

Emotion and Thinking; Emotion in Worship

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[0:00] All right, we're in Feelings and Faith by Brian Borgman. Last week we saw that since Jesus was a true man, that he was made like us in every way, therefore, he can be a pattern and an example to us in this area of emotions.

We can't just say, well, he's God, so I can't relate. No, he became man, fully man, as much man as we are men, and that in order to leave us an example.

So we saw his example. Always his emotional response was always just what was called for in the situation.

Perfect, no out-of-control emotions. There were strong emotions, but they were always in control and the exact appropriate matter.

For the situation. Now, that's the example then set before us. What do you do with an example? What do you do with a pattern? What's its purpose? To follow it.

[1:10] To follow it. So you study a pattern. If you're going to make a, I don't know, a piece of art off of some model or pattern, you look at it.

And not just once, but you study it closely, don't you, in order to make what you're making to look just like that. And so our pattern is to be studied. He's to be examined.

He's to be looked over. Indeed, we're to run this whole race looking unto Jesus, looking unto him.

And as we observe him, we familiarize ourselves with his emotional responses so that we then can imitate him.

That's a fundamental aspect of discipleship. It is to imitate our master. Disciples walk in his way. So he's given us an example that we should follow in his steps emotionally.

Well, we were given a challenge last week to follow Jesus around in the Gospels then and to observe his emotions, to see his compassion as it was expressed in the pages of the Gospel, to see the excellencies of his delight, what caused him the greatest joy, to see his devotion, to see his anger.

[2:34] And seeing it in him was the critical element to having that same emotion reproduced in our lives.

Because in beholding him, 2 Corinthians 3.18 says that we are being transformed into the same likeness from one stage of glory to another, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

How does it happen? By beholding him, contemplating him. So that's an important aspect of becoming like our pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, an undergirding lesson throughout this whole study has been this, that proper feelings are the result of proper thinking.

That if we want our emotions to be in line with Christ's emotions, then we need to give ourselves to the discipline of thinking God's thoughts. Well, so important is that, and Borgman has hit upon it, yet when he comes to chapter 16, he gives a whole chapter to beating on that drum one more time.

And so chapter 16 is called Renewing Our Minds. Absolutely critical to cultivating godly emotions.

He talks about a friend who had a baseball cap, and on it there were five letters in the front, T-H-I-N-K.

[3:58] Think. And he raises the question, Do you think that our present generation is good at thinking?

David says no. Anybody agree with him? Do you agree with Borgman and David? Yes. Why would you say that? Is there evidence to back that up?

Roger and Ed? When I was in college and we did term papers, we had to go to the library, see a bunch of books, read the books, think out the books, meditate on what it said, take your own notes. Now you have a computer and everything is there. Okay. And you certainly don't have to go to the mental gymnastics. All right. So technology has maybe made us quicker, but maybe reduced some

of our thinking skills.

Ed? You hear over and over again, and you see it, just watch TV, people's attention span very short. If it's very short, then they don't have the ability to think through a series of reasoned arguments.

[5:08] Excellent. Many of the writings of scriptures are reasoned out logical syllogisms, and you have to follow the thought, the logical thought of the Savior, or Paul, whoever's writing through.

Well, that's becoming harder and harder because people can't think well. Yes, Derek? I taught art, and compared to the other subjects, the students were used to kind of rope humorization, and just feeding it back.

And in art, I would give them an idea and motivate them however I could to come up with their own creative ideas. And it took a lot of work sometimes to motivate some kids, but it was so foreign to them to think creatively and come up with their own visual idea.

But, oh, it was so exciting. You could just see the lights go on. And then, you could see they were thinking. Well, we were made to think, weren't we? And so, it is exciting when we're being what we were made to be and doing what we're made to do.

Borgman agrees with you. It's a visual generation. There's not much reading being done anymore. Not much critical thinking being done.

[6:23] And it's seen in the church as well. Little preaching of any substance and length. Even the songs that we sing often require far less thought. Little discernment in the church as to the errors of the day.

