

SECTION SEVEN
THE ANALYSIS OF THE SOUL
(1)

THE EMOTION
CHAPTER ONE

THE BELIEVER AND THE EMOTION

When a believer has not experienced the sure work of the cross, which is brought about by the Holy Spirit, he may have experienced deliverance from sin yet still be soulish and unable to overcome his own natural life. In the foregoing chapters we have spoken concerning the believer's soulish life and work. If we carefully study the soulish conduct and action of a believer, we see that both issue from his emotion. Although the soul includes three primary parts—the mind, emotion, and will—most soulish believers live by their emotion. We can almost say that they are controlled by their emotion in their soulish life. This is because the emotion appears to occupy a greater part than the mind and the will in human life; its work also appears to assume a greater role in daily human living than the other parts of the soul. Therefore, we can see that nearly all the actions of soulish believers originate from their emotion.

THE FUNCTION OF EMOTION

Our human feelings—joy, happiness, cheerfulness, excitement, sighing, irritation, stimulation, despondency, sadness, grief, depression, misery, sorrow, agitation, confusion, anxiety, enthusiasm, coldness, affection, fondness, covetousness, compassion, kindheartedness, preference, likes, interest, desire, expectation, pride, fear, remorse, hate, etc.—all come out of our emotion. All work related to our thinking issues out of the mind, our thinking organ. All work related to our decision-making originates from the will, our decision-making organ. Aside from our thoughts, decisions, and their related works, all other functions issue from the emotion. Our multitude of diverse feelings are the function of the emotion. Since emotion comprises such a vast area, nearly all soulish believers are emotional believers.

Human emotion is very complicated because it comprises a vast area. In order to help believers understand, we will subdivide emotion briefly into three major parts: (1) affection, (2) desire, and (3) feeling. These three parts cover three aspects of the emotion's function. If a believer can overcome these three aspects, he will soon enter into a pure spiritual life.

In short, our human emotion comprises what we commonly call the "seven passions," which are nothing less than the different feelings we have in our hearts. Whether it is a feeling of love, hate, joy, grief, excitement, despondency, interest, or indifference, all of these comprise the different feelings in our hearts. Therefore, they all belong to the emotion.

If we pay attention to the diverse feelings in our emotions, we will see that our emotion changes easily. In the world there are probably very few things that are as changeable as emotion. We can feel one way one minute and feel another way the next. Emotion changes according to feelings, and the latter changes very rapidly. Therefore, if one lives by emotion, his life is without principle.

Man's emotion always has a reactionary function. This means that when man's feeling is active in one direction for a while, an opposite reaction is bound to follow. For example, extreme happiness is followed by sorrow, high excitement by great depression, and burning fervor by a feeling of deep withdrawal. Even in the matter of affection, although it may begin in love, after a period of time certain influences may change one's feelings, when the intensity of hatred can far exceed the earlier love.

THE BELIEVER'S EMOTIONAL LIFE

The more we consider the function of our emotional life, the more we know its fluctuation and undependability. If believers do not live according to the spirit but according to their emotion, is it any wonder that their living undulates like the waves? Many believers feel sad about their living because their experiences are so unstable. Sometimes they seem to be in the third heavens transcending everything of the human life; at other times they seem to descend and share in the lot of ordinary men. Their life is a series of ups and downs. It does not require something outwardly heavy and big to change them; as long as a little thing is contrary to their wish, they are unable to withstand it. Subsequently, they fall.

This phenomenon relates to the fact that a believer is controlled by emotion and not by the spirit. Since his emotion is still the major element of his life and has not been taken to the cross, the spirit cannot be strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the believer's spirit is still weak; he cannot control his whole being, nor can he overcome his emotion so that it becomes secondary, completely under the control of the spirit. If a believer can hand over his emotion to the cross through the Holy Spirit and accept the Holy Spirit as the Lord over all things, he surely can avoid this kind of undulating life.

Emotion may be considered as the greatest enemy to the life of a spiritual believer. A believer should walk according to the spirit. To do this, he must heed every leading of the spirit within him. The sense of the spirit is gentle, fine, and keen. Unless the believer attentively waits to receive and discern the revelation of his spiritual intuition, he can never obtain the guidance of his spirit. Hence, the total silence of the emotion is a prerequisite to walking according to the spirit. The small and delicate sense of the spirit is often confused and ignored by the believer because his feelings are roaring like billows. We cannot ultimately attribute any fault to the softness of our spirit's voice. Actually we can adequately feel the sense of the spirit, but when other feelings are mixed with it, we cannot possibly have discernment. Whoever keeps his emotion calm will see that it is easy to detect the voice of the intuition.

