

Wk3: Heavenly Wholeness: “It is Well”

Week 1 P Mike - We are Spirt Body Soul

Week 2 P Mark - We are Spirit

Week 3 P Theresa - We are Spirit People and we have a Soul

We are on a journey towards Heavenly Wholeness. Or another way to say this is Wholeness in Christ. Lets review again this week 1 Thess 5:23-24

23-24 May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he’ll do it (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 The Message Bible)!

Biblical Definition of Wholeness:

The state of being perfectly well in body, soul (mind, will and emotions) and spirit. This was God's original design for man before the fall and is now attainable through Jesus.

OG QUESTION: WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD SOUL WHAT DO YOU THINK OF? DO YOU RESONATE WITH THE SAYING, “IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL”?

What is our Soul? The soul is our mind, our will and our emotions. Or in other words, it is what we think, what we want, and what we feel. The essence of our soul, therefore, is considered our flesh. Next week P Earl will take a deep dive into the Mind and today we will be taking a deep dive into our emotions and our will to choose those emotions.

By the end of today my prayer would be to establish that emotions are neither good nor bad, that they are from God and that ultimately we have the choice to choose our emotions. How we choose our emotions and master our emotions so that they don’t master us will greatly affect how we live. Can I get an amen!

In a lot of the discussions I’ve been apart of or even read about, Emotions have been given a bad wrap. Currently I’m reading book by Brenee Brown

called the Atlas of the Heart and I'm learning that we typically don't have a wide enough vocabulary to express all of our emotions. Just for fun, let's see how many we can come up with and write them down on the white board. Just shout out some emotions... (note: then add some that may not have been mentioned).

In truth, God created us to have emotions so why do we often consider them so evil? Joyce Myers once said, "Emotions are the believers #1 enemy." In many marriages you hear the husband say, "My wife is so emotional." Even as a minister we can be warned about emotions not always being a good thing because it could lead to emotionalism (undue indulgence in or display of emotion).

One simple definition for emotions that I heard and liked was this: feelings on the inside caused by pain or pleasure on the outside to move you towards or away from the will of God or the design purpose for your life. Think about it. How many times have you come to point in your life when you ask the question,

"How did I get here?"

"How did I fall back into the trap of addiction?"

"How did I end up in this broken relationship?"

"How did I fall in the sin of _____?"

"How did I gain so much weight?"

"How did I get caught up in this drama?"

OG QUESTION: DISCUSS A TIME WHEN YOU ASK YOURSELF ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED QUESTION. WHAT LED YOU TO THAT PLACE AND HOW DID YOU GET PAST THAT SEASON?

The answer - Your emotions took you there.

As I prepared for this message, I searched for a balanced viewpoint on emotions. Maybe because I'm such an emotional person, that deep down inside I wanted to believe that the intensity of emotions I feel was a good thing. From experience, I already know they can be a bad thing. As I studied I truly believe the Lord brought a deeper understanding of why emotions are a gift when under the submission of the Spirit.

The key is your emotions should not be the only thing that defines you nor should they lead you. Why? Because our emotions don't tell us the truth, they simply tell us how we feel. **Therefore, feelings are indicators not guides.** Remember, we are Spirit, Soul, and body. I heard a preacher say it like this, "Man is a spirit, possesses a soul and lives in a physical body." We learned last week the significance of being led by the Spirit. If our soul is our mind, will and emotions, we can also say that as goes our soul so goes our life. Turn to your neighbor and say, "As goes your soul so goes your life."

OG QUESTION: IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT YOUR EMOTIONS BECOME MORE OF A GUIDE IN YOUR LIFE RATHER THAN INDICATORS?

Maybe that's why that popular hymn, *It is Well with My Soul*, is so significant. If it is not well with my soul, it is not well with my life. Therefore, we have feelings but we must not allow our feelings to have us.

Why would God give us emotions if they were going to trip us up so much? Well, think about it. The greatest commandment according to Jesus was what? "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30 ESV). Therefore, How can we truly love God fully without emotions? Try to love your children or spouse without your emotions. Some of you are in that situation right now. How's that working out for you?

Even Jesus had emotions. The shortest verse in the Bible,

"Jesus wept"(John 11:35 NASB).

So then, how should we perceive emotions?

I like what they say about emotions in an article I read from the Gospel Coalition (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/emotions-important/>), it states

Our emotions are neither the most important thing about us, something to be worshiped, nor are they the least important, a problem to be avoided or ignored.

Today, our culture tells us that what you feel is the most important thing about you. It contends we should have good feelings so that we can be happy. If you are having negative feelings then that's not good and we must get rid of the situation causing those negative feelings.

That is why people get trapped in this idea to "express yourself at all costs" or "get it off your chest," or them believing they are just "letting off steam," and "just being honest." So we unload no matter what others may think or how it makes them feel. I don't know about you but I've been here. And although I'm not advocating that you should hold everything in, I am contending the Lord will show us this morning that under the submission of the Holy Spirit, we can temper (everybody say temper) these emotions not get rid of them. **Temperance is the quality of moderation or self-restraint.** This should not be unfamiliar to us. The bible tells us we have the fruit of the Spirit and therefore we have self-control.

