Is my ruling concern godly or selfish?
 4. **Entrust:** How should this emotion fuel my greater reliance on Jesus?
 5. **Respond:** Pursue your satisfaction by trusting and obeying Jesus.

Opening Announcements:

- **Pastor Shaun's Ordination** is scheduled for next weekend, and you are all invited! If you're interested in learning more about what it means to be an elder at New Castle, you'll want to attend the 3 hour ordination council on Saturday morning! Sunday will be a special day that focuses on God's good design for local church leadership. Please plan to come and celebrate with us!

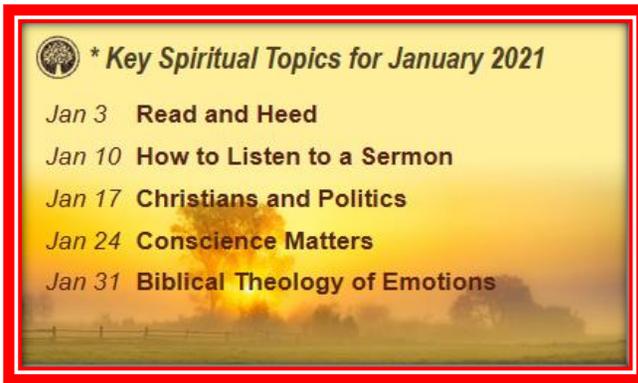
<<Grace and Peace>>



It's always good to sing of God's amazing grace that has come to sinners like you and me. For God's grace offers us great hope as we turn our attention now towards *A Biblical Theology of Emotions*.

Please open your Bible to **Philippians chapter 2** to prepare for our Scripture reading together.

Today's message concludes our special January series on *Key Spiritual Topics*:



This month we've been challenged with a number of topical messages that have caused us to think carefully and biblically about relevant matters for Christians today.

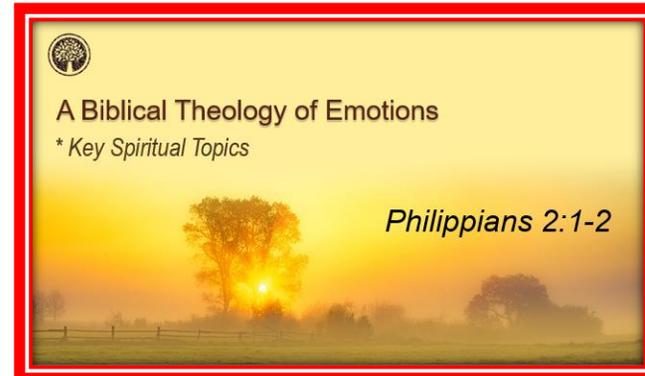
If you're like me, you're starting to itch for our return to our sermon series in the **Gospel of Matthew!** But hang in there...today we have one more message designed to renew our minds in a matter of critical importance for Christians living in our present culture.

After all, there's a lot of emotion being felt and expressed by all of us these days. Probably most of us have experienced strong emotions ranging from despair and fear to anger and delight ... sometimes all in the same 5 minutes! Therefore, as God's children we must make sure we are thinking biblically, and not culturally, about all these emotions we are experiencing.

Historically speaking, Christians tend to fall in one of two extremes regarding emotion: The hyperemotional tribe believes that emotions are everything, and chants the mantra, "*If it feels good, do it!*"

Our tribe tends toward the opposite ditch that believes emotions are nothing, promoting a stoic Christian

rationalism that dismisses emotions as optional, or even sees emotions as a nuisance to our life of faith and obedience.



Therefore we need to open our Bibles to renew our minds with a theology of emotions.

If you are looking for them, you will find emotions all throughout the Bible. So just to highlight the existence of biblical emotions, I've selected two verses from **Philippians** for us to read together.

If you're able, please stand in honor of the reading of God's Word. As I read, please look for any emotions. I'm reading from **Philippians chapter 2, verse 1:**

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

This is God's Word. Please be seated.
Let's Pray.

In order to prevent you from experiencing all kinds of undesirable emotions at the end of this message, I want to be very upfront about the limited purpose of this sermon. Because there's a whole lot that could be taught about God's design of our emotions!

One like-minded pastor intended to do a three-week preaching series on emotions, and ended up preaching 22 sermons before they moved along to a different topic!¹

So since we don't have 22 sermons, or even 3 sermons, to give to this topic...here's how I'm going to approach this particular study.

We're going to spend most of this sermon trying to understand emotions from God's perspective... making sure that when we think about our own emotions, we have a biblical understanding of what's going on in our soul, and why.

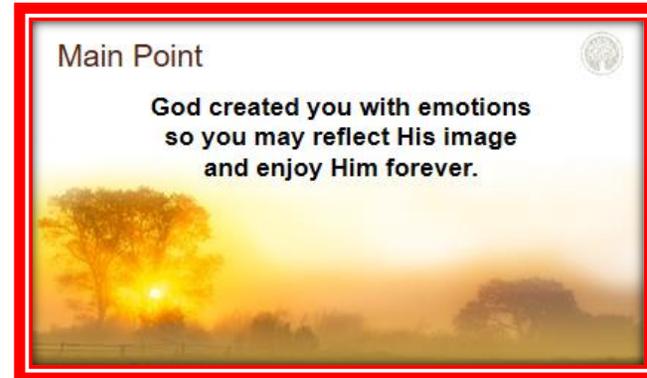
And then in our last few minutes, I will offer some diagnostic questions for engaging your emotions in a godly way.

