

Caring for our Emotions
Proverbs 4:23; Matt 12:34; Ecclesiastes 3:4-5;8
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We'll be talking about emotions tonight by looking at several verses. And the first one is Ecclesiastes chapter three. And Ecclesiastes is, as you may know, as the passage of the Bible talks about a time for time to be born and so forth. But it also stresses that there is a time for emotions. Verses four and five say this there is a time under heaven to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance. Time to cast away stones and the time to gather stones together. Time to embrace. The time to refrain from embracing. And then down to verse five, a time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace. There's a time for all the emotions. There's even a time to hate, to hate evil.

Proverbs 4 puts all these matters in biblical perspective when it says this Solomon to a son, he says, my son, be attentive to my words in 4: 20. And then he says this - keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. This is our emotional life springs from our heart, and our Lord. Jesus says the same thing when he says, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Those are clues to our emotional life. It comes from our heart, from our core convictions, from that for which we live. That's the source of our emotions. Now, as we walk through a survey of what the Bible says about emotions, I want to be as clear as I can. And so let me say, first of all, I'd like to reflect on what emotions are for about ten minutes or so, and then I will look with you at God's faithful emotions, the emotional life of God our Father. And then a few more comments about Jesus the Son who experienced every emotion and experienced it well. And then finally we'll talk about healthy emotions for ourselves. So that's what we'll be doing.

But I want to start with one more word of prayer, if I may. Heavenly father, give us, I pray, the ability to reflect on our hearts and what comes out of our hearts, and not to be confused too much by our emotions. Lord, we have we have thoughts, and we do things, and we want things that are good for us and things that aren't good for us. And yet somehow we're surprised what our emotional life is neither more nor less disordered than our mental life or the life of our desires. But, Lord, I pray that we would understand our emotions and that we would dedicate them and consecrate them to you. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

So first, our emotions reflect the status of our heart.

I want to tell you about, something that happened. I'm changing it quite a lot. But this is this is a scene at a staff meeting of a small business. And there were two men on a Tuesday morning. Let's call them Michael and Jason. They were. They were hired at the same time. And about eight weeks into their tenure at this, at this relatively small firm, the news spread that Michael's dad had cancer and people cared about Michael. And so at the staff meeting, they did something they commonly did, and that is they gave words of praise to somebody. And they decided to pick Michael, even though he'd only been there for eight weeks. They gave

words of praise to Michael because he was doing a good job, and they wanted to encourage him because they'd heard that his father had cancer. Well, everything went well for everybody, and Michael was greatly encouraged. But Jason, who was hired the same week, was beginning to feel a little bit anxious because they kept heaping praise on Michael and not a word for him, although his performance was just fine as well. And he kept telling himself, you know, I know it's because his dad has cancer. It's so good. But it was troubling him because he thought, isn't anybody going to say nice? And he any nice words about me and my performance? I mean surely they know that we start at the same time. And he kept it reined in and he kept telling himself, stay relaxed, stay relaxed. it's fine for the praise. Michael, because his father has cancer. But then about 20 minutes later in the meeting, something came up and Jason didn't like that. He lost his cool and came pretty close to blowing up. Now. Jason asked himself a little bit later, why am I so emotional? Why can't I control my emotions? Of course, it's really not a mystery at all, is it taking him so much effort to control himself during the period of praise for Michael that his emotional restraint muscles had gotten worn out a bit. And so when something difficult came up later in the meeting, it's very difficult for him to keep calm. It was difficult because something that mattered to his heart was at risk. What was at risk was his sense of his self-worth, his sense of his career, his sense of his standing had been threatened by the outpouring of kindness and praise for his friend Michael, who'd been hired at the same time.

Now, this whole scene, many of us have seen moments like this in our life, in ourselves and in other people, reminds us that our emotions are like any other faculty. God gives us our emotions and our mind and our will and our body are all good gifts that God gave us. And they're all fallen. They all go astray. And yet use them all well. The entirety of the human being is good, and the entirety of the human being is also fallen. So an emotion is a heart driven response to something that happens above all else. Guard your heart, because from it come the issues of life. It's the wellspring of life.

So watch your heart. If there's something that challenges your God, which might be your career, or you're standing in front of your peers, and it's very likely that you'll get emotional in a negative sort of way. What I'm saying then is this we sometimes have the, the, the sense that we're going through life and our emotions suddenly come over us. But the truth of the matter is, our emotions don't simply come over us. They do rise suddenly at times, but they come from deep within our being. They rise from the core concerns of our life. They don't. They come over us, but they don't simply come over.

