

April 2014 Newsletter – Dealing With Emotions – Review

As we have seen in our study in Ephesians 4:31, “*Let all **bitterness**, and **wrath**, and **anger**, and **clamour**, and **evil speaking**, be put away from you, with all **malice**.”, that anger goes through six stages ending up in physical violence, or some kind of physical activity. The first stage is bitterness, pikria. Bitterness is the old sin nature reaction to an unwanted stimulus and it's a function of the arrogance complex. Cain was extremely arrogant and when the Lord rejected his human good, then he instantly reacted all the way to the most intense feelings of anger that one could have! He was furious! And instead of dealing with these feelings in the proper manner, by the offering up of the proper sacrifice along with his confession, he later on acted upon them **and murdered his brother!***

Remember, the normal way virtually everyone deals with their feelings are by: repression, suppression, (both of which create the condition of tension myositis syndrome [TMS]), denial, dissociation, transference, projection, expression, (venting), or by acting them out. (Christians are to confess their feelings to God the Father). **Cain acted upon his anger feelings by murdering his brother**. He also got into denial, dissociation and self-justification, where the guilty conscience defends itself.

The word **bitterness, pikria**, is really the soul's reaction to a painful, or unwanted stimulus. We get hurt, we react with anger. We have to do something we don't want to do, we react with anger. We are kept from doing what we want to do, we react with anger. Get the picture? Desire (lust) delayed, brings about **frustration**. Desire (lust) denied, brings about **anger!**

Internal and external stimuli, when met with our contrary and rebellious will - pride, end up in the reaction of the soul to them, bitterness – pikria. We get fuming mad on the inside, then it goes either one of two ways. Either we act out on it verbally or physically to those around us, or society in general, or we repress it down into the subconscious where it becomes the stuff of TMS. We either end up hurting those around us, or we end up hurting ourselves!

When dealing with our feelings, we need to realize that we do have a problem with them, first of all, and that they can and do negatively affect, not only our bodies, but our spiritual life as well. We also need to learn that even the so called good feelings, such as, having fun, being in love, etc., can adversely affect our spiritual life, just as bad as the negative feelings. That's because as long as we're having these good feelings, we neglect our spiritual life, which is vastly superior.

We need to understand that our feelings are not spiritual phenomena, but a carryover from Adam's fallen nature, which we acquired at physical birth. And because there are so many things that we don't know about ourselves, such as, an ignorance of our human frame, we need to learn about our feelings, what each one is, how they affect us, how they affect others, and to be able to identify them and deal with them biblically.

And this is done through the teaching of Bible Doctrine, for it is through doctrinal teaching that we are able to see these things about ourselves. We many try to dissociate ourselves from how we feel, but doctrine and the spiritual life forces us to face them. We may still be denying them, which is self deception, but doctrine still puts them before us to face them and deal with them.

We also need to learn how to deal with our emotions and the Word of God teaches us how to do this. We learn that repression, suppression, denial, dissociation, transference, projection, expression, or by acting them out, is not the proper way to handle them. There is only one way to handle our feelings and that is by identifying what the feeling is, admitting to yourself that you are feeling that way, and then confessing it to God, for he already knows that.

We learn through Bible Doctrine that God has provided a spiritual, not emotional, dynamic for us to live in. At the moment of salvation God gives to each believer in Christ their own unique spiritual life, which is eternal. This spiritual life is found in the sphere of Bible Doctrine that has been metabolized by faith, energized by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit and accessed through confessing our sins to God, 1 John 1:9.

When we are confronted by the teaching of God's Word that our **conduct** is not right before the Lord, when our **speech** is out of line, when our **thoughts and feelings** are wrong before God, we can be like Cain and arrogantly reject the truth, or we can in self-enforced humility admit our sins to God. It is only by the teaching of the Word of God that the problem can be **defined**, the solution **outlined** and the path we are to take **clarified**.