For some of you, this sermon is just going to be a launch pad into some more involved personal study with the recommended resources on the back of your sermon notes page.

But hopefully for all of us, with God's help, this message will reorient our understanding of emotions, and give us helpful diagnostic tools so that we might not waste our emotions, but engage them as God designed.

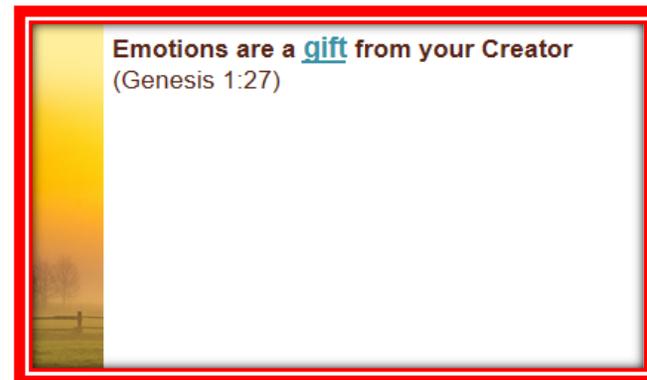
¹ Pastor Brian Borgman, as told in the introduction to the highly recommended book, *Feelings and Faith: Cultivating Godly Emotions in the*
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So here's the main point to understand today:



God created you with emotions so you may reflect His image and enjoy Him forever. God didn't make a mistake when He made you emotional. All those emotions like grief, and anger, and pleasure, and jealousy, and joy, and compassion have a good purpose in your life.

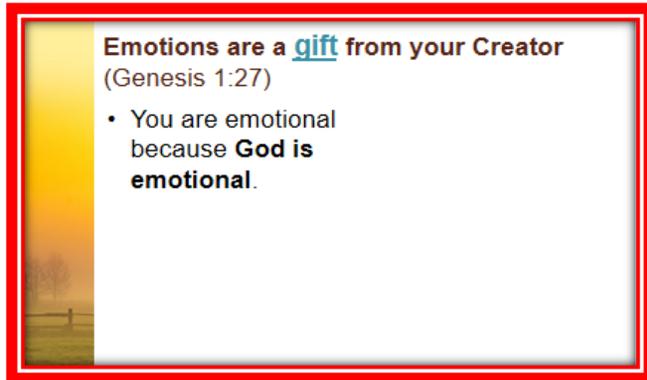
In fact,



Emotions are a gift from your Creator – Gen. 1:27

Christian Life.

Genesis teaches that God made human beings in two genders – man and female,² and both men and women are made in the image of God Himself. This means,



You are emotional because God is emotional!

God created you to reflect His likeness on the earth in all kinds of ways. And because He is emotional,³ He created us with emotions as well.

Now, of course God never sins with His emotions.⁴ But you can't read Scripture without learning that God Himself experiences both *positive* emotions like love,⁵ pleasure,⁶ rejoicing,⁷ delight,⁸ and compassion,⁹ ... and

² Genesis 1:27

³ Historically Christian doctrine affirmed the impassibility of God, meaning that God was above and unaffected by all passions. Even the popular *Westminster Confession of Faith* described God as “without body, parts, or passions.” All the biblical references to God having and expressing both positive and negative emotions were merely dismissed as being anthropomorphic. However, from the beginning of Scripture God reveals Himself as One God in three Persons. He thinks, and chooses, and feels. The biblical witness is clear that although God is eternal, unchanging, and sinless, He is also emotional and able to express and experience both positive and negative emotions.

negative emotions like grief,¹⁰ jealousy,¹¹ hatred,¹² and anger.¹³

So notice:



Both your positive and negative emotions are a gift from God to you. The bright and sunny positive emotions tell us something is right in our world, and the dark negative emotions tell us something is wrong. And *both* positive and negative emotions are good gifts from God.

You see, sometimes Christians believe it's wrong, or even ungodly, to feel bad. Our culture can reinforce this lie, teaching people to mask or manage all negative

⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22

⁵ Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16

⁶ Isaiah 60:5; Luke 3:22; 1 Corinthians 1:21

⁷ Isaiah 62:5; Psalm 104:31; Zephaniah 3:17

⁸ Numbers 14:8; Psalm 18:19

⁹ Matthew 9:36; Romans 9:15

¹⁰ Genesis 6:6; Ephesians 4:30

¹¹ Exodus 34:14; Psalm 79:5; Ezekiel 36:5; Nahum 1:2

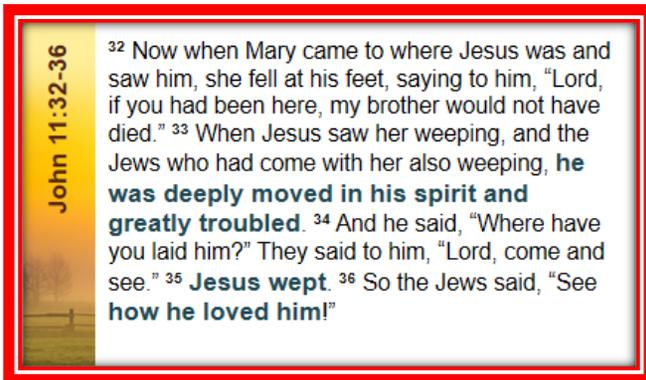
¹² Deuteronomy 16:22; Psalm 5:5, 11:5; Proverbs 6:16; Isaiah 61:8

¹³ Exodus 4:14; Deuteronomy 9:8; 2 Samuel 22:8; Psalm 7:11; Hebrews 3:10

emotions since “real men don’t cry,” or “Mature faith has a stiff upper lip.”