He thinks that we have a crisis in thinking. And I think that most of us would agree. And so, as a doctor diagnosing his patient, Borgman says, there's a very strong connection between our lack of biblical thinking and the emotional confusion that we are in.

So, we're studying emotions. And we saw earlier on in our study how the emotions are way out of whack in the world today. And he's saying, could it be that it's because we're not thinking right? Indeed, that's the whole lesson that he's pounding into us. Wrong thoughts lead to wrong emotions. Well, many books in the last quarter of a century have added or have addressed this crisis within the evangelical church.

I think some of the titles are revealing. One's called *Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless Age*. *Fit Bodies, Fat Minds, Why Evangelicals Don't Think and What to Do About It*.

[7:40] There's this laziness, not only physically, but mentally. We don't want to have to think. Just tell me the answer. Tell me what to do.

But now, this is precisely what the Bible calls us to do over and over, is to think, to meditate. Think upon these things. Consider what I say.

Think upon it. Dwell on it. Set your minds on things above. Be transformed by the renewing of your minds. Isaiah complains that no one stops to think.

So it's not just a 21st century problem, but I think it's exacerbated in our own generation by many factors. So, a mind saturated with godly thoughts is the seedbed to produce a heart filled with godly emotions.

Now, turn to Isaiah 26 and verse 3 and tell me the connection between thinking and emotion in that verse. I'm not going to read it. You read it.

[8:48] And what we're looking for is the connection between right thinking and right feelings, right emotions.

Isaiah 26 and verse 3. Read it and then tell me what is the connection? Anyone? Anyone? Do you see a connection?

Do you see our two elements? Thinking and feeling? Yes? Okay? Perfect peace is the emotion. Steadfast mind.

Mind fixed. Steadfast upon the Lord produces the emotion of peace. Alright?

Turn to Philippians 4:6 and 7. Philippians 4. While we're here, just look at verse 4 first of all.

[9:51] Do you see our two elements? Philippians 4:4 Anyone? What's the emotion? What's the way to it?

It's there. Do you see it? In the Lord. Who's He? You've got to think about that, don't you? If you're going to you've got to think about that enough to get some joy out of that.

So you've got both elements. You've got the emotion. And then you've got the truth. The right thoughts about the Lord that produced that.

Alright? Now from 6 and 7. What's the emotion that we're seeking in verses 6 and 7? After the ages. And that's the negative side of it. What's the positive expression of it?

Peace that passes all understanding. Okay? So that's the feeling. That's the emotion. How does it come? Through prayer.

[10:53] With what? With thanksgiving. Oh. So I'm to give thanks. If I'm being anxious about something I'm to stop being anxious and I'm to start praying and giving thanks.

Well what do you have to do to give thanks? Think about what I'm saying. Okay. I've got to think about God's character.

I'm glad God is sovereign. I'm glad God is good. I've got to start thinking about all that God is. I've got to think about His ways. What He's done for me in the past.

I've got to think about His promises. What He's promised to do for me. If I'm giving thanks I've got to be thinking. And so thinking right thoughts produces the effect the emotion under the presence and power of the Spirit obviously.

This is not a mechanical thing that you plug in thought and out comes the right emotion. We're not saying that but there is the connection and we see it in Scripture. And then we're told in verse 8 to think on these things.

[11:55] Whatever you've learned or received or heard from me or seen in me I'm sorry verse 8 Finally brothers whatever is true whatever is noble whatever is right whatever is pure whatever is lovely whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about these things.

That's a command to think. And the fruit of that is transformed living and feeling. So if you'd cultivate godly emotions plant godly thoughts in the garden of your mind.

Guard carefully what you allow into your mind. Amen. Above all things guard the heart the mind as it thinks for out of it are the issues of life.

So find ways to keep your mind fixated on God's word. Read it. You see we're back to the basics. Why do we read our Bibles every day?

Because we're wanting to get our mind thinking right that we might be emoting right all day long. Meditate on it. Find out ways to keep the word before you to be memorizing it to be returning to it put it around your house in your car wherever you can snatch time to get your mind back to the word.

[13:12] Listen to CDs go online listen to sermons read good books listen to and sing edifying word saturated songs throughout your day.

getting the word take inventory of your thoughts where does your mind go when you put it in neutral?