The rising and falling of the emotion not only hinders the believer from walking according to the spirit, but also directly causes him to walk according to the flesh. Since he cannot walk according to the spirit, he naturally walks according to the flesh. If he cannot secure guidance in his spirit, he naturally walks according to the impulse of his emotion. Whenever the spirit ceases to guide, the emotion starts to guide. At that moment a believer will spontaneously take the emotion as his inspiration and the impulses of the soul as the moving of the spirit. An emotional believer can be likened to a pond full of mud and sand. As long as no one comes to disturb the water, it looks clear; but once it is disturbed, it becomes muddy.

INSPIRATION AND EMOTION

Many believers do not know how to differentiate inspiration from emotion. Actually this is not difficult. Emotion always enters from outside of man, whereas inspiration is given

by the Holy Spirit within man's spirit. For example, when a believer beholds the beauty of nature, a feeling within him spontaneously wells up. He feels the beauty of the scenery and his own joy. This is emotion. Perhaps, when he sees a loved one, some kind of inconceivable feeling rises up within him as though a certain power is drawing him. This is also emotion. Both the beautiful scenery and the loved one are outside the man; hence, the feelings which they produce simply belong to emotion.

However, inspiration is not the same. It is influenced only by the Holy Spirit within man. Only the Holy Spirit can inspire the spirit. Since the Holy Spirit lives within the spirit, inspiration must come from within. It does not need to be stimulated by the beautiful scenery or a dear one; it can take place in the calmest environment. The emotion, on the contrary, becomes instantly dispirited when the outside stimulus is gone. Hence, an emotional believer lives solely according to his environment. He must be stirred up and encouraged in order to go on; otherwise, he stops. Inspiration does not require outside help. In fact, when the emotion is influenced by the external environment, it is confused, resulting in a believer being unable to know which of the two he should follow.

A believer should be careful not to consider calmness and absence of stimulation as spirituality. This is far from the truth. We should know that emotion can cause people not only to be excited but also to be depressed. When the emotion urges us, we feel quite excited; when it impedes us, we feel very depressed. In the same way that emotion excites, it also calms down. Just as excitement belongs to emotion, so does calmness. A believer often commits many errors because he is under the influence of his emotion; but when he is awakened from the state he is in, he will suppress his feelings and consider this as being spiritual. He does not realize, however, that the stirring of his emotion at this point has produced a reaction opposite to excitement which spontaneously calms him down. This calmness or quietness causes the believer to lose interest in much of God's work; he does not have much affection for many of God's children. Gradually the believer's outer man is reluctant to work. The spirit, therefore, is imprisoned, and the life of the spirit cannot flow out. Since he is no longer enthusiastic and has become extremely calm, he may think that he is walking according to spirit. What he does not know is that he is still walking according to his emotion, only this time it is according to another aspect of the emotion.

In reality, the believers who turn to this kind of emotional calmness are few. The majority of them continue to be excited by their emotion. Because of their stimulation, they do many things which are beyond the bounds of the ordinary. As they quiet down and recall their actions under the influence of this function of the emotion, they cannot help but laugh at themselves and consider themselves to have acted nonsensically. This is usually true of the things done according to the emotion. In retrospect a believer often feels embarrassed and regrets his rudeness. It is very pitiful when a believer is influenced by his emotion; his spirit is powerless to subject his emotion to death and deny its control.

There are two reasons believers walk according to their emotion. First, many believers never understand what walking according to the spirit is, nor have they sought to do so; therefore, they walk according to the influence of their emotion. In these circumstances, they do not have much experience and do not know how to reject the impulse of their emotion when it is activated. They are simply driven by their emotion, and they do the things which they should not do. This is not to say that their spiritual sense does not raise any intuitive objection. However, because of their weakness, they listen to their emotion and ignore their intuition. Then their emotion becomes all the more intense

until they lose control of themselves and walk according to their emotion. After having done the things which they should not, they once again repent. Second, there are believers who already know the difference between the spirit and soul experientially. When they are influenced by emotion, they know that this is from their soul, and they instantly resist it. Nevertheless, even this kind of believer sometimes walks according to the emotion. This is a successful counterfeit. If the believer is not spiritual, as in the first case mentioned above, he is overcome by the intense feeling of his emotion. If a believer is already spiritual, his emotion often counterfeits his spiritual sense. Outwardly the emotion and the spiritual sense appear identical; therefore, the believer finds it difficult to differentiate between them. Due to his ignorance, the believer is deceived and has many soulish actions.