But this is not biblical. Because, as your soul engages brokenness in and around you, it is very godly to feel bad ...with “negative” emotions.

For example, consider Jesus. Jesus is the sinless God-man, the perfect human being. And He feels both positive and negative emotions deeply.

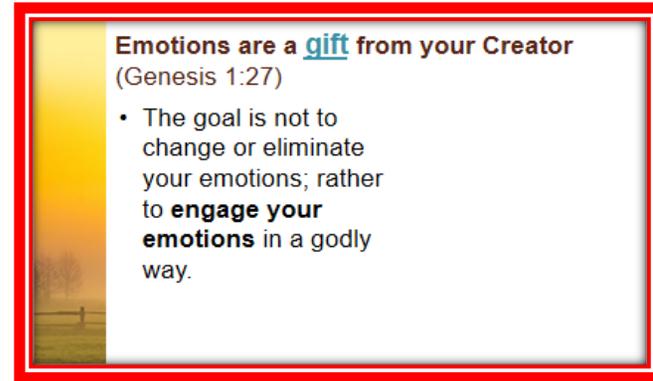


In **John chapter 11**, after Lazarus died, when Jesus saw Mary and her friends weeping, **verse 33** says,

He was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

Sinless Jesus felt negative emotion like grief and anger very deeply. Jesus wept... because Jesus loved. Even though He knew about Lazarus’ imminent resurrection, His love rightly moved Him to deep negative emotion.

So don’t miss this church,



The goal is not to change or eliminate or even give full expression to your emotions. Since emotions are a creative gift to you from God, the goal is rather to engage your emotions in a godly way.

And in order to do this, we must understand God’s purpose for emotions. Why are emotions part of God’s design?

Listen carefully: God gave us emotions because we are created for worship. You and I were made to feel deeply in order to properly know and relate to God Himself.

You see,



Emotions communicate what you love or worship.

Emotions express what you most value. What you care about most is what shapes how you feel. Your emotions are always expressing the things you love, value, and treasure.

When a sports fan stands up and high-fives their neighbor after their team makes a good play...their emotion is expressing how much they value what just happened.

When Jesus wept, his sincere grief was an expression of His love for Lazarus.

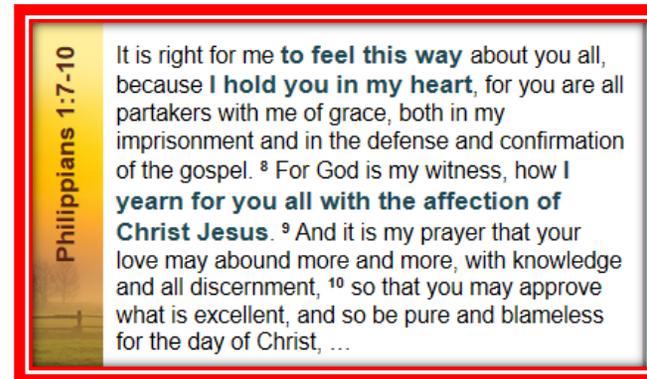
When the apostles were beaten and imprisoned for preaching salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, they

rejoiced that they were counted to worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the Name.¹⁴

Make no mistake: your emotions are rooted in your worship far more than they are connected to your body chemistry or your personality temperament.¹⁵ Your physical body does have a real influence as we'll see in a moment, but we must first understand that emotions are not essentially material, but immaterial.

Your emotions are the language of your heart. They are the surface expressions of your deeper desires and values.

We can see this clearly in Paul's letter to the Philippians.



In Philippians 1:7, Paul writes,

¹⁴ Acts 5:41

¹⁵ After all, remember God has emotions even though He does not have a material body (John 4:24). In Revelation 6:9-11 the martyrs' souls cry out with righteous indignation for the Lord's justice to come. In Luke 16:19-31, the disembodied soul of Lazarus receives comfort while the soul of the rich man is in torment and agony. Also, angelic beings are able to experience emotion apart from a material body. In Luke 2:8-14, the angels

rejoice over the incarnation with "great joy." According to Luke 15:10, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." And all of the visions of heaven's worship in prophetic Scripture describe unceasing worship of joy that seems full of emotion and awe. So while emotions are certainly mediated through our physical body, and deeply influenced by our physical body, emotions are not essentially material or somatic. They are far more than mere neurological sensibilities.

It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart.

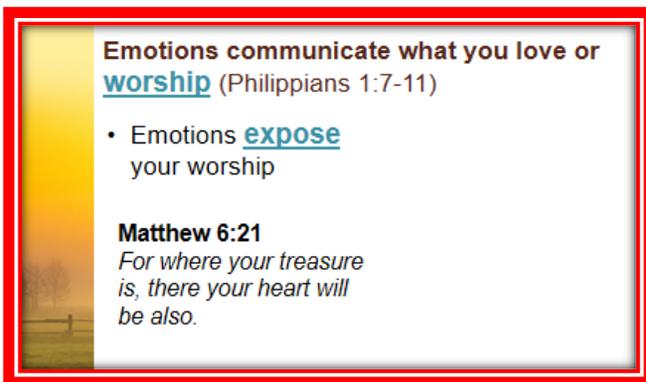
Do you see that? Paul's feelings express Paul's love. Or here's another way to say the same thing:



Emotions communicate what you love or worship (Philippians 1:7-11)

- Emotions **expose** your worship

Your emotions **expose** your worship. Every emotion you ever feel ... no matter if it is bright and cheery, or dark and gloomy... reveals your loves, or what is most valuable and treasured by you.



