

# Emotions – Part 7

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### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

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#### REVIEW

For a few weeks now, we have been considering the second component of our soul – the **HEART** (emotions).

We began by establishing the fact that while the mind and the heart are two separate functions that are so intricately connected that they **INFLUENCE** and **IMPACT** each other.

#### 1) The **DESIGNING** of the emotions

We found that our emotions are a good gift from a good God for the purpose of helping us **ENJOY** right relationships (with God and others) and **ACCOMPLISH** a good purpose.

#### 2) The **DISTORTING** of the emotions

Our heart (emotions) was designed to work in tandem (together) with our mind and our will, but now, because of sin, our emotions want to **DOMINATE OUR MIND** and they want to **DICTATE OUR WILL**.

Our emotions want three things: to **GAIN OUR ATTENTION**, to **GARNER** (acquire) **OUR AGREEMENT**, and to **GAIN CONTROL OF OUR ACTIONS**.

They want us to replace **FAITH** and **FACTS** with **FEELINGS**, and if we let them, our emotions will **RUN**, and they will **RUIN** our lives.

Sin has distorted our perspective by turning our focus inward (to ourselves) and limiting our focus to the short-term causing to neglect, or ignore, the **SPIRITUAL ASPECT**, the **LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES**, and/or the **SURROUNDING IMPACT** (others).

Last week, we began to consider the three emotional “T’s:” emotional **TYRANNY**, emotional, **TRAUMA**, and emotional **TRAINING**.

### A) **EMOTIONAL TYRANNY**

This life is a war of and a war with our emotions. We are often our own worst enemy (actions), but we are also often the creator of some of our greatest nightmares (feelings).

If allowed, our emotions will **DEFINE OUR PERSON**. That’s **EMOTIONAL TYRANNY**.

When we make the **CHOICE** to yield **CONTROL** of our situation or our life to our feelings then our feelings will **CONFUSE** and **CORRUPT** our thought process which will in turn **CONTAMINATE** our actions and **CONTRIBUTE** to our downfall.

We need to understand that while we simply can’t control when our emotions show or what emotions show up in our heart, we are

responsible for how we express those emotions and for how long we entertain those emotions. Emotions are meant to be **MOMENTARY HELPERS**, not **LIFELONG MASTERS**.

## **B) EMOTIONAL TRAUMA**

We have found that our emotions are very **VALUABLE** (they are good gifts from a good God for a good purpose), our emotions are very **VOLATILE** (they are unpredictable, unstable, not always accurate, and yet, they desperately want to be in control), and our emotions are very **VULNERABLE** (they are open to attack and are capable of being wounded or damaged).

The Bible likens emotional trauma to a wounded heart and spirit as well as to a broken heart and spirit. It also describes the impact that emotional trauma has on us in great detail:

It drains a person of their courage and strength.

It cannot always be hidden and shows up most frequently in our facial expressions.

It will continue to eat away at a person from the inside out.

It robs a person of the energy, the ability, and the desire to continue.

It is a grievous hurt that just never seems to go away.

We then asked this question: why would the Bible provide us so many examples of individuals who not only dealt with traumatic experiences in life, but who also dealt with the emotional trauma of those traumatic experiences?

- (1) So that we would know that we are not alone.
- (2) So that we would see that victory is possible

(3) So that we would know that God is able to hold the pieces of our broken life (physically, mentally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally) together so that we can once again be a beautiful, useful, and powerful tool in the Lord's hand for the Lord's work.

Just because something difficult, painful, or bad happened to you does not mean that you are without **VALUE**, that you are without **PURPOSE**, or that you are without **POTENTIAL**.

Grievous things may have happened to you in the past, but God has great things that He wants to lead you towards, if you'll trust Him.

And that's really where we pick back up.

## **MESSAGE**

Read **1 Thessalonians 5:14-24**

If you're in the habit of marking things in the word of God, I want to draw your attention back to verse **23** where the Bible says, "*And the very God of peace sanctify...your whole spirit...*"

For a few moments, I'd like to begin to consider this thought: **IS IT WELL WITH YOUR SOUL? (THE EMOTIONS – PART 7)**

*Disclaimer - I am not a doctor, and I am not approaching these topics from the standpoint of one. I am simply attempting to help us gain an understanding of what the Bible has to say about our mental, emotional, and physical health.*

- 1) The **DESIGNING** of the emotions
- 2) The **DISTORTING** of the emotions
  - A) **EMOTIONAL TYRANNY**
  - B) **EMOTIONAL TRAUMA**

Last week, I defined *Emotional trauma* this way: it is an emotional **STIRRING** in the present



because of something deeply distressing and disturbing that has happened in the past.

I likened it to an internal **SCAR** that was caused by a personal traumatic event, experience, or injury.

Just the other day, Kim and Josiah were wrestling and while doing so, Kim, either intentionally or unintentionally, pinched Josiah on his side (knowing Kim, pinching around the ribs is her go to defense mechanism, I'm just saying).

However, what was intended to be a moment of fun quickly turned into a moment of intense pain because that's where the incisions are from Josiah's surgery last May.