So let me tell you another story about a workplace. And again, I'm changing a few details, although it's probably unnecessary because it happened ten years ago on another state. But here goes. There was a place and maybe, 50 employees in this place and three beloved employees for good reasons. That is to say, they had, you know, they had reasons to go. They all left this work environment, this workplace. At the same time, they weren't just good workers. They were good workers whom everyone loved, people that made the place a little bit happier. And when they left and new people were hired, one of the people who remained behind him was grieving the loss of her three friends in this workplace said, you know, I walk

past Tyler's old office and I walk past Jennifer's old office, and I walk past Andrew's old office, and I'm resentful for the people who sit there in their chair. And I know it's unfair. I know it's illogical, but I just it just drives me crazy that the three of them are just sitting there so happily in the chairs of those three people whom we lost now, four or 5 or 6 months. So can you understand that feeling? It feels so illogical. What did those people do?

They were hired. They did nothing wrong. It's illogical. But may I say, it is illogical, but not irrational. There is a reason. It's not a good reason. But there is a reason why. Why? The people in this workplace were upset. The people sitting in the offices and the spaces of their former friends. And the reason is their hearts ached and it was hard for them to overcome this sense of loss in it. And we might say it had to go somewhere and it went to those people. And so those folks and they were Christian folks said, I've got to rein my emotions in. I've got to watch myself. There is no reason for me. Well, there is a reason. There's no good reason for me to be angry or upset with these people or emotions follow or out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks or emotions come from who we are. Our deepest concerns. Emotions are a window to our soul. If you get emotional about something, it's because you care about it. If you get very emotional, it's because you care about a deeply. If you get emotional, negative sense is because you care about it wrongly.

The Bible says our emotions are just fine. There is a time to weep. There is a time to laugh. There's a time to mourn. It's very emotional. All sorts of feelings, a time to mourn and a time to dance. A time to embrace. A time to refrain from embracing. A time to love and a time to hate. A time to hate evil, a time to hate evil done to people for whom we care. There's nothing wrong with being emotional. All we need is emotions that are well tuned to the right things. Now I'm going to spend a minute, recounting or maybe four minutes recounting three things I said in the past few weeks about emotions is kind of a warm up, I guess you could say for the message the first one is, the first one is that our emotions are based on appraisals.

Or if I can use an unusual word, construe rules. And this is, say, how you construe a situation, what you make of it. I think I said this about six weeks ago. Imagine. In fact, I'm sure I did. imagine that you are sitting somewhere and someone is rushing at you with a sword. Or a knife? A dagger. Now, your response to someone rushing at you with a dagger depends on how you construe or take or understand the situation. If you were in a strange city like Milwaukee or Phoenix, and you've gotten lost and you don't quite know where you are, and someone is running at you with a knife, and you have the vague feeling that it's just not a good neighborhood, you are terrified. You want to run. On the other hand, if you're at a family picnic and it's your nephew or your child, or your someone, a boy that's four years old and you know perfectly well that it's a foam knife, you are prepared for being jumped upon by a child and tickling and laughing and rolling around the floor. Everything depends on how you construe the situation, how you take it. That's point number one. We're appraising the world and we're asking, what does this do to me? What does this have to say to me?

Number two, above all else, again, guard your heart, for from it come the wellsprings of life. And so if your emotions are out of order, it's always important to ask the question does

something that's making me upset the something have too big a place in my heart, a bigger place than it ought to have. Now, when I talked about this 5 or 6 weeks ago, I spoke about football games. But just to be fair minded, I'm gonna talk about basketball today. So I know that no one in the state of Alabama cares about professional basketball. You can come correct me after the service if you wish, but very, very few people care. But whether you know it or not, there's something called the NBA championships going on right now. And tomorrow night. What do you care not there's going to be possibly the final game in in that final game because the Celtics are ahead of the Mavericks three games to one. The Celtics can win the championship tomorrow night. If they win one more game. And if they do, that will be their 18th championship of the NBA. And they will then surpass the Los Angeles Lakers, who have 17. And it's a tie and I stumbled upon a little news report in which various members of the Lakers over the last 50 years are making statements like, I hate the Celtics. I hope they I hope Madison Square Garden, that's not the right one. Wherever they play basketball in Boston, I hope. I hope the whole place caves in in itself and the whole team dies. I hate the Celtics. Now. It's also true that people in Boston, if they do win, will exalt and they'll be thrilled. And if somehow they lose, devastated. And that's a clue that basketball by a group of very large strangers has too big a role in their heart, you really shouldn't. You know what, Mr. Laker? If you want an NBA championship 40 years ago, you won the championship. Good for you. What difference does it make whether the Celtics win one more? There's something amiss in your heart if you care too much, if you're too upset.