Emotions communicate what you love or worship (Philippians 1:7-11)

- Emotions **expose** your worship

Matthew 6:21
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Jesus said it this way in **Matthew 6**,

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The emotions of your heart expose what your soul desires and deems most valuable.

So Dad, why do you experience the strong emotion of anger when you have to repeat yourself for the third time to one of your children? Because you value being respected and obeyed.

Mom, why do you experience the strong emotion of anxiety when your teenager isn't home after curfew? Because you love and care for your child deeply, and you want their safety and protection.

Maybe you feel jealous when a friend gets a better grade or some award...because you crave attention or love getting compliments from others.

Emotions expose our worship, therefore we must appreciate our emotions and pay attention to them. For your strongest emotions will tell you what is most important to you.

Paul Tripp describes emotions like an ongoing "worship audit." Emotions are like a check-engine light on the dashboard of your soul... communicating that something I value is experiencing some kind of threat or blessing.

So if you want to better understand the ruling desires and worship of your soul... pay attention to your emotions. For your emotions expose what you love and worship.

Additionally your,

Emotions communicate what you love or worship (Philippians 1:7-11)

- Emotions **expose** your worship
- Emotions **enliven** your worship

Emotions **enliven**, or bring life to, your worship. Your emotions help you relate, and connect to God and others. Emotions allow us to see and feel and taste and take in deeply the reality with which we are engaging.¹⁶

You could say it this way, emotions bring to life the reality of the deeper controlling desires within our hearts. Emotions help us personally engage with another's experience in a genuine and caring way.

This is why God's people love to sing together, by the way. Because music is inherently emotional. Music engages the emotions and embeds God's truth deeper into our souls than could be possible simply by reading the song lyrics together aloud.

All throughout Scripture we can find examples of how our emotions bring relational life to our worshipping desires.

¹⁶ In fact, the way the Scriptures are written as an emotional story, instead of just a bullet list of propositional truths and facts about God, helps us see

Emotions Enliven

Matthew 13:44 The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then **in his joy** he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Revelation 3:16-19 ... because **you are lukewarm**, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ... ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so **be zealous** and repent."

In **Matthew 13**, the kingdom of heaven is likened to a man who finds a treasure in a field, and *in his joy* sells all he has and invests his life in God's kingdom.

In **Revelation 3**, Jesus rebukes the church at Laodicea for being lukewarm, and urges them to be zealous and bring emotional life into their relationship with Him.¹⁷

So this is why God gave you emotions. First, so your emotions can expose what you most care about. Second, so your emotions can bring life to your most valued relationships. And third,

God's purpose for our emotions. Emotions bring to life the truth of God's reality.

¹⁷ C.f. Deuteronomy 28:47; John 4:24



God created you with emotions to energize your worship.

God gave you emotions to physically energize your obedience to Him. Emotions move and motivate us. Emotions provide the needed energy to celebrate what is good, meet the needs of others, process the pain of loss, and pursue future satisfaction.

We see this in **Romans chapter 12** where Paul urges the Christians to,

not be slothful in zeal, but be fervent in spirit as they serve the Lord.

So understand your emotions are God's gift to help you put your values into action. Emotions energize you to act in accordance with whatever you care most about.

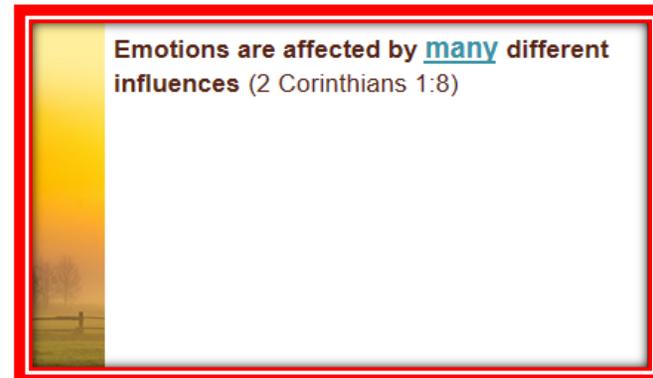
The emotion of anger easily illustrates this point. Have you ever noticed what happens when you feel angry?

Your voice gets louder. Your chest and your jaw tighten. Your heart rate increases, and your face becomes flushed. What is happening?

You are experiencing an emotional energy which God is giving you to correct a perceived wrong. Now obviously that energy can be used in sinful and selfish ways... and when that happens our anger is sinful. But in **Ephesians 4:26**, God urges us to *be angry, and do not sin*. In other words, use the energy of anger to motivate your obedience to God, to love others rather than yourself.

Now you understand why God created you emotional. Your emotions reflect His image by communicating whatever your heart loves and worships.

But now, we need to understand how emotions actually work within us. Because Scripture is clear that our,



Emotions are affected by many different influences.

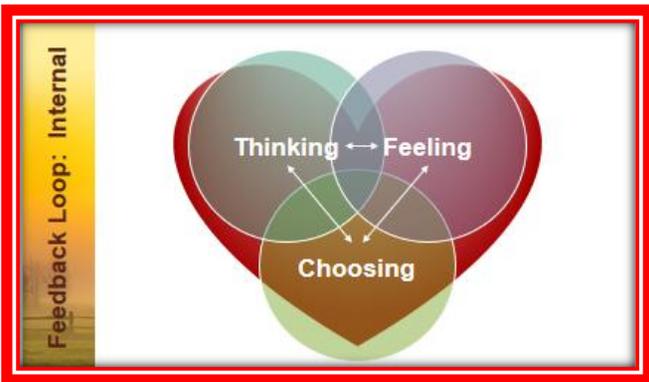
Prior to studying for this message, I've used the memorable illustration of a train to teach the relationship between our heart (the engine), our behavior (the box car), and our emotions (the caboose). And while that illustration can be a helpful challenge to anyone who lives controlled by their feelings, I realize now that illustration is just too simplistic to accurately reflect what God's Word teaches about emotions.