The believer should realize that if he walks according to the spirit, all of his actions must be according to certain principles. This is because the spirit has laws, tracks, and principles. To walk according to the spirit is to walk according to the laws of the spirit. In spiritual principles, all the "rights" and "wrongs" have a clearly defined standard. If it is "yes," it is "yes," whether the sky is cloudy or clear; if it is "no," it is "no," whether one is excited or despondent. The Christian life follows a definite principle. If a believer does not completely put his emotion to death, his life will be without a fixed criterion. He will live by unstable feelings without a definite principle.

A life of principle differs completely from a life in the emotions. A believer who walks according to his emotion does not take care of principles or ordinary reasonings in considering whether or not to do something; he only takes care of his own feelings. If there is something that he likes, that makes him happy, or that he loves, he will be tempted by them even if he knows quite well that to do so is normally unreasonable and against the principles. If he feels cold, melancholy, and despondent, he will not fulfill his duty because his feelings do not go along with it. If the children of God paid a little attention to their emotion, they would realize how changeable it is and how dangerous it is to walk according to it. When the Word of God—the spiritual principle—agrees with their feeling, they do it; otherwise, they reject it and do not pay any attention to it. This kind of living is altogether at enmity with the spiritual life. Whoever wishes to have a spiritual life must walk according to God's principle moment by moment.

One distinct characteristic of a spiritual believer in his dealings with his circumstances is the fact that he is most calm. No matter what happens outwardly or if he suffers any provocation, he is always calm and peaceful, maintaining a kind of unchangeable characteristic. This is because his emotion, which is subject to stimulation, has been dealt with by the cross. Furthermore, his will and spirit are full of the power of the Holy Spirit so he can regulate all his feelings. Therefore, outward stimulation cannot move him. But if he does not allow the cross to deal with his emotion, he will be very susceptible to outward influence, regulation, movement, and stimulation. Since emotion easily changes, those who are regulated by emotion are also changeable. Whenever there is a slight threat from outside or a slight increase in work, they panic and are at a loss as to what to do. If they want to arrive at perfection, they must allow the cross to do a deeper work in their emotion.

If a believer could only remember that God does not lead in the midst of confusion, everything would be fine. This would guard him from many errors. He should never decide to do anything or begin to do anything when his heart is in an upheaval and his emotion is in an uproar. This is the time when the emotional impulse is the strongest, and he will commit errors if he walks according to it. Our mind also becomes unreliable

when our feeling is in a confused state, because the mind is very easily affected by emotion. Once the mind is weakened, we cannot distinguish right from wrong. At the same time, the conscience is also undependable. When the emotion is agitated and the mind is deceived, the conscience loses its standard for accurately discerning right from wrong. In such a condition, whatever the believer decides to do is bound to be improper and will cause many regrets afterwards. He must exercise his will to reject, stop, and overcome his feelings. Only when his feelings are no longer stirring and are perfectly calm can he make a proper decision.

Likewise, a believer should not do anything which might stir up his emotion. Sometimes our emotion is peaceful and calm, but because we act according to our own will, we stir up the emotion. This kind of experience happens frequently, and it greatly damages our spiritual life. Whatever disturbs the tranquility of our soul (emotion) must be rejected. Not only should we refrain from doing things when our emotion is in turmoil, we should also learn not to do anything which may cause such turmoil. However, we should not think that our actions will be correct just because our emotion is in an undisturbed state. If we are led by the "calm emotion" rather than the spirit, we will stir up our emotions. Those in our midst who have the experience can recall that in meeting someone or in writing a letter, the emotion can become greatly stirred up. These things are then outside of God's will.

EMOTION AND WORK

Elsewhere we have emphasized that only the spirit can do spiritual work; all other works are without spiritual value. Because this point is so important, we will now go into more detail.

Today men pay much attention to human psychology. Some who work for the Lord diligently study psychology. They think that if their words, teachings, presentations, attitudes, and interpretations can appeal to man's psychology, they will win many people to the Lord. This psychology is the working of man's emotion. Although it may prove useful at times, dependence on emotion alone has no spiritual significance at all.

