

# Life of Joseph

Lessons in Humility, Leadership and Forgiveness

## Emotions

- In our study of the Life of Joseph we have seen various displays of emotion.
  - When Joseph was about to reveal himself to his brothers, he wept with joy [Gen 45:1-2].
  - When Joseph saw Jacob for the first time after many years, he wept with joy [Gen 46:29].
  - Clearly, these events involved strong emotions.
- God has given us emotions as a blessing to enrich our lives.
- As with every other blessing from God, Satan endeavors to distort the role of emotions.
- In this study we will come to understand the proper place that emotions play in the life of a believer.
- First, it is critical to understand that emotions are not in and of themselves sinful.
  - Emotions are tied to almost every thought and action of human life.
  - Emotions contain no objective thought – they serve to amplify the thoughts of the heart.
  - Emotions will either respond or react to whatever thoughts are occurring in the soul.
  - Emotions can respond to God and His character and express praise and adoration [Ps 7:17; 9:2].
  - Emotions can respond to the truth of God’s word [Ps 119:14, 103, 111, 162; Jer 15:16].
  - Jesus Himself experienced human emotion during His time on earth [John 11:32-35].
- God designed human emotions to respond to a soul that is stable.
- The thoughts of the soul are supposed to lead and emotions are supposed to follow.
- When emotions rise up and take precedence over thoughts in the soul, the person will become reactionary and irrational.
- Emotions are sensations or feelings and are inherently subjective in nature.
- The thoughts that circulate in our souls can be either subjective or objective in nature.
- God’s word teaches us to see things with objectivity which can only occur when our thoughts are in control of the soul.
- When a believer is walking by means of the Holy Spirit, he will be thinking godly thoughts which are guided by the Spirit and his emotions can respond as God intended.
- For example, a husband walking in the Light will love his wife with ἀγάπη love and he may have an emotional response to that love.
- Note that the love itself is not an emotion and there may or may not be an emotional response to the love that is in the heart.

- Because emotions can ebb and flow for the believer walking in the Light, a lack of emotion should not be misconstrued as an unhealthy condition of the soul.
- When a believer is walking in the flesh, his soul can quickly become unstable which allows emotions to take control.
- This breakdown of the proper authority structure in the soul can lead to a flooding of the heart with all sorts of emotions which further destabilize his thinking.
- When emotions are in control of the soul, every circumstance we face in life will become exaggerated in our thinking.
- Our bodies will respond to our emotions, whether good or bad, and produce hormones which intensify the sensations of our emotions (think adrenaline).
- For example, a believer who succumbs to fear can quickly be overcome by emotions which amplify the sin of fear and lead to panic or even paranoia [1 Sam 21-22].
- Likewise, bitterness and anger can be amplified by emotions and lead to uncontrolled outbursts or even violence.
- This condition where emotions have taken control of the soul is sometimes referred to as emotional revolt of the soul.
- A person whose soul is in emotional revolt will experience wild mood swings and can eventually deteriorate into psychosis which can lead to physical illnesses.
- The solution for the believer is for his soul to be under the control (filling) of the Holy Spirit [Eph 5:18] which occurs when the believer confesses his sins and yields to the Spirit.
- Once under the control of the Spirit, the believer's soul needs to be nourished by the truth of God's word in order to heal.
- A believer who consistently walks by means of the Spirit, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, will become more and more stable and less likely to be ruled by emotion.
- God desires for His children to think and act this way, so we should be diligent to do so.