The third thing I'm going to say is a quotation that I used a few weeks ago, also from the greatest theologian of emotions in the world today. His name is Robert Roberts, and he said this the emotional person is not weak because he has emotions, but because he has poor ones. Where such a limited repertoire, his concerns seem to go back to momentary or primitive or immature or insignificant or badly ordered things. He lacks personal integration and depth, not because he feels strongly, but because he feels strongly about the wrong things. Let me say it positively. There's nothing wrong with emotions. Emotions are God's good gift to us. To feel compassion, to feel loved, to feel empathy, to celebrate, to rejoice over good news. For a friend, to be stirred by emotions is good. To be angry at evil in the world. If you're angry about things like the invasion of Ukraine over a year ago now, or the invasion of Israel about nine months ago by now, if those things make you angry, it's not wrong. You're upset because innocent people were attacked. But we all care about the right things. We must care about them to the right degree. In other words, again, emotions are a window to the soul.

There's a story in the Bible. It's very poignant. It's the story of Jacob, the man who had two wives, and he loved one, Rachel, far more than he loved the other. Leah. But God loved both of them. And therefore God gave children to Leah so she would be more loved. And he did not give children to Rachel right away. And Rachel was torn apart by the grief she felt. She wanted to be a mother, she wanted to have children, and she was so distraught that at one point she said to her husband, give me children or I'll die. Now that language, I need to have this or I'll die. Life is not worth living if I don't have this. That kind of language shows something that's good in itself. Children has too big a place in that woman's heart. And then Jacob showed that

he wasn't necessarily nurturing his life. His wife, correctly, when he replied, am I in the place of God who has kept you from having children? Don't blame me. It's God's fault. That is to say, keep your emotions to yourself. Don't bother me with your excitement. Rachel had an idol. Her idol was children and Jacob had his confusions. So let's not think that emotions are bad. Emotions are one of God's good gifts to us, same as our mind or body, or will. Let's use it well. All right. How do we use it? Well, of course, as always, we decide how to use our emotions when we consider God.

And according to the Bible, God does have emotions. Now, some people say God can't have emotions because emotions come and go and the Lord God of Israel does not change. There's no shifting or shadow with God and he doesn't change his mind. So they say, God doesn't really have emotions. God can't feel anything. But it is far better and far wiser for us to say, if God says he loves, that's an emotion we should say he had. God has emotions like love or grief over human sin. It grieved God that Saul was king. We had to take that seriously. God actually is sorry, but we'd say that is not the God can't have emotions because it doesn't change. Rather, God has consistent emotions. And wouldn't it be good if our emotions were consistent right? Would it not be wonderful if every time your child made a mistake, fell down, tore his or her clothing, you had the same response to it? Even though the dress is brand new, even though their pants are brand new and they just tore their brand new clothing, but they're just being a child. Wouldn't it be great if we could be calm every single time? We might agree with you on that. It would be good to respond the right way to a childish mistake. It would be good if we were distressed or grieved over evils, even if we've seen them over and over again. God, of course, is consistent in his emotions.

One of my theologian theological friends. Kevin Vann, who's my name, says God has to leave faithful emotions. His emotions are consistent. He's not angry about sin one time and not the next. He is always angry at sin, not necessarily the sinner. He is always grieving over sin, and God is always pleased when his people love him and trust him.

God is faithful in his emotions. We see this even more when we look at the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because you see, the Lord Jesus that is, has all kinds of human emotions. Again, a number of weeks ago, we were looking at, the book of Mark when his when Jesus disciples could not cast out a demon. You might remember this from Mark chapter nine a number of weeks ago. And they didn't pray, and they couldn't imagine why. They couldn't cast it out. And Jesus said to them, how long do I have to put up with you? Now, what that means is that Jesus was wearied or exasperated by their lack of faith. In fact, he says, you, oh faithless generation, that means that there is such a thing.