Fifteen

We see all this occurring when the Lord dealt with Cain in Genesis 4:6,7, which he did **before** Cain murdered his brother. “*And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou **wroth**? and why is thy **countenance fallen**? **If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?** and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*”. Christ was giving Cain doctrinal information to help him deal with his negative emotions of jealousy, arrogance, bitterness, resentment, anger, hate, etc.. The **choice** was Cain's as to whether he would apply the doctrine or not, **but so would be the consequence if he didn't!**

The first thing that Christ did was ask Cain, “*Why are you **angry**?*”. By doing this Christ was revealing to Cain that he had **an anger problem**. By defining the problem of the feeling of anger he was making it clear to Cain just exactly what his problem was! But he put it in the form of a question to get him to think. By asking him, “*Why are you angry?*”, instead of just saying, 'You're angry Cain', he accomplished two things.

One, he revealed to him what his problem was, having feelings of intense anger, and **two**, to get him to think about how it is that he became angry! He wanted Cain to recognize and admit that he was angry, but he also wanted him to think about how he became angry! What led up to this place of intense anger. Which is the process we all need to implement in our own lives, when dealing with personal overt sins, sins of the tongue, or emotional sins. Why am I so angry? Or bitter? Or jealous? Or feeling sorry for myself, etc..? Then **backtrack in our steps to see what led up to that point in our lives.**

Cain got angry because Christ rejected his offering. But Christ rejected his offering because Cain arrogantly refused to bring the offering Christ told him to bring! Sermons can be, and have been, written about this subject, but suffice it to say, that Cain was arrogantly demanding, by way of his offering, that Christ accept his human good, that he was good enough in himself to be accepted by God. **And when Christ didn't, Cain reacted with intense anger!** This same reaction of anger is found in all humans today when their human good is rejected.

And so, in his intense anger, Cain acted out against his brother, Abel, who had done the right thing. Abel, in the sphere of humility, offered up the sacrifice to God that he was instructed to offer. So we have sibling rivalry and jealousy on the part of Cain the firstborn, which were there prior to the event. And he took this intense anger out against his brother, who had done the right thing. So why was Cain angry? Because he was negative to the Word of God, he was full of pride, jealousy, human good and anger, and because he was not a believer in the Lord.

The first thing Christ did was outline the **problem** to Cain, “*Why are you angry*”, and then the next thing he did was outline the **solution** for him, “*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?*”. Here lies the solution for all our problems. We're to do what God tells us to do! We're to listen to Bible Doctrine and apply Bible Doctrine. In the Church Age today it's sitting under the doctrinal teaching of God's Word, applying it to our lives, living by faith, living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, confessing our sins to God when necessary, and living in our own spiritual life which he gave us - *eusebeia*.

Then Christ clarifies the path in life that Cain is to take. He tells him, “*And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*” KJV “*And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.*” Genesis 4:7b NASB In this Christ is teaching Cain, and all of us as well, about the problem of the sin nature that we all have due to it being in our bodies passed on to us from Adam. It is always there, because it is in the flesh, (often referred to as the flesh nature). It will always seek to dominate our lives, as Romans 6 teaches, and we have to learn to master it by living in the new nature and the spiritual life dynamic.

The Father has given to every Church Age believer, though, every spiritual provision that we need to keep sin from mastering us. He has given us **new natures**, which he created in us at the moment of our faith in Christ. He has given us the **Holy Spirit** at the moment of our salvation, who will never, ever leave us, but will be in us throughout eternity. He has given each one of us our very own unique **spiritual life dynamic** to live in, our *eusebeia*. He has given us **prayer, access** to his throne of grace, the **local church**, the teaching of **Bible Doctrine, faith**, the provision of **confessing sins** to him when we sin and **fellowship** with him over his Word.