Emotions are affected by **many** different influences (2 Corinthians 1:8)

- My emotions are continually in a feedback loop with both **internal** and **external** stimuli.

In fact, Scripture teaches that **my emotions are continually in a feedback loop with both internal and external stimuli**. Emotions are complicated. Emotions are a whole-person, ever-changing reaction to things going on inside me, and things going on outside me.

I'll illustrate this with a diagram:



Since every person is created to reflect God's image, God creates us as rational, volitional, and emotional beings. So inside every biblical heart these three interrelated faculties are constantly working and informing each other. Our thoughts are thinking. Our emotions are feeling. And our will is choosing.

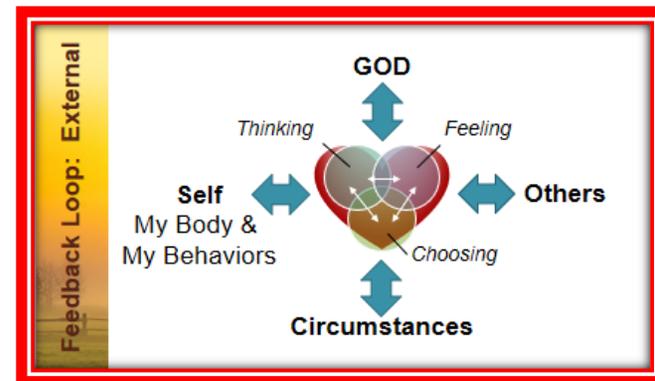
Each of these heart faculties are designed to move us toward a more whole-person worship of God. But under sin's influence our thoughts, wills, and emotions are now inclined towards self-worship rather than God's glory.

And notice, our thinking and our feelings and our choices are all in a dynamic feedback loop with each other.

Sometimes I know something is wrong, but I choose to do it anyway because of how I'm feeling. Another time, my emotions might lead me to obey the Lord even though my rational thoughts are believing lies.

My point is simply this: your emotions are constantly being influenced inside you by what you're thinking, and by how you're choosing to live. And also, your emotions are constantly energizing how you're thinking, and how you're choosing to live.

But brace yourself, because in addition to this dynamic *internal* feedback loop that is always going on inside your soul, there's also an *external* feedback loop that is influencing your how you feel in any given moment:



After all, we each live in relationship with God, others, circumstances, and self. And each of these external relationships have a significant two-way influence on our emotions.

Sometimes our bodies don't work right. Maybe it's a thyroid issue, or lack of sleep, or some other physiological reaction to trauma that causes our emotions to react too quickly, or too slowly, or last too long or too short, or respond too strongly or too weakly to the realities of our world around us.

See, our physical senses are constantly sending signals to our soul about how our world is going.

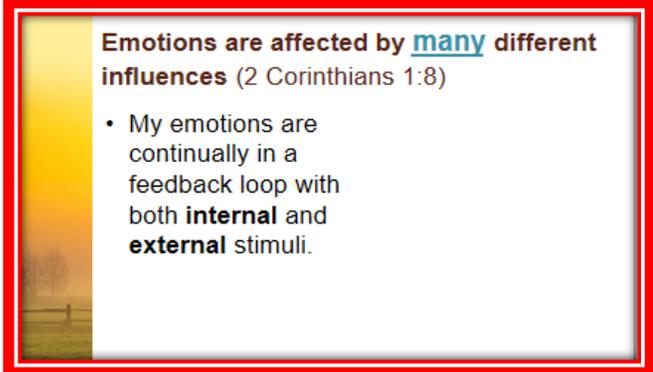
You could say it this way: our body is always going emotional, and our emotions are always going physical.

So a biblical theology of emotion must appreciate the dynamic feedback loop that is constantly happening between our physiology and our psychology.

This is why there are times when medication can be a helpful part of the Christian's godly engagement with their emotions. But understanding this feedback loop between our body and our emotions also explains why medication alone is never sufficient to produce godly emotions. No matter how much we can learn about our brains, we still always need to wrestle with our emotions as expressions of what we love. Our bodies matter significantly, but the deepest whys of our emotions are not neural pathways, but worshipping desires.

Of course it's quite easy to also understand how our changing circumstances, or relationships with others, or

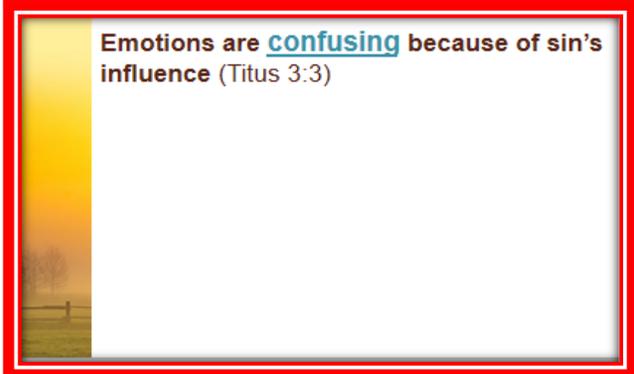
changes in our relationship with God can influence how we feel, and visa versa.