And I'm glad to hear this sometimes, that there is such a thing as godly exasperation during the years of Covid, you know, 2020, I became exasperated with my students, graduate students, by the way, we're not forcing you to come to grad school. It's your choice. But at the worst, at the worst time, about 40% of my students were saying things like, I just can't turn my work in. Will you accept it two months late? Will you accept it three months late? Why am I why are you turning in three months later? I don't know, I just can't do it. And I became

exasperated with them. I'm not sure if I had godly exasperation or not, but I was consistently exasperated with them. But there is a place for godly exasperation. There is a place for godly joy. Jesus, rejoice when his disciples came back after proclaiming the kingdom and demons submitted and the people heard the gospel, the king rejoice, the always rejoices, God always rejoices over his children when they're doing his will. And Jesus consistently grieved. When people died, he wept over the death of Lazarus. He wept over the sin that he saw in the city of Jerusalem.

Now, the way the Bible describes Jesus tears actually varies when he cried, there's a word for quiet tears, sort of tears leaking down your face. Jesus wept quiet tears when Lazarus died, maybe because he knew he had raised Lazarus and he wept loud tears. The word is clear. A loud weeping and wailing over Jerusalem because he knew how they would suffer. But Jesus knew how to grieve over the sorrows of this life. Now what I'm saying then is this God has given us emotions. God has emotions. God has good and godly emotions, and God cares about the right things in the right way. One of the conversations I've had with non-Christians about these things, kind of goes like this. One of my non-Christian friends said to me at one point, you know, I just kind of hated how Christians pray about stupid, trivial things. I said, well keep talking. I'll listen to what you have to say. you know, we pray about colds and we pray about sporting events. We pray about lost kittens. I mean, come on. I mean, dogs are one thing, but kittens. Forget it. Why do people pray about colds and sporting contests and lost kittens and I thought, okay, I hear what you're saying, but you understand that when a little girl asks for prayer for her lost kitten, even if you even if you advance the idea that God doesn't care about kittens, which of course implies that God doesn't really know everything and doesn't have mastery of the whole universe, he's kind of limited. He can only pay attention to so many things at once. I'm not going to even talk about that. You understand that even if God doesn't care about kittens, he cares about the girl who lost her kitten. God has compassion and we may laugh at a boy who's nine years old and barely starting Little League and wants to pray with mom and dad before the baseball game that his team will win. You may laugh at that, but God cares about that little boy and God knows of his teammates. His friends and the team will be happy or sad or depending. And God cares about the emotional development and the physical development of that child, doesn't he? And so God rightly cares about our emotional life, and we should too. I'm going to say it differently one more time.

I'm going to say the way to think about our emotions is not to tell ourselves, don't be so emotional. About 18 or 20 years ago, some very good writers created a character named Don Draper, in a TV series that you may have watched or not. I don't recommend it, but I do comment on it. I'm not telling you to go watch it. I'm just telling you it's well done. It's actually a very depressing series, but the star or the anti-hero of the show is a man named Don Draper who had an extremely difficult life, and his mother died in childbirth, and his father, hated him. And he ran away from home and joined the Navy at the age of eight of 16 and one of the Korean War and one of his friends was killed and he grabbed the dog tag from his friend and took his friend's identity. Created a whole new life for himself. He never wanted to look back. And he had a protege. Her name was Peggy, and Peggy made a series of bad decisions and.

And at the end of the series of decisions, she spent a brief period of time in a mental hospital, and he went to visit her and he said, Peggy, do you know why you're here?

And then, you know, sort of a haze of too many medications. This is taking place in the 60s, too many medications, she said, I don't know. And Don Draper said, yes, you do know. Yes, you do know what you need to do. Whatever they tell you to do and say whatever they tell you to say to get out of here, get out of here, get out of here. Move forward. This never happened. You can't believe how much this never happened. Now, that's a template that our culture uses to say emotions are bad. Get rid of them. Pretend it never happened. Now, the authors of the program, or at least of the episodes that I'm talking about now, we're making a point. And that is that Don Draper is a guy who says this never happened. Move forward, move forward. You'll never you'll never guess how much your past never touched you. That is to say, crush your emotions, pretend they aren't there. And by crushing his emotions, he had a very successful career and a very miserable life. That's what the authors are saying in 4 or 5 episodes around that time. And I think I believe that at least at that point.