Sixteen

The **arrogance** of Cain, and remember, anger is a function of the pride complex, the greater the pride the greater the anger. His arrogance was manifested by the fact that: **one**, he did not do what God told him to do in the first place regarding the type of sacrifice to be offered; **two**, when he rejected the doctrinal counsel of the Lord concerning the matter; **three**, by his reaction of anger, when his human good sacrifice was rejected by the Lord; **four**, when he went out and murdered his brother.

The **degree** of Cain's arrogance, that is, how arrogant this man was, was measured and revealed by the level of intensity of his anger. There is anger, then there is burning, intense anger, either of which is bad enough. But with *meod* being used it amplified his burning, intense anger to a level off the charts, as we would say. He was **furious**; he was filled with **rage**.

The **principle** is: the more the arrogance, the greater the anger. The more arrogance there is, the greater the anger, but also the greater the human good and narcissism. The more arrogant that one is, the more likely they are to become easily angered. Arrogant people are easily angered, burn with more intense anger and stay angry longer. They are quick to become angry and slow to never to forgive. In addition to that, arrogant people are **vindictive and vengeful**. “*If Cain shall be **avenged** sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.*” Genesis 4:24

And we also see that if this pride and anger problem is not corrected in the parents, through salvation and applying the Word of God to their lives, especially in the areas of controlling the sin nature in us and living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, then these same negative mental and emotional traits can be passed down to our children and children's children! It isn't just a genetic predisposition toward certain things, but also a family dynamic that becomes imbedded into offspring by the parents.

We see Cain's pride, anger, unforgiving spirit and vindictiveness all the way down five generations later in **Lamech**. We all have the responsibility to correct these negative traits in ourselves, for our children's sakes! And we do this by getting saved and sitting under bible Doctrine.

Cain was extremely proud and arrogant. Certainly the spirit of Satan was working in him, for Satan is referred to as the one who is king over all who are proud. *“He beholdeth all high things: he is a **king over all the children of pride.**”* Job 41:34 And even more clear in 1 John 3:12, *“Not as Cain, who was **of that wicked one**, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.”*

We deal with our **emotions** by living in the filling of the Holy Spirit and by applying Bible Doctrine to our lives. We deal with our **pride** by humbling ourselves under the authority of God's Word and do what he tells us to do. It is by the teaching of the Word of God that our conduct, our speech, our thoughts and our repressed feelings are revealed to us. This is not for the purpose of further complicating our lives, nor making us feel guilty, but so we can recognize these things about ourselves and confess them to God.

A doctor back east had a patient who was morbidly obese. He outlined to her the health risks she was facing and a plan to get healthy. She stormed out of his office and brought a law suit against him! He had another female patient, who had the same problems, and he told her the same thing. He outlined a monitored weight loss program, healthy diet, etc.. And she too stormed out of his office, but she came back because she realized the doctor was trying to help her and she lost over 100 pounds!

Pastor-teachers teach Bible Doctrine, which identifies our own personal problems and gives us spiritual solutions to solve the problems. We can only teach. We can't give positive volition to people, nor can we make people apply the Word to their lives. It lies solely on the shoulders of believers in Christ to make the appropriate decisions to come to class, take notes, confess their sins if necessary, live in the filling of the Holy Spirit, live by faith and apply doctrine to their lives.

There are four major areas that war against our souls and cause us so much misery: **One**, stress in the soul, which we have allowed in from the world system; **Two**, sin in the soul, which comes from the sin nature; **Three**, false doctrine in the soul; **Four**, the inner conflict of the defense mechanisms of the soul in the area of repressed emotions. We must learn to use God's spiritual provisions to deal with them.

Life has always had its share of problems and stress. If we're living in a time of apostasy and/or national judgment, then the problems and stress will be compounded. If we're living at the end of the age, then they will be compounded even more! So it's vital that the believer understand the conflict that he/she will be going through as the stresses of life seek to penetrate the soul.

External pressure will always be there, **but we want to keep it from becoming stress in the soul!** If we don't, then we will not only have stress in the soul, but also sin in the soul, and could end up with false doctrine in the soul and dealing with garbage in the soul.