Emotions are affected by many different influences (2 Corinthians 1:8)

- My emotions are continually in a feedback loop with both **internal** and **external** stimuli.

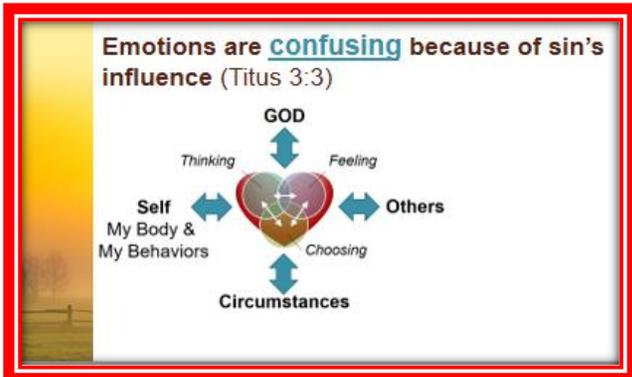
So again, please understand that our emotions are affected by many different influences, and there's particularly one influence that makes our emotions most confusing to understand.



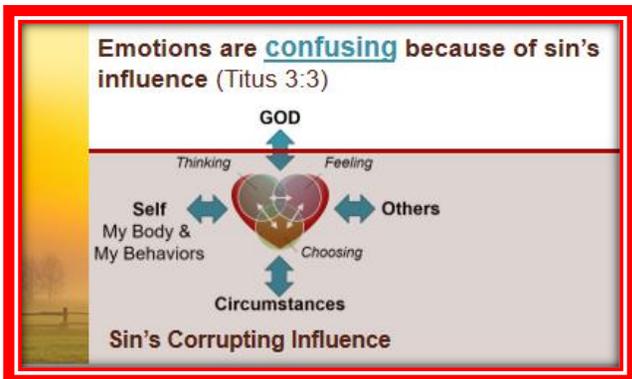
Emotions are confusing because of sin's influence (Titus 3:3)

And that is the effect of sin. **Emotions are confusing because of sin's influence.** **Titus chapter 3** describes how sin enslaves the human heart in self-love and self-worship. And of course, the brokenness of sin is experienced every day in our bodies, in the circumstantial

challenges of suffering, and in our relationships with God and others.



In fact, if you think about every possible influence on our emotions, a biblical theology of emotion recognizes that,

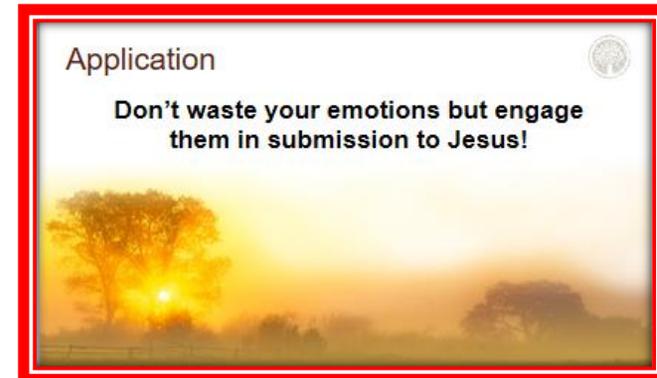


Sin has a corrupting influence of brokenness on every *internal* influence and every *external* influence except on God Himself. Sin has corrupted my thinking and my will. Sin has corrupted my worship and my loves, sin has corrupted my relationships with God and with others, sin has corrupted my world, and sin has corrupted my body.

Therefore sin's influence makes our experience with, and interpretation of, our own emotions quite confusing.

And that's why a biblical theology of emotions leads us right to the cross of Jesus! For apart from God's rescuing grace, all of us would be emotional train wrecks! Apart from Jesus' blood washing our souls, and renewing our hearts, the good purposes of our emotions would be lost in our lives.

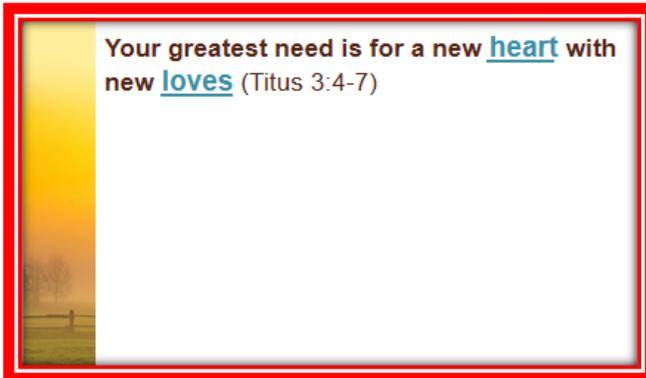
But because of the power of God's gospel – through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus –we don't have to,



waste our emotions, but rather we can now engage them in submission to Jesus!

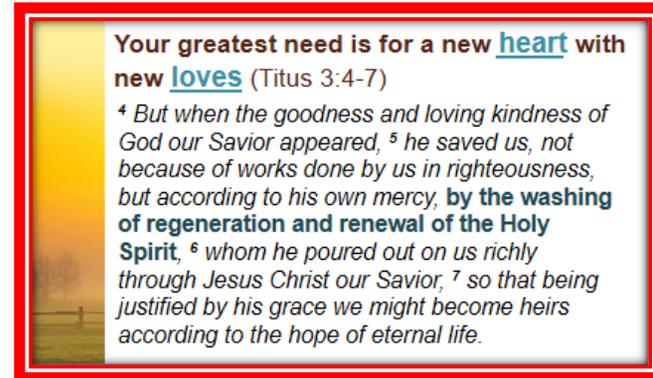
Remember God gave us emotions so that we might better reflect His likeness. So that we might have a way to express what we care most about, and who we actually worship. God created us emotional so that we might love what He loves, and be troubled by what troubles Him.