John Owen says that's the real indicator of the frame of your mind he says such thoughts are the best measure in indication of the frame of our minds when we daydream or when the mind is in neutral it drifts to the things that we love we think about the things that we love so take inventory of the mind fill it with scripture so that's that's chapter 16 and I think it's just a good refresher before we get to the end of this book next week that we remember that principle if we don't take anything else with us the next two chapters deal with emotions and worship chapter 17 and 18 first singing and then preaching they're both found in corporate worship and they feed off of each other so we're thinking of two more ways then to cultivate godly emotions we've already seen plant God's word in your mind now we're seeing singing in worship and preaching in worship two more ways to cultivate godly emotions so let's look first at emotions and singing emotions and singing all throughout the bible the people of God are found singing

Christians are people of the book and people of the book sing they not only read the scripture and preach the scriptures they sing the scriptures and singing is to engage both our mind and our emotions 1 Corinthians 14 15 I will sing with my spirit but I will also sing with my mind Paul says so we need to remember that singing is is an emotional experience an exercise yes it's also a mental thing and if we ever divorce those two we're off the rails so singing both mental and emotional now we want to consider two functions of singing with regard to emotions and that is that singing is to express emotions and to stir the emotions first of all we sing to express our emotions right truths about God should set us singing as a response theology is meant to lead us to doxology right thinking about God is meant to lead us to praise and the songs of praise about God remember how Paul is writing the letter to the Romans and 11 chapters of wonderful truths about the gospel how God saves sinners and how he does it for his own glory and it's like he comes to the end of chapter 11 and he just puts down his pen and has a doxological moment he worships he praises God oh the

depth of the riches of the wisdom knowledge of God and from him and through him and to him are all things to him be glory both now and forevermore so it's truth that leads to praise and often that praise is expressed in song so we see that truth grips the mind moves the emotions and sets a singing that's the the order that we see

[17:18] James 5 13 is anyone happy let him what let him sing let him sing songs of praise let him express his emotion of joy with fitting songs of joy and praise Psalm 9 and verse 2 says I will be glad and rejoice in you I will sing praise to your name almost high so singing is the way we express our emotion of joy in the Lord but here's the second purpose for singing it's not only to express our emotions but it is also a means to stir our emotions so the African pastor says when we are happy we sing and when we're not happy we sing until we are you see he found that second use of singing it's not only as an expression of joy so when we're happy we sing no it's it's meant to stir us to joy so when we're not happy we sing until we are now

Jonathan Edwards was no African pastor and he as well agreed that the duty of singing praises to God seems to be appointed both to excite and to express religious affection emotion so singing has a tendency to move our emotions to stir them to awaken them to song take your hymnal and look at 520 you're familiar with William Cooper the hymn writer of the church where John Newton ministered in Olney we sing many of his hymns this is a tune that we don't know and so we don't sing it real often we've sung it a few times but it's a beautiful hymn and it's about singing 520 sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings okay so this is this is what he's talking about that sometimes singing itself is used to excite emotion sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings it is the Lord who rises with healing in his wings when comforts are declining he grants the soul again a season of clear shining to cheer it after rain in holy contemplation we sweetly then pursue the theme of God's salvation and find it ever new set free from present sorrow we cheerfully can say let the unknown tomorrow bring with it what it may it cannot it can bring with it nothing but he will bear us through and on he goes so Cooper is saying that sometimes the Christians start singing with drooping spirits declining comforts but before he's done he's singing with joy and hope and gladness in the Lord God meets him and uses the singing to stir his heart and to get it into a right emotional frame and notice it was as the song let him down paths of holy contemplation that's called using your noggin again thinking holy contemplation as he's singing about

God's way of salvation and deliverance it becomes ever new to him and he's lifted up emotionally now that is the pattern of many of the Psalms that we find in our Bible they start low don't they emotionally depressed scared anxious without hope and as the psalmist sings and starts to sing about his problem about his God at the end of the psalm he's full of joy and praise and hope the very act of singing has been a means of grace to him to bring him into a proper emotional frame in light of all these glorious realities that he's just sung about I wonder if you've ever experienced that in this room as you started singing it is well with my soul things weren't well with your soul what what happened sometimes a light surprises the