The suppression and repression of feelings is a survival technique that children adopt in childhood as a defense mechanism to protect the core of their identity, their soul, from abuse and damage. They work in childhood, but in adulthood they don't. In fact, they can become counter-productive, even destructive. So they will have to be dealt with through the teaching of God's Word and counseling, which can be very helpful in the process, may have to brought in to facilitate healing.

Repressed feelings, such as, anger, fear, guilt worry, etc., negatively affect our bodies mentally and physically, with pain and poor health as some of the consequences. Utilizing the childhood self defense mechanism or repressing or suppressing one's feelings is not the biblical solution provided by God to deal with them. It is through the conscious recognition of our feelings and confessing them to God that we have relief from them.

Seventeen

Some of our feelings are due to recent events in our lives, while others are due to feelings buried deep down in our subconscious long ago in our childhoods. In the process of spiritual growth, as we go to spiritual completion, the believer will often be placed into a variety of tests designed to bring these destructive feelings to the surface, where the conscious mind can see them, confess them to God, and finally be free from them!

But this is the opposite of what we've been trying to do all our lives. What we've learned to do, ever since childhood, is bury our feelings and keep them buried! This is where tension comes about in the soul and physical pain to keep our minds off them. TMS, tension myositis syndrome, is a distracting device, a ruse, utilized to keep our conscious minds from the awareness and identification of our painful feelings, so we can finally deal with them and be free of them. The flesh nature uses TMS to avoid doing God's will in our spiritual growth. I can't because....

The childhood self defense coping technique of repression works counter-productive as adults because it produces in us the flesh dynamic of denial, and denial is just the opposite of confession. Also, when the believer is faced with certain things about themselves: their pride, anger, fears, guilt, self righteousness, etc., they will not only will keep trying to suppress these truths, but deny them have if they do happen to surface.

The four areas of inner conflict that Christians will have to face and need to deal with faith, the Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit are: **one**, stress in the soul that we have let in from the outside pressures of the world; **two**, sin in the soul from the resident sin nature; **three**, false doctrine in the soul; and **four**, the conflict inside of us from trying to live life and deal with our problems by using the childhood defense mechanisms of repression and suppression of our feelings, denial, dissociation and the acting out of our feelings, instead of using the spiritual life provision God gave to all of us.

Tension myositis syndrome is the inner tension that comes about as the result of buried feelings trying to surface, while at the same time, the conscious and subconscious mind keeps trying to push them down. This results in tension, and is often manifested in one physical manner or another, and it also results in stress in the soul.

Stress in the soul is not necessarily sin in the soul, but is tantamount to sin in the soul because it has the same negative impact on the soul as sin does. So we have pressure which is external to us and pressure which is internal and **both can cause stress in the soul**. And we deal with these inner stressors just the same as we deal with the external stressors, and that is through faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word, which gives our souls peace!

All of us have gone through bad things in our lives, and many have gone through childhood neglect, or even abuse in one form or another. The key for believers is learning to handle them by using God's spiritual provisions, instead of childhood coping mechanisms.

When we resort to childhood defense coping mechanisms, we are resorting to a dynamic of the flesh nature. We are trying to handle our problems and the pressures of life by our knowledge, our strength, our instincts, or by our years of conditioning. By using these childhood defense mechanisms, we will not only fail to handle the problems, and end up with stress in the soul, but we will also be creating another problem for ourselves in our bodies!

Stress in the soul always leads to sin nature control of the soul. **Pressure**, if not handled by the filling of the Holy Spirit utilizing the faith rest drill, will result in stress in the soul. **Stress** in the soul always leads to **sin in the soul**. The first **sin** that is activated is the **emotional complex** in the soul. The first emotion that is usually activated is the **fear** complex followed by the **anger** complex.