We already know that man's lack is regeneration—the regeneration of the spirit. A work is absolutely useless if it cannot cause man's deadened spirit to be enlivened, cause man to receive God's uncreated life, and cause man to have the Holy Spirit indwell his regenerated spirit. If the purpose of the believer's work is not to impart life to others, the result of his preaching is no different than if he exhorted people to worship the devil. Neither our psychology nor other's psychology can help them receive life. Unless the Holy Spirit Himself does the work, everything is in vain.

A believer must realize that his emotion is altogether natural; it is not the source of God's life. May he truly acknowledge the fact that his emotion is void of God's life! Therefore, he must not consider using the power of his emotion through tears, a sad countenance, weeping, or other emotional expressions to save people. None of the functions of his emotion can influence man's darkened spirit in any way. Unless the Holy Spirit gives life to man, no one can receive life. If we do not depend on the Holy Spirit, but depend on the emotion instead, we will see that all of our work's efforts are futile and bear no real fruit.

Emotion can never give life to man. Those who work for the Lord must clearly see that if they depend on themselves, nothing in them can generate God's life. We can exhaust

every psychological method to excite man's emotion to arouse his interest toward religion; we can make him feel repentant, sorrowful, and shameful for his past history and fearful of the coming judgment; we can cause him to admire Christ, desire to contact other Christians, and be merciful to the poor; we can even make him feel happy while doing all of these things, yet we still cannot cause him to be regenerated. Whether we cause interest, regret, sorrow, shame, fear, admiration, desire, mercy, joy, etc., all of these are just the various functions of the emotion. Man can have them all and still be spiritually dead, because he has not apprehended God intuitively. From our human viewpoint, is not someone who possesses these qualities a first-class Christian? Nevertheless, these are only the impulses of the emotion and cannot sufficiently prove one's regeneration. The manifestation of regeneration is apprehension of God in the intuition of the regenerated one, i.e., his spirit is quickened. Therefore, when we work, we must not think that it is sufficient for men to change their attitude toward us, have a good feeling about us, and display all the previously mentioned emotions. This is not regeneration!

If the workers of the Lord would remember that our aim is to help people receive the life of Christ, they would never use their emotion to make people approve of Christ's teaching and express a good feeling toward Christianity. When we clearly acknowledge that man lacks God's life—the quickening of the spirit—we will realize that all the work which has been done by relying on ourselves is vain. No matter how a man changes, he can only change within the boundary of his "self." He can never step outside this boundary and change his own life into the life of God. Therefore, may we truly see the reality that "a spiritual aim needs spiritual means." Our spiritual aim is to cause people to be regenerated. Therefore, when we work we must only resort to spiritual means; emotion is of no use.

The apostle Paul said that every woman who prays or prophesies must have her head covered. Concerning this matter, there are many diverse explanations and opinions. Although we will not decide here which interpretation is right, one thing is clear: the apostle's intention was to prevent the functioning of emotion. He intended to cover up all that arouses the emotion. It is particularly easy for a woman who preaches and prays to arouse people's emotion. From a physical standpoint, only the head is seemingly covered, but from a spiritual standpoint, the purpose of the covering is to put to death all the things that belong to emotion. Although in the Bible, brothers are not physically allowed to have their heads covered, in a spiritual sense, brothers must have their heads covered just like the sisters!

From this we can see that emotion may easily be expressed in the Lord's work; otherwise, the apostle would not have needed to give this kind of prohibition. In spiritual work today nearly the greatest problem is whether or not there is a power of attraction. It seems that those who have a natural attraction have the upper hand, and that the result of their work is superior to others. Those who have no natural attraction are seemingly defeated, and the achievement of their work is inferior to others. The apostle's intention was to cover up everything belonging to the soul, regardless of whether it was naturally attractive. All that is natural must be covered. Therefore, all the Lord's servants must learn this lesson from the sisters. Our natural attraction cannot help our spiritual work, neither can our lack of natural attraction hinder it. Let us refrain from all such thoughts. If we consider our power of attraction, we will lose our heart of dependence. Similarly, if we consider our lack of attraction, we will not walk according to the spirit. Unless the workers of the Lord walk according to the spirit, all the results of their work will be vain.