Christian while he sings and singing becomes the very thing to excite emotion and bring us back to that peace that rest that calmness that hope that's found in Christ so yes singing expresses our emotions but it also excites and stirs and awakens them now the kind of worshipers that God is seeking he tells that woman at the well Jesus tells the woman at the well the father seeking worshipers and the kind of worshipers he's seeking are those who will worship him in spirit the heart the viscerals the emotions and truth so spirit and truth that's the kind of worshipers emotion and truth now that passage then sets forth two ditches on either side of the road where we can get off in this matter of singing and worshipping and song first of all there's the ditch of singing with plenty of motion but little if any of truth so you got spirit without truth where the emotions are all whipped up and stirred up but not by truth but by musical notes and instruments and rhythms and it's empty shallow emotionalism there's a difference between emotion in true worship and emotionalism and here's one of the points that marks the difference music itself has power to move the emotions!

[24:18] there is some music that could move people emotionally if they were doing nothing but singing over and over bananas are yellow bananas are yellow it's not the words that are moving them it's the music or even singing na na na na na na na what is that what does that mean but people can be all whipped up into a frenzy singing it can't they so it's not the words that's moving them it's it's the music and that's possible in church as well well that's not worship that's pleasing to the Lord where it's the music that's driving the emotion and truth is not in it or it's light on truth no

content content matters greatly words are important they're not to be little ditties we want grand truths of

God to be filling our minds as we sing we want that to be the thing that moves us his glory his salvation but that's one ditch only there's a ditch on the other side of the highway and if one ditch is all spirit and emotion without truth the other ditch is truth but no spirit no emotion lifeless singing of profound truths very orthodox words 16 ounces to a pound truth but void of emotion stoical stilted stuffy half hearted and right away some might think oh yeah that's the traditional forms of worship no I visited enough contemporary services to see the same singing without heart in contemporary services you see it's not a problem of style of music it's a problem of the heart when you've got truth but you've got no heart as you sing it and so that is as much a ditch that we want to avoid as the other this too is to not work is not the kind of worship that the father seeks yes it has truth but it's lacking in spirit in heart in emotion and that too is dishonoring to him so I'd like us to go to the Psalms you know the Psalms were the the Old Testament hymnal and you can see that that most of them were sung from time to time you read musical notations in the Psalms and you say what does that mean well they knew what it meant they were musical notations and so this was the song book of the Old Testament people of God and I'd like for us to turn to it to examine this very thing we want to notice how singing was both in spirit and in truth both with emotion and with rich theological content God's character God's attributes his works his ways but also with holy emotion hearty enthusiastic singing so not one or the other but both let's start in the 59th!

and I want us to see how that both sides of this coin of what the kind of worship and song that God seeks are found in the Old Testament song book and that one without the other is not stood for Psalm 59 verses 16 and 17 notice the truths about God that are being sung here Psalm 59 16 but I will sing of your strength in the morning I will sing of your love for you are my fortress my refuge in time of trouble oh my strength I sing praise to you you oh God are my fortress my loving God you see how that's oozing with theology no little ditties will serve for the psalmist now

Psalm 33 Psalm 33 and and I want you to point out to me both sides truths and words in the song that remind us that there's emotion and to be emotion in the way that they sing these truths Psalm 33 1 to 3 go ahead and read that so are there any truths that we are we find sung or or notes as to how it is to be sung with emotion what do you see okay what's the emotion okay we're we're not just to sing to the

[30:07] Lord no we're being told even in this song that the way we sing is to be joyfully with your heart with your spirit with high emotion says the same thing again at the end verse 3 shout for joy that you can't shout without emotion I've never seen a man shout when he wasn't emotionally moved have you fire go lions whatever he's shouting for help he's always emotionally involved it's definitely a word of emotion now do you see any content about about who this Lord is that we're to sing to and why we're to sing so emotionally to him verse 4 for the word of the Lord is right and true he is faithful in all he does that's worth shouting about and the Lord loves righteousness and justice the earth is full of his unfailing love that's you see truths about