Therefore, the first and most necessary step for you to begin engaging your emotions in a godly way is for you to repent of self-love and place your saving faith in Jesus.



Your greatest need is for a new heart with new loves. Please don't race past this point. Since your emotions are an overflow of your worship, your emotions can't and shouldn't change apart from a change in what you worship!

And a new heart is exactly what Jesus provides for any soul who believes that Jesus' death on the cross paid for your sins, and that His resurrection from the dead secures your eternal life with God forever.



Titus 3 explains God's saving grace in this way,

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy,

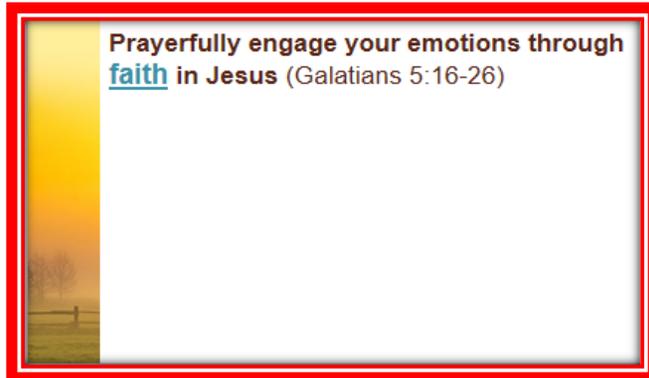
[now watch this!]

By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Rejoice in God's saving grace church! For God's grace grants you a new heart – a new thinker! A new chooser! And a new feeler – all controlled by new loves. Although we all continue to wrestle against the leftover fleshly desires in our soul, salvation sets us free from sin's slavery...and now our soul is free to love and worship God again!

Dear friend, are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Have you received the heavenly emotions **Galatians 5** calls the fruit of the Spirit?

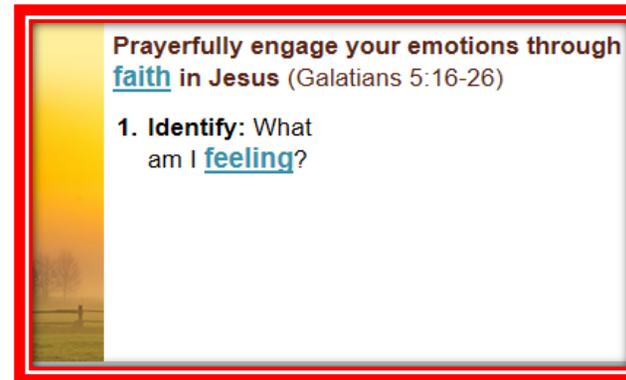
Because only after you've received a new heart with new affections for God, are you able to,



Prayerfully engage your emotions through faith in Jesus. Remember our goal is not change our emotions, but to engage with our emotions in a godly way. We want to crucify all selfish desires and use our emotions to better love God and others, all by the power of His Spirit at work within us.

So let's get practical. I want to share 5 diagnostic questions you can use to prayerfully engage with your own emotions for the glory of God.

Since your emotions are confusing and complicated, and tethered deeply to your worshipping desires, you can only be successful in a godly engagement of your emotions as you are submitted to the Lordship of Jesus. So pray for God's Spirit to give you understanding and humility throughout this entire exercise.



Once your soul has been converted through repentance and faith in Christ, the first step in a godly engagement of your emotions is to **Identify** whatever you are feeling. Ask yourself, **What am I feeling?** As you identify one of your strongest emotions this past week, you might write it down in your notes.

This is often more challenging than we'd expect...since our emotions are affected by so many different influences inside and outside of us. So pray for God's help, and slow down enough to simply put a name on the emotion that you are feeling.

Is it a positive emotion or a negative one? What would you call it? Delight? Anger? Stress? Fear? Something else?

Once you've described how you are feeling, then,

Prayerfully engage your emotions through **faith** in Jesus (Galatians 5:16-26)

1. **Identify:** What am I **feeling**?
2. **Examine:** How does this expose what I **love** or worship?

Examine: How does this feeling expose what I love or worship? What am I reacting to? What do I want, or not want, that is creating this strong response in my soul?

Remember, you're trying to understand what value or treasure of yours is being impacted that is energizing your present emotion.

Maybe you simply want comfort, or pleasure, or respect? Maybe you're concerned about yourself, or someone else?

Once you've exposed the ruling love behind your emotion, then,

Prayerfully engage your emotions through **faith** in Jesus (Galatians 5:16-26)

3. **Evaluate:** Is my ruling concern **godly** or selfish?

Evaluate: Is my ruling concern godly or selfish?

Are you loving what God loves? Are you being troubled by something that troubles God? Or are you ignoring what pleases God?

Again, prayer and a humble intake of God's Word is so important throughout this process...to make sure that your internal evaluations are being renewed and governed by God's truth.

Once you've evaluated how God judges what you are loving or worshipping in this particular emotion,

Prayerfully engage your emotions through **faith** in Jesus (Galatians 5:16-26)

3. **Evaluate:** Is my ruling concern **godly** or selfish?

4. **Entrust:** How should this emotion fuel my greater reliance on **Jesus**?

Then entrust yourself to Jesus. Remember God made you emotional so that you could better relate with Him. So ask yourself, How should this emotion fuel my greater reliance on Jesus?

