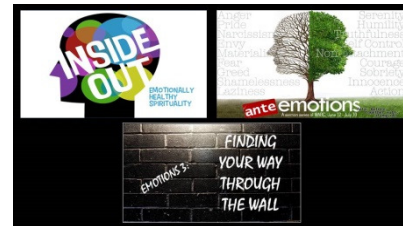




Anonymous Confessions of an Emotional Cripple 20th November 2016



Overview

This week we reviewed the emotions series that have been our key focus over the last 3 years. This study will be an opportunity for you to talk through what we've been focusing on over the last year as a group and see what difference it has made for you, for your group, and for the church.



Getting to Know You

Rate yourself on a scale from

- I love talking about my emotions
- I would much rather not talk about my emotions

Why have you placed yourself where you are? Looking at where various people in your group place themselves on this scale, can you make some overall conclusions? Are men / women more likely to be at one or other end of the scale? Old / young? Ethnicities?



Digging Deeper

1. Inside Out: Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

**God can use our emotions ...
... to speak to us**

Fear: An unbearable feeling is one you avoid feeling at any cost. By identifying that feeling we can begin to allow God to help us not be controlled by it.

Anger: Anger is not (always!) sinful. Our anger helps us identify the core of our being so with God we can identify and address it.

Sadness: A king lie is the belief underlying all our other beliefs, which is actually untrue. E.g. I am what I do, I am what I have, I am what others think of me.

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. (Prov 4:23)



What was the key thing that really impacted you about this series?

What difference has it made?

How have / could you put this into practice in your life?

Note: We have put these review questions at the beginning of each section, but don't feel obliged to spend too long on them, unless people have particular things they recall.

One response Greg had to this series was his realisation that his life is like a Matryoshka doll. There are a series of layers to him, which not everybody (even he) knows that well.

- Do you relate to the idea of your life as being like a Matryoshka doll? If so, what are the layers in you? If not, why don't you see it this way?
- Do you think it is right / good / Godly for us to be layered like this? (e.g. Was Jesus like a Matryoshka doll?)

2. Ante-Emotions



Building spiritual disciplines into our lives allows God to reshape us

Discipline yourself to be able to 'stop' and focus on God

- Stop our busy minds & our activity to consciously focus on God = the key to all contemplative practices

Try out having three prayers times in a day

- Like Daniel did. Focus mostly on being with God rather than asking for lots of stuff

Stop for a day a week (Sabbath)

- Make Sabbath a whole of life orientation: Rethink what you do in the 6 days so that rest on the 7th is possible

Listen to your body, love it and treat it well

- Figure out which of your fun activities are merely stimulating and which ones are restorative

Give up your quest for the perfect body

- There is no such thing. See each other through God's eyes and you'll only see the beauty of what He created.

Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but rather, be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Rom 12:2)

What was the key thing that really impacted you about this series?

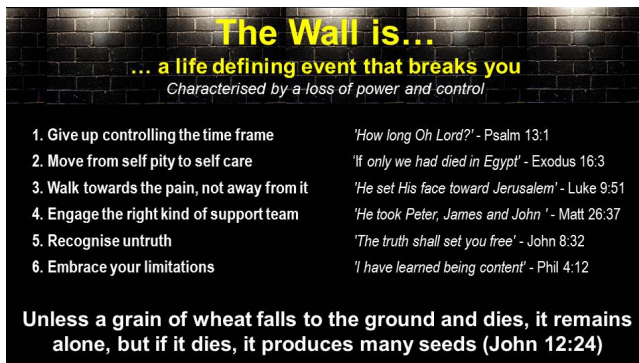
What difference has it made?

How have you put this into practice in your life / how could you put it into practice in your life?

Greg talked about intentionally adopting the practice of Sabbath in his family.

- Which spiritual discipline are you finding the most helpful for yourself at the moment?
- Which spiritual discipline are you keen to try that you have managed to quite make work for you yet?

3. Emotions 3: Doing time at the Wall



The Wall is...
... a life defining event that breaks you
Characterised by a loss of power and control

1. Give up controlling the time frame	'How long Oh Lord?' - Psalm 13:1
2. Move from self pity to self care	'If only we had died in Egypt' - Exodus 16:3
3. Walk towards the pain, not away from it	'He set His face toward Jerusalem' - Luke 9:51
4. Engage the right kind of support team	'He took Peter, James and John' - Matt 26:37
5. Recognise untruth	'The truth shall set you free' - John 8:32
6. Embrace your limitations	'I have learned being content' - Phil 4:12

Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it produces many seeds (John 12:24)

What was the key thing that really impacted you about this series?

What difference has it made?

How have you put this into practice in your life / how could you put it into practice in your life?

Greg talked about how all of us, whether or not at the wall, have an opportunity to intentionally grow and develop in our walk with God.

- What is your current growth edge? What aspect of your life do you think God is working on with you, and how is it going?



Taking it Home

At the end of the sermon, Steve asked two key questions ...

- What difference has our focus on emotions this year made on you personally? What has changed?
- What difference has our focus on emotions made on our church?

Two other questions to discuss together are ...

- What difference has our focus on emotions made in your group?
- What next for us as a church? What do you think we could do as a church to continue growing to be an emotionally "mature" community?



Prayer

Spend time thanking God for this year and the things he has done in your life, your group and our church. Pray that what has started this year will continue.