God by the word of the Lord where the heavens made their starry host by the breath of his mouth he's thinking about his greatness and creation so truth emotion married in all true biblical singing psalm 95 nathaniel hutcheson reminded us that this psalm was often used by the old testament church as a call to worship and we can see again these two elements come let us sing for joy to the Lord sing for joy as an expression of the joy that you have let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation there's content about who he is he's the rock of our salvation we have an unmovable salvation in him so shout and sing joyfully verse 2 let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song for the Lord is the great

God the great king above all gods in his hands are the depths of the earth the mountain peaks belong to him the sea is his for he made it and so on just rich with truth about God his works his ways and yet it's also rich with emotion and the way that we are to sing it I love the 98th we sing it from time to time how it calls upon us to sing to the Lord a new song why because he's done marvelous things his right hand and holy arm have worked salvation for him and on and on it goes and so we're to shout to the Lord verse 4 all the earth is to burst into jubilant song and so on why because he comes to judge the earth and he'll judge the earth in righteousness and the peoples with his truth Psalm 100 shout for joy to the Lord all the earth worship the Lord with gladness come before him with joyful songs do you see how the Psalter is telling us not only to sing with truth but with emotion and then why well it because the

Lord is God it's he who made us we're his we're his people the sheep of his pasture he's good his love endures forever his faithfulness continues just one other we could go on and on Psalm 103 praise the Lord oh my soul you see it's not enough to praise him oh mind yes the mind's involved you wouldn't be talking about God and all these things that he is and does so the mind's involved but the psalmist says oh I want more than my mind to praise him I want my soul my spirit I want my heart involved in this business so he's talking to himself praise the Lord oh my soul all my inmost being praise his holy name that's his emotion he's digging for emotion I want to praise God with emotion but is it empty emotionalism is it just emotion for emotion's sake just to feel good I had my emotions tingled and no you can get that from singing na na na na no what he wants is holy emotion over who

God is and his great salvation and so he says praise the Lord oh my soul and forget not all his benefits and he just starts pouring them out and he finds his heart caught up in praise for all the benefits of salvation who forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases whose love reaches to the heavens and so on so the picture that emerges from the Old Testament song book is truth on fire let that be the picture that you hold before you whether we think of Jesus words as to how we're to worship telling the woman at the well it's to be spirit and truth truth and fire mind and emotion reverence and joy there's reason for both and we should settle for nothing less God's command to sing includes singing with emotion and it includes the reasons to do so are we not meant to feel love for God as we sing to him about his great love that endures forever should our emotions lie unmoved as we sing about

[35 : 44] God who rescued us out of darkness and brought us into his marvelous life what would that suggest that if we sang with emotionless monotone praise in a Joe Friday voice what would that suggest it would make our praise suspect wouldn't it do we really feel that great about this God that we're singing about he's worthy of more than that and some say well I'm a reserved sort of personality I've seen reserved men lose all their reserve at a ball game they're excited about their team and I do believe that if the Lord laid hold of our hearts with what the gospel is and who our savior is that we would lose more of our reserve in holy happy songs of praise are we making the most of this opportunity to cultivate godly emotions let's not rest in anything short of truth and spirit mind and emotion are you thinking about the words you're singing as you sing sometimes you got to call yourself back to it maybe a couple times in a worship service maybe a couple times within the song it's easy just to sing songs we're familiar with without thinking what we're saying isn't it so we've got to come back to what we're saying and get our hearts involved in the work the happy work of worship are you asking god to move your heart to fill you with emotions befitting him and his truth that's all part of preparing the heart for worship to ask god to do that for us any questions at the end of this chapter on cultivating emotions and how song is both the excitement and expression of emotion jim i'm thankful lord has given me to!

good so dennis is just saying get a hymn going take it home and memorize those hymns and make them your own as we come and sing them together it will be with even more meaning as you've laid them up in your heart what else anything may the lord meet us and surprise us while we sing as he meets us and lifts our hearts up to heaven itself we're dismissed may may may!