What are the workers of the Lord seeking today? Many seek for spiritual power. But real spiritual power comes from paying a price. As long as we are dead toward our emotions, we will have spiritual strength. We lose spiritual strength because we use too much of our emotion and have so much desire, affection, and feeling. If we do not walk according to the feelings of our emotions, and in everything deliver to death our own desires and actions which cause us to be happy, we would see strength and power in our human lives. The deeper death of the cross can fill us with spiritual power; other than this, there is no way. When the cross deals with our desires and enables us to live for God, spiritual power spontaneously will be manifested from us.

Furthermore, if a believer does not overcome his emotion in spiritual work, the emotion will hinder him in many ways from going on. As long as the influence of the emotion is present, the believer's spiritual strength is not sufficient to regulate his emotion. Hence, he cannot fulfill the highest will of God. The emotion will use all kinds of things to hinder the work from going on. Let us see the example of our physical weariness. We need to distinguish whether our need for rest is due to (1) bodily fatigue, (2) emotional weariness, or (3) both bodily fatigue and emotional weariness. God does not want us to overwork our spirit, our soul, or our body. God desires us to rest when we are tired. But we need to know whether our need for rest is related to bodily fatigue or emotional weariness, or whether our emotional weariness is using some fatigue in the body as an excuse to demand rest. Many times our desire for rest is really laziness. Our body needs to rest and so does our mind and spirit, but we should not rest because of a laziness which comes from the evil nature of our emotions. Laziness and weariness use physical fatigue as an alibi. In short, our emotion is pleasure-seeking and self-entertaining. The believer should guard against it creeping in during their proper rest.

THE PROPER USE OF EMOTION

If a believer allows the cross to do a deeper work in his emotion, he would soon learn that the emotion would not obstruct the spirit, but would even cooperate with the spirit. The cross would deal with all the natural life of the emotion, renew it, and make it an instrument of the spirit. We have previously mentioned that a spiritual man is not a spirit, nor is he a man without emotion. On the contrary, he uses his emotion to express the divine life within him. Before being dealt with by God, the emotion cannot be an instrument of the spirit. Rather, it acts according to its own desire. After being cleansed, the emotion can be an organ to express the spirit. The spirit likewise expresses its life through the emotion. The spirit needs the emotion to express its love and feelings towards man's suffering; it also needs the emotion to cause man to sense the operation of intuition. The sense of the spirit is made known to man through the feeling of his quiet emotion. If the emotion obeys the spirit, it causes the spirit to love what God loves and hate what He hates.

After understanding the truth concerning not living according to the emotion, some believers mistakenly think that a spiritual life is a life void of emotion. They think we need to abolish emotion so that we can be without emotion, like wood or stone. If a believer does not understand the meaning of the death of the cross, he cannot know the meaning of delivering the emotion to death and living entirely according to the spirit. We are not saying that the believer should become exceedingly hard, like iron or rock; nor should he be without affection in order to be considered a spiritual man, as if the term "spiritual man" denotes a man without affection. On the contrary, the most tender, sympathetic, merciful, and loving person is a spiritual man. Being entirely spiritual and delivering the emotion to the cross do not mean that a believer will lose his emotion and

become emotionless. When we see how a spiritual believer's love is greater than that of others, we will know that a spiritual man is not without emotion; rather, his emotion differs from that of an ordinary man.

In delivering our soul to the cross, we must remember that the life of the soul is lost, not the function of the soul. To nail the function of the soul on the cross would mean that we no longer think, decide, or feel. We must always remember this fact: losing the soul is to solely and continuously live by the life of God, not living by the natural life. It is being willing to not live according to self or walk according to the pleasure of the self, but to submit to God's will. Moreover, the cross and resurrection are two inseparable facts. "For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection" (Rom. 6:5). The death of the cross does not mean annihilation; the emotion, mind, and will of the soul-life are not exterminated by passing through the cross. They only lose their natural life in the death of the Lord; they are resurrected in His life. Death and resurrection cause the functioning organs of the soul to lose their life and then cause them to be renewed and used by the Lord. Consequently, a spiritual man is not without emotion; rather, his emotion is the most perfect and noble; it is as if it were newly created by God's hand. If anyone has difficulty here, the problem lies in his theory because no problem exists in his spiritual experience.

Emotion must pass through the work of the cross (Matt. 10:38-39) in order to get rid of its fiery nature, fanaticism, and confusion and to be totally subject to the spirit. The goal of the work of the cross is for the spirit to have the authority to regulate the function of the emotion.