22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT)

Self-control is a Godly force to help us go to where God wants us to go!

OG QUESTIONS: DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU DID NOT TEMPER YOUR EMOTIONS. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS? DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU DID. WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

Emotions not under the control of the Spirit can lead one to a state of unhealthy emotionalism which makes emotions the final authority in the believer's life. Or worst yet, when you can't control your emotions you desire to control others.

On the flip side, to dismiss emotions altogether is not good either. This side of the spectrum would have us "believe we should treat emotions like you would a rabid dog that has wandered into your living room." These are the stoic people, or those being "tough" or "strong". Unfortunately, I've

heard too often this ideal that if you cry you're just weak. Or how's this, "Men don't cry, suck it up". To that I say, real men cry! All my ladies in the house say AMEN! Jesus was an example of a man who was steel and velvet - tough as nails but so tender hearted. The reason so many fall in this category is because they believe that emotions cannot be trusted. And at times this is true but not at all times!

Christian stoicism tends toward immediately repenting from any negative emotion in oneself and rebuking it in others. The driving theological emphasis here is that negative emotions (e.g., anger, sorrow, fear) are inappropriate, given God's sovereignty. If God ordained this suffering and he works all things for good, then the only reason you feel bad is because you don't have enough faith.

And yet the Bible clearly teaches us about our emotions. Romans 12:15 tells us we should rejoice when someone rejoices and weep when someone weeps. It calls for the sharing of a full spectrum of emotions. I know what you are wondering. Well then what about anger? Is there ever a time when it is okay to be angry?

Lets read Ephesians 4:26-27,

26 "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and do not give the devil a foothold.

Even Jesus got angry. In His anger or passion for God, Jesus went into the temple and started flipping tables. How many of us can agree that anger is sometimes the appropriate response? Looking at sex trafficking, molestation, murder, abortion to mention a few things should make you angry. The key is to not sin in the midst of feeling angry. How do we sin? We react instead of responding in righteousness.

We must be careful to not try and swing to the extreme anti-emotion side.

Stoicism misses that emotions, even negative ones, are a God-given gift, designed as an aid in obedience. And it misses that the Bible (especially Psalms) is full of godly negative emotion. Most

fundamentally, all our emotions are an occasion for connection with the Lord if we pour out our hearts to him as he intended.

So what do we do with our emotions? How do we biblically approach our emotions that allows us to take them seriously without “giving them the keys to our lives”? The answer, submit them or have them come under the power of the Holy Spirit (remember P Mike’s analogy of the submarine hatch). Jesus was the example for us to follow to live like this.

Hebrews 4:15
New American Standard Bible

15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things just as we *are*, yet without sin.

Jesus was without sin! All sin is conceived in our emotions therefore, again, we must learn to master them! Jesus did master them through submission and obedience to the Father! In conclusion let's look at a time when Jesus totally could have given in to His emotions and yet He did not.

Mark 14:33-36
New King James Version

33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. **34** Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, *even to death.* Stay here and watch.”

35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. **36** And He said, “Abba, Father, all things *are possible for You.* Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

Key Take aways from the story:

1. Take some friends on the journey to hold you accountable and watch your back

2. Stay the course. You get to a place where you start thinking, “Maybe God doesn’t want me to do this because it doesn’t make me feel good.” NO. God wants you to mature and go deeper into His presence
3. Keep on praying - this is how you stayed fixed and focused on the one leading and guiding you into all truth! Staying focused on what the Lord has called you to do and be.

People with their minds set on you,
you keep completely whole,
Steady on their feet,
because they keep at it and don’t quit.
Depend on God and keep at it because in
the Lord God you have a sure thing (Isaiah 26:3-4 The
Message Bible).

4. Surrender your will for His will!

Emotional stability is the will of God in our lives and He gives us the Holy Spirit to help us walk in the power of the Spirit not in the power of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16)

Living by the Spirit’s Power (Galatians 5:16 NLT)

16 So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves.

Church, We don’t want to just give in to or cope with our emotions we want to control them. Most of us have been deceived to believe that our emotions are a response but not a choice. People think I don’t have any control over my emotions. My emotions just happen. It’s just my response to what happened. Listen carefully!! It is not a response. It is a reaction. That’s the worlds way. We react to what is happening around us or what is said to us. The Christ way is pause, think, and walk in faith. We respond with faith, with the truth of God’s word to what is happening around us and what is being said to us.

WE HAVE A CHOICE! Turn to your neighbor and say I have a choice! Our soul is mind, WILL, and emotions. Our will is our CHOICE.

What we think will inform our choice and then our emotions will follow. The question is, "How will we choose?"

OG QUESTIONS: Will you choose in your flesh or will you choose in the Spirit? Will you choose your will or will you choose God's will? How has this been a struggle for you and how can you overcome in this area?

By allowing the Spirit to first renew our minds we can change how we think. If we change how we think we can change what our will or choice will be. If we change our choice we can master our emotions and not have them master us. Hallelujah. Some say thank you Jesus for your Word!

Will you stand with me as we close in prayer.