

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

“Good Grief”

September 20, 2015

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

| EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY | | |
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| An 8-Week Sermon Series on Spiritual and Emotional Maturity | | |
| Date | Message Title | Bible Text |
| Aug. 23 | Emotionally Healthy Spirituality | 1 Corinthians 13 |
| Aug. 30 | Becoming Your Authentic Self | Ephesians 4:22-25 |
| Sept. 6 | How Your Family Tree Affects Your Life | Genesis 37-50 |
| Sept. 13 | The Dark Night of the Soul | 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 |
| Sept. 20 | Good Grief (The Inside Out Movie) | Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 |
| Sept. 27 | Slowing Down to Be With Jesus | Psalms 46:10 |
| Oct. 4 | Learning New Skills to Love Well | Romans 12:9-21 |
| Oct. 11 | Secret to Loving Christ Above All Else | Matthew 22:37-39 |

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality requires us to go through the pain of the “wall”. Regardless of how we get there, every follower of Jesus at some point will confront the “wall”.

- “There is no greater disaster in the Spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality. In fact the true spiritual life is not an escape from reality but an absolute commitment to it. Loss marks the place where self knowledge and powerful transformation happen – if we have the courage to participate fully in the process.” – Peter Scazzerro
- Perhaps no greater story teaches us this truth than that of the life of Job found in the book of Job in the Bible.
- Job can be divided into three main sections:
 - The Circumstances, Calamities of Job (1:1 -2:13)
 - The Dialogues with Job (3:1 -42:6)
 - The Deliverance of Job (42:7 – 17)
- Through it all we see Job's innocence, God's allowing of His suffering, His friends accusations, his wife's giving up, Job's expressing his emotions, God's Glory and Job's restoration.
- The Author of Ecclesiastes sums up these uncomfortable times in our life in *Ecclesiastes 3:1-11*

1. God gives us _____ and _____ for our lives. (v.1)

- Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes 3:1 – “There is a time and season for each thing. You cannot do it all at once. There are limits. There are seasons.”
- **Psalm 131**
- David says that he has learned the secret to a peace-filled life: To humble himself and realize that he cannot do it all. He is not God. He has learned to live within his limits and to set healthy boundaries.
- “Understanding and respecting our boundaries and limits is one of the most important character qualities and skills that (a person) needs in order to be long-term lovers of God and others. Maturity in life is when someone is living joyfully within their God-given limits.”
- Peter Scazzerro
- Application #1 – The following are signs that a person is off-center and signals that I have strayed from my God-given life. Are any of these true about me? Is God speaking to me about a need to live with boundaries and to receive God's gift of limits?
 - I am anxious
 - I am rushing or hurrying
 - My body is in a knot
 - I am doing too many things
 - My mind cannot stop racing
 - I am driving too fast
 - I am not able to be fully present with people
 - I am irritable about the simple tasks of life, like having to wait in line at the supermarket
 - I am skimming over time with God.
- Application #2 – What steps do I need to take in my life for Psalm 131 to be true about me?
 - I need to repent of my pride in thinking I can do it all – that I am a god.
 - I need to embrace God's gift of limits as one of His good gifts to me.
 - I need to resign from such-n-such to make more margins in my life for God and people.

- I need to say “no” in the power of God’s Spirit.
- I need to pause to be with Jesus.
- I need to...

2. Grief is a process God gives us to help us process our emotions in a _____ way. (vv. 4-7)

- God gives us seasons so that we can emote.
- Video: “First Day Plan – Inside Out” [1:04] found at YouTube
- “Perhaps the most popular way in our culture of not paying attention to our losses and pain is by medicating ourselves through an addiction. People use work, TV, drugs, alcohol, shopping binges, food binges, busyness, sexual escapades, unhealthy relational attachments, even serving others at church incessantly – anything to medicate the pain of life.”
- Peter Scazzero
- Am I using any of the following unhealthy methods of dealing with my losses?
 - Ignore my losses.
 - Deny having losses.
 - Minimize my losses.
 - Blame my losses on others.
 - Blame my losses on myself.
 - Intellectualize and rationalize away my losses.
 - Medicate my losses with an addiction.
- Part of a healthy way of dealing with losses is just to acknowledge that they have happened. We live in a fallen world. We are not in heaven yet. It is healthy to pause and acknowledge a loss. To talk about it. To feel it. To express it. To stop and pay attention to it.
- **John 12:24** – *I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.*
- Application #3 – With God’s help and power, I will...
 - Make a list of my losses. Pause and reflect on each one in God’s Presence. Feel the loss. Acknowledge it.

- Share my list of losses and the story behind each one with a trusted friend or Christian counselor. Allow someone to mourn with me (Romans 12:15).
- Acknowledge any unhealthy ways that I have been dealing (or not dealing) with my losses and seek to steer my course to healthy ways of dealing with loss.
- Attend Grief Share on Wednesday nights at Grace Fellowship to help process my loss with others on the same journey. Contact Care Ministry at 281-646-1903. More info at www.whatisgrace.org/careministry
- Read/pray the Psalms aloud: “There is a psalm for every sigh.”
- Wait on the Lord and trust Him for healing of my broken heart.
- Let go of the former (what I have lost) and trust God for the new.