And if anyone doubts the negative impact that **fear** has on the soul, see 1 John 4:18, “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because **fear hath torment**. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*” Torment refers to the soul being tortured! And if anyone doubts the negative impact of inner **stress**, see all the studies done on how the various diseases and conditions caused by stress!

Even if we are positive to the Word of God, and are sitting under the teaching of Bible Doctrine, we will still have the three problems of: stress in the soul, sin in the soul, and defense mechanism coping devices to deal with. The inner tension will always be there, if we are operating in the flesh nature. The battle for us is to use spiritual problem solving devices, rather than childhood defense mechanisms.

The Lord said that in this world we will have tribulation – pressure! “*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have **tribulation**: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*” And from what we know the human frame reacts adversely with negative emotions to any demands placed upon it. Pressure automatically creates stress in the soul.

And for Christians, when the pressures of life are not met with the spiritual provisions that God has supplied to us in his grace, such things as: prayer, the filling of the Holy Spirit, the faith rest life, claiming the promises of God, occupation with Christ through his Word, Bible Doctrine circulating in the stream of consciousness, having a personal sense of destiny, etc., then the result will always be **stress in the soul!**

If we are not successful in keeping stress out of our souls, then we will not only have to deal with stress in the soul, but sin in the soul. And both stress in the soul and sin in the soul destroy the tranquility of the soul, as well as, the tranquility of our surroundings. And again, the spiritual provision from the Lord to deal with stress outside the soul, is the peace of Christ! **The peace of Christ is both the prevention and cure for stress in the soul!**

We have heard that the natural reaction to fear is fight or flight. We see this in king David, when faced with evil men who were trying to kill him. Now David was not a coward, nor was he an untrained warrior. He had killed thousands of men in battle. But this time he was operating outside the faith-rest dynamic and was **gripped with fear** to the place that he was not only tormented in his soul, but he wanted to run away. “*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. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.*” Psalms 55:4-8 But he recovered his faith and waxed bold and joyful. “*He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.*” Psalms 55:18

Eighteen

The question is, “Why don't we handle stress when it's still on the outside, before it gets inside?” Isn't it better to keep the wolves outside the house, rather than let them get into the house! God's provision of inner peace, which comes from faith in the promises of God, will certainly get the stress out of our souls. **But isn't it better to live in peace to prevent stress from getting into our souls, rather than allowing ourselves to become miserable??**

The flesh's approach to handling pressure and the problems of life, (and all believers in Christ still have their flesh natures, even though they have acquired a new nature at salvation), is to solve their problems by using their own ideas, strengths, abilities, and by utilizing a life time of conditioning, whereby we automatically resort to childhood defense mechanisms. We do this instead of applying the spiritual provision of faith in the promises. The one leaves us with stress and misery in the soul, while the other leaves us with peace in the soul.

We see in Psalms 55:4-8 that David's flesh nature was in control, and, because he was afraid for his life, he wanted to run away, “*And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*” Psalms 55:6 Running away to a place where he felt secure was his flesh nature's reaction to the situation, but it was not God's solution! The spiritual solution was for him to trust the Lord, which he did, as we see evidenced in his prayer to *Yahweh*. “*As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.*” Psalms 55:16

When we look back at David's life we see why this was his reaction. He spent his childhood out in the wilderness as he was taking care of the sheep. It was a familiar place to him; one where he felt safe and secure. No people, no demons, no threats other than the occasional predators, which he had no problem in handling, a place of solitude, safety and peace. In his young adult years much of that was spent in fleeing from Saul. So we can see his life time of conditioning of fleeing to safe and familiar surroundings enter in to this threat of these evil men. Now our life stories are all different, but the same in one respect in that we are all prone to flee to safe and familiar surroundings, when faced with threats to us, instead of fleeing to God in faith and prayer in the spiritual life dynamic! And repression is one of those tactics the subconscious uses when face with feelings we are afraid of.