Again, I don't recommend the program globally, but at least at that point, they're borrowing Christian truth. And that is we must face our emotions, address our emotions, and receive them as a part of the way God has made us. We're emotional beings. And to say that didn't happen, I'm going to crush my feelings is not the way forward.

Again, Jesus had righteous anger toward the Pharisees, didn't he? And proper joy over his disciples and proper sorrow when he met a widow whose only son had died. Can I say that again? He met a widow, no husband whose only son had just died, and he was so moved by grief and compassion that he healed the boy on the spot. Jesus was moved by emotions, and we too should be moved in a godly way by our emotions.

A number of years ago, I was following a sad event in geopolitics. There was in Uganda a warlord named Kony. Sometimes he called himself Father Kony. You might have read about this. He kidnaped 139 girls from a children's home, a girls home. I remember that story. And there was a woman who was, in charge of the girls in that story and in that school and the people who kidnaped those girls were kind of heedless and reckless and had kind of plundered the place and were eating food and throwing wrappers around. And the girls couldn't carry all the clothes. They'd been told to grab some clothes and possessions, and they were dropping their clothes. And sister for Sarah follow them, watching the trail of debris and clothing and food wrappers, and came upon Kony and his can I say it, Kony and his cronies and began. I just thought of that the second. Forgive me, and began to berate them and say, what have you done? Why are you taking these girls? What purpose do you have? And one woman by herself demanded that Kony and his tribe release all the girls, and he got all but she got all about about 40 back by just standing there and yelling at them and shaming them. Now. Chase went on to get the rest of the girls, but what moved her was a godly emotion.

If you have no emotions, if you sit there and say, oh, these, this marauding band came and stole, I think, I think I said 139. I think it was 200 and 39 were kept in their in their care. You know, kids come and go. There's millions of kids in the world. I mean, who really cares? You

know, we get rid of some troublemakers and, we'll get some more kids to stay calm. No passion for those children. Moved her to shout at armed rebels and demand that the child and the child and the child and the child, one by one, be given back. Godly emotions move us to do things even as they move Jesus, even as the emotion of pity moved Jesus to heal, to raise up the only son of that widow.

As you read the gospel, look, it's it looks, humanly speaking, like a chance encounter. Of course, in God's perspective, it's ordained so that that child would live. And so we would see that Jesus just walks into some people. He's so moved. He's so filled with compassion, so filled with empathy, that he knows he must do something and heal that boy. Now, Jesus didn't just heal people all day, all the time, but Jesus was moved emotionally and that led him to act.

So what then do healthy emotions look like for us? Of course. it's election season more or less, and one of the things we could do is reflect on healthy emotions and ask ourselves the question, how upset actually do we get when we read about that politician? We don't like, or when we read a piece or hear somebody say something about the politician we do like that's critical of the politician we do like, and we can ask ourselves the question, exactly how upset should I get about politics? I'm not saying don't get upset at all. I'm not saying don't care at all. But ask yourself, are my emotions well ordered?

May I ask you to turn with me to Galatians chapter five for a moment? In Galatians chapter five, we have the fruit of the spirit, and we have the deeds of the flesh. Now what's interesting about the deeds of the flesh is that they aren't all deeds. And in fact, if you look carefully with me, you will notice that a number of the works of the flesh are actually deeply emotional. In Galatians 5:19. And this is not quite the core. So if you're turning in your Bible, you still have a second to catch up with me. Now the works of the flesh are evident sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idol, archery, sorcery. Okay, those are all deeds. And then it gets emotional enmity, which is not just having an enemy, but a settled state of conflict with someone. Enmity, strife, jealousy, surely an emotion fits of anger, not anger, but fits of anger, rivalries which lead then to dissension and divisions. And then another emotion. Envy, drunkenness, orgies and the like. But the fruit of the spirit includes virtue, but also good emotions. You see it love, which is a feeling. I understand you all know that love -- there's agape love, this passionate love, love that loves an enemy, the person that that wrongs us. But a significant percentage of the time when love is used in the Bible, it also it's the sense of brotherly love or warm love or familial love. Love that's an emotion. Joy. Surely an emotion. Peace. That's an internal calm patience which may or may not be an emotion, but it's certainly patience keeps us from letting our emotions run amok, doesn't it? Patience. Kindness. That's emotional goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control drove all either emotions or they help our emotions. So when you're tempted to say, don't be so emotional, I would rather that you say something like -- foster healthy emotions or watch your emotions.