Maybe this emotion could become a trigger for you to pray fervently for God's help and provision for your concern. Maybe this emotion should trigger a confession of unbelief in God's promises? Perhaps this emotion should lead you to a godly repentance?

Maybe entrusting yourself more to Jesus with this emotion might just mean getting more sleep, or seeking greater medical care, or even seeking godly counsel from others. But don't waste your emotions! Rather engage with them that they might fuel your greater trust in Christ.

Finally, after recognizing how this emotion should drive you into a deeper relationship with Jesus, you must act and,

Prayerfully engage your emotions through **faith** in Jesus (Galatians 5:16-26)

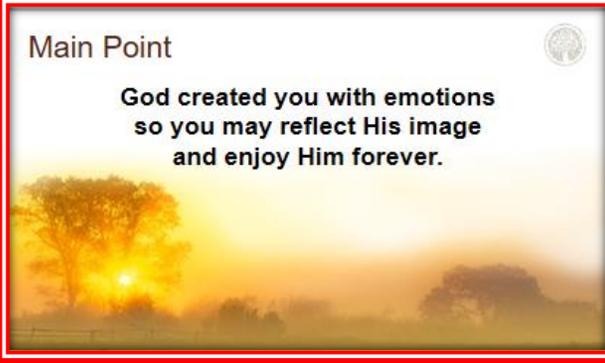
5. **Respond:** Pursue your **satisfaction** by trusting and obeying Jesus.

Respond. By faith in God, you must pursue your satisfaction by trusting and obeying Jesus.

Remember, changing our emotions is not our primary goal. Instead our responses should focus on reorienting the deep loves and treasures of our hearts back under submission to the Lordship of Jesus.

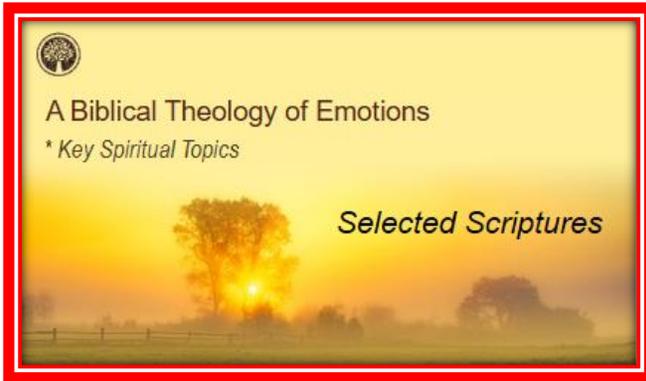
Main Point

God created you with emotions so you may reflect His image and enjoy Him forever.



For God created us with emotions so we may reflect His image and enjoy Him forever.

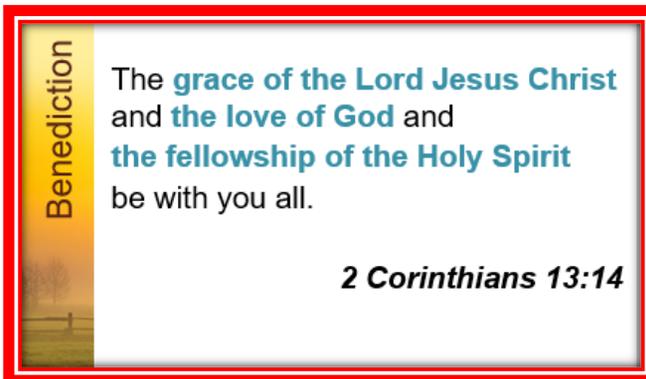
And that's a beginning to a biblical theology of emotions!



Let's pray.

<<Come Thou Fount>>

Let's pray our benediction together as we dismiss.



*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
2 Corinthians 13:14*

Recommended Resources on Emotions:

- Psalm 42; 62:8
- Proverbs 4:23
- Matthew 5:21-22; 13:44; 22:34-40
- Luke 24:32
- John 11:32-36; 14:1, 27; 15:11
- Acts 2:26; 5:41
- Romans 12:9-13, 15
- Galatians 5:16-26
- Ephesians 4:26
- Philippians 1:7-11; 2:1-5, 25-29; 4:4
- Colossians 3:1-17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:17
- Hebrews 4:14-15
- James 4:6-10
- 1 Peter 5:7

- <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2011/07/27/toward-a-theology-of-emotion/>
- <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2019/11/08/emotions-the-language-of-the-heart/>

- *Feelings and Faith*, Brian Borgman
- *Untangling Emotions*, Groves & Smith
- *The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life*, Jeremy Pierre
- *Faithful Feelings*, Matthew Elliott
- *Religious Affections*, Jonathan Edwards

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions:

1. Read John 11:32-36. What caused this deep emotion in Jesus even while He planned to raise Lazarus from the grave in vv. 38-44? How does Jesus' strong emotion here change how you think about your own strong negative emotions? Is it sometimes good to feel bad? Is it sometimes bad to feel good?
2. Read Matthew 6:21. Share some real-life examples of how someone's emotions may express what they love, value, and treasure?
3. Read Romans 12:15 and Philippians 4:4-7. Since our emotions are designed to express what we most love and treasure, explain how God can hold us responsible to obey His commands regarding our emotions.
4. Read Psalm 42. What emotions are expressed in this Psalm? How does the Psalmist seek to engage God with his emotions?
5. Read Galatians 5:16-26. How does God's Spirit set us free emotionally? What difference does salvation make on our ability to honor God with our emotions? (c.f. Psalm 51:10)