The way it works is like this; negative emotions are automatically activated whenever stress comes into our souls. It's a part of our human nature. But it wasn't always like this. When Adam and Eve were created, there was no stress in their souls, nor were there any negative emotions! No fear, no anger, no guilt, no grief, no envy, even their concepts of love and happiness were totally different than ours! But after they sinned against God and acquired a fallen nature, then all these negative emotions entered in and so did the psychological defense measures of suppression, repression, denial, etc..

Man is vulnerable and he feels insecure. The slightest threat or demand put on him will cause him to react emotionally. The emotions react with fear, anger, etc., to any threat real or imagined. And it will react to demands, even legitimate demands put upon him. Vulnerability leads to insecurity, and insecurity leads to fear, and fear causes torment in the soul.

So emotional reactions to pressure are normal, they are a part of the flesh nature, but God has provided something infinitely superior to handling pressure and that is the spiritual life dynamic. The spiritual life is able to keep the pressures of life from becoming stress in the soul. And no stress in the soul means no sin in the soul and no misery in the soul.

Whenever one is under pressure, God has provided: faith, the Word, the promises, Bible Doctrine, claiming the promises, the faith rest drill, having a personal sense of destiny, confession of sin if necessary, prayer, the filling of the Spirit, meditating on the Word of God, all of which create peace in our soul, which keeps stress out of the soul! The **pressures** of life are inevitable, (it is wise to minimize them), but **stress** in optional.

The spiritual provisions God supplies to all of us are the walls of our inner house or castle, which keep the enemy soldiers of negative thoughts and feelings from breaching the walls and making our souls miserable. Even Peter wrote concerning **lusts**, “*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which **war against the soul**;*” 1 Peter 2:11 But if we fail to do this, then the soldiers of the army of stress will break through to wreak havoc on our souls. If this happens, then we will have to round them up one by one and deal with them by faith. Which we should have done in the first place to keep them out!

Nineteen

Our problem is we want to handle our own problems with our own ideas, strengths, stubbornness and childhood problem solving devices, even though they're doomed to fail every time! And the result will always be us not filled with the Holy Spirit, no peace in the soul, and the soul being ravaged by negative emotions, misery and sin in the soul. And it is usually because of the misery we are experiencing that we are motivated to apply the spiritual problem solving devices of faith in the Word and prayer to God.

Human viewpoint, human ideas and human strength are the believer's works. They are also a part of our human frailty, or infirmity, as Paul puts it. And one of them is our resorting to the childhood self defense mechanisms of repressing our feelings. Believers tend to look at the believer's weaknesses along the lines of personal lust trends, legalism, lasciviousness, legalism and OSN activities, which are all true. But repression techniques are also a part of our weakness.

But there is something else that is a part of our works. And remember, the word **works**, *ergos*, refers to any and all activities that the flesh nature can produce. How do we attempt to solve our problems and face the pressures of life? Do we try to run away from them? Do we worry about them? Do we get angry and rant and rave? Do we complain? Do we get bitter and resentful? Do we take the “stiff upper lip” approach? Or our “shoulder to the wheel” approach? Do we unknowingly resort to childhood conditioning and start applying childhood self defense mechanisms? These are all works of the flesh.

Life, and the problems that come with living life, have pressures and with pressure there is always the potential for stress in the soul. We're all faced with it and all of us resort, in one area or another, to the flesh's approach for handling pressure. But Christians are to handle the pressures of life by applying the faith rest drill, prayer to God for wisdom and the leading and filling of the Holy Spirit. God said he will provide all our needs and that should satisfy our souls and give them rest and peace.

Remember the 6 P's. The Lord established a new concept of faith for us to live by here on earth, one that he lived by and perfected, and that is **faith in the Father**. Faith in the Father's **plan**; faith in the Father's **provisions**; faith in the Father's **protection**; faith in the Father's **power**; faith in the Father's **promises**; and faith in the **process** that the Father has chosen to perfect us! “*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” Hebrews 12:2