The pinch itself wasn't bad, but the pinch being on the scar from the surgery was.

That in essence is what emotional trauma is like. Something in the present: a sight, a sound,

a sensation, a situation in the present puts an individual in the past causing painful feelings in the present that are as intense as when the trauma initially.

You see, emotional trauma is more than just a **SITUATION** that an individual was involved in or that an individual had to endure over a period of time; emotional trauma is when a situation leaves its imprint on a person's **SOUL**. We see this expressed in a variety of ways throughout the Psalms.

In **Psalm 6:2-3**, David described it this way:

“Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?”

The word *vexed* means “to tremble inwardly; to be alarmed or affrighted; to become agitated or anxious.”

The word *sore* means “something that gets louder and louder.”

**Psalm 55:4-7** says, “*My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.*”

The phrase *sore pained* means “to twist round and round.” It has the idea of a rag that is twisted in an effort to wring as much water out of the rag as possible.

**Psalm 88:3** says, “*For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*”

The phrase *full of troubles* has the idea of taking as much as is possible.

**Psalm 119:28** says, *“My soul melteth for heaviness...”*

This has the idea of constant weeping; tears that just won't stop.

In **Psalm 142:7**, David likens emotional trauma to a prison cell when he cried out saying, *“Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name...”*

And so, our soul can be imprinted by a variety of incidences that happen in life. Things like: **REJECTION, NEGLECT, CRITICISM, ABUSE, DIVORCE, DEATH, DANGER, DIFFICULTY**, etc. The truth is that there are far more things that could be put on the list than we have time to discuss in this setting.

Now, it's important for us to consider what portions of our soul are impacted by trauma.

I remind you that our soul is made up of four things: our **INTELLECT** (how we think), our

**EMOTIONS** (how we feel), our **WILL** (our desires, our responses, our action), and our **CONSCIENCE** (our reaction to what we say and do).

Of those elements, trauma impacts three of them: **INTELLECT**, **EMOTION**, and **WILL**.

We could say it this way: emotional trauma impacts our **ATTENTION** (what we focus on), our **AFFECTIONS** (how we feel), and our **AMBITIONS** (what we desire to do or perhaps the lack of desire to do).

We'll talk about our emotions impact on our will next, but for now, we need to understand that our emotions impact our thoughts.

**Proverbs 23:7** puts it this way: *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..."*

Question – do our thoughts produce emotions or do our emotions produce thoughts?

As I researched for this message, I found that there are a lot who emphatically teach that our

thoughts impact our emotions and there are just as many who emphatically teach that our emotions impact our thoughts.

So, which one is right? Well, I think that they're both right.

The reality is that wrong thoughts produce wrong emotions, but wrong emotions also produce wrong thoughts.

The opposite is just as true – right emotions can produce right thoughts, but right thoughts will produce right emotions (we'll talk more about that in our next thought).

There are those who deal with emotional trauma as a child like that of unsatisfied parents, angry parents, divorced parents, abusive parents that have developed thoughts of **DEFICIENCY** (I'm not enough; I can't do anything right, I am the cause of the trouble, I won't quite do).

Now, none of those are correct thoughts, but they are powerful thoughts brought on by an emotionally traumatic experience that puts us in that prison cell that David was talking about.

**Psalm 139:14-18** says, *“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.”*

There are those who have to deal with emotional trauma where you have been neglected by those who had the responsibility to love and to take care of you, you were abandoned by a parent or by someone that you thought were a friend, or someone went back on their word that they had given you that have developed thoughts of **DESERTION** (No one loves me, no one really cares enough about me to help me or to stay with me).

**Psalms 27:10** says, *“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.”*

There are those who have to deal with emotional trauma where it seems like anything and everything that is bad has happened to you.

The reality is that there are certain individuals who have been through a lot of terrible and tragic events along the course of their life.



So much so, that their emotional trauma produces thoughts of **DREAD** (bad things are coming – morning, job, sickness, financial failure, getting old, and death).

There are those who have gone through a variety of the things that we have discussed and others who have dealt with a variety of things that we simply don't have the time to get into.

Emotional trauma often produces the thoughts of **DEFECTIVENESS** (I am broken). Let me say this: because of sin, we all are defective, but God specializes in taking our brokenness and making someone beautiful and useful for Him where He gets even greater glory from.

**Isaiah 61:1-3** says, *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the*

*opening of the prison to them that are bound;  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,  
and the day of vengeance of our God; to  
comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them  
that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty  
for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the  
garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
that they might be called trees of  
righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that  
he might be glorified.”*

Instead of reliving your hurt, instead of  
mourning your loss, instead of walking in a  
sense of fear and dread, you can receive  
comfort.

There is a reason why the Holy Spirit is called  
the comforter.

God through His Spirit is able to heal our  
trauma and brokenness and help us to  
**CONTROL** and to **RETRAIN** our emotions.

In **Genesis 50:20**, we find that God can take what was meant as evil against us and He can produce something that is good from it.

**Genesis 50:20** says, *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”*

**Romans 8:28-29** says, *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*