The most helpful single thing I read about emotions comes from a man named William Alston, who's a Christian philosopher, and he said this. He said, when you think about your emotional life, you need to explore the difference between emotions and emotional dispositions, he

said. For example, it's one thing to fear. I mentioned Phoenix earlier. I was near Phoenix one time, walking in the desert. and I came really close to stepping on a rattlesnake, and it was a little rattlesnake. You know, the big ones are safeish. The little ones are the dangerous ones I came really close to - I mean - I was about this close, and I was suddenly afraid. There's nothing wrong with being afraid of stepping on a rattlesnake, right? It's very different to live a life in which you're constantly on the edge of fear. You're not only afraid of stepping on a rattlesnake when you see one right there on the trail, but you're terrified of rattlesnakes for the whole walk. You're terrified. But you get a plane. You're terrified when you get to go somewhere in the car, more than more than 20 or 30 miles. There is. Fear is fine. The problem is a disposition toward being fearful, and anger can be fine. If you're angry about something that's unjust and evil. The problem is when you're always ready to explode, a disposition toward anger.

Of course, I hope we have a disposition toward the godly emotions, the good and healthy emotions, and one way to have good and healthy emotions is to notice the way God works with people whose emotions aren't quite right. So I'm going to ask you to listen as I run through about 6 or 7 quotations from the Bible that start with the same kind of question, and the question is, why are you?

God approaches people and he asks, why are you? So in Genesis 4, God comes to Cain after he's killed his brother and says, why are you angry, Cain? Why are you downcast? Would you please join me in questioning your anger? And then there's a woman named Hannah who also was unable to have children, and she was married to a gentleman, a kind man named Elkanah. And at one point he said to Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you down hearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons? I understand your grief, but I love you, and surely that will temper your grief. In Psalm 42 and 43, the psalmist asks himself, why are you so downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? He questions his own emotions, his own depression or anxiety. We might say today, after the resurrection, which Jesus long predicted, Jesus meets his disciples on the road to Damascus, Emmaus. And he says to them, why are you troubled? Don't you remember what the Scripture said? So they should question their emotions. In another occasion, Jesus heals some people on the Sabbath day, and the Jewish leaders are angry at him for healing on the Sabbath day and he says, why are you angry with me for healing a man on the Sabbath? And then God questions Jonah. You're right. Remember that God declared judgment on Nineveh at the mouth of Jonah. And then they repented. And Jonah was so upset, and he was sitting watching the city of Nineveh, not being destroyed. And while he's sitting there moping around, God said it was a hot day and God sent a gourd that sprang up quickly and gave him shade. He was so happy about the gourd. And then a worm came and ate the gourd. And then he said, O God, you might as well just kill me. And God said to him, Jonah, why are you so upset about this gourd?

What's the story with your emotions? And so I want to leave this with you when your emotions are not quite right. The great question to ask is why are you? What is the heart issue? It's moving you as sharply and as negatively as it does and then positive. Let me ask you at some point, invite you at some point simply to read the Bible and let all the teachings about

emotions wash over you. All those statements that say things like fear not, don't be afraid, be tenderhearted to one another. Be glad and rejoice in the Lord. Love one another with brotherly love and watch as you read through the Bible, as you read through the Gospels, the panoply, the range of healthy emotions in our Lord, and say, Lord, as I learn to more, no more about you as I watch your emotional life, please heal my emotions, your good gift. Every bit as good as my mind, as good as my body, as good as my will, as prone to sin, but as prone to redemption as any other part of who I am.

Let's pray together.

Heavenly father, I thank you for all of your gifts, every gift you give to us. We're thankful for the way you made the world, the way you made us. You made us with a mind to praise and a heart to have convictions and emotions that register that. And may we have emotions. Emotional life, fears and hopes and joy that are well ordered, that are like your own good and perfect emotions. Teach us not to be angry at ourselves or our emotions, or out of out of order, but rather just say, why are you? Why are you so downcast? Why are you angry? Why are you dismayed? And Lord, even as we ask this question, but you ask us so many times, in a word, may we learn how to answer and to answer in a healthy way for the sake of your kingdom and our friends and Lord, even for your own pleasure. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.