



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Emotional Pain

Week of 7.15.2019

We should never underestimate the power of emotions. They affect all our relationships - with our Savior, with others, and with ourselves. Painful emotional experiences are especially difficult to navigate. Roman 12:15 tells us to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." We were not meant to walk through these emotions alone - we were created for community, and dealing with painful emotions should be walked through with others.

Blg Idea: Emotional pain can either strengthen or weaken your walk with Christ and others.

In his message Dr. Riehl spoke of three crossroads that we come to when dealing with difficult emotions:

1. Emotional reasoning: This happens when a strong emotion convinces us of something that isn't true, and we resist any logic or reasoning that proves us wrong.
 2. Anger: Anger is not necessarily wrong, but we are prone to sin when, in anger, we lose control of our behavior.
 3. Guilt: As with anger, guilt in the form of conviction of the Holy Spirit for sinful behavior is healthy when it brings us to repentance. But the dark side of guilt comes in the form of torment and self-hatred.
- The sermon referenced Proverbs 28:26, which says, "Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered." This applies to emotional reasoning: Each of us might be prone to believing an untruth because of a strong negative emotion. Can you think of a time when you allowed fear, guilt, anger, loneliness, or some other emotion to convince you of something that wasn't true? What was it that ultimately helped you to reject that belief?

- Anger is powerful and useful as an indicator and as a motivator. When combined with contemplation, it can alert us to other feelings we might need to deal with, such as fear or pain. Anger at true injustice can move us to take righteous action, although anger at a personal slight may falsely convince us that retribution is justified. When do you most often experience anger? Do you find it hard to be angry without also losing control or seeking revenge? What can you do this week to learn from your anger or to allow it to motivate you to Godly work?
- Dr. Riehl used the comparison of Peter and Judas to show the difference between healthy guilt and unhealthy guilt. Read Matthew 27:3-10 and John 21:7-8 and 15-19. Both Peter and Judas betrayed the Lord. But one was restored and the other was not. Walk through the stories and compare the differences. In particular, what does Peter's story of restoration tell us about the healthy side of guilt and repentance.
- At the beginning of the sermon, Dr. Riehl made it clear that when people experience these emotional crossroads, it does not necessarily mean that they are spiritually deficient. Why do you think this was important to say? What should your posture be toward a brother or sister in Christ who, in processing extreme emotions, is navigating each of these crossroads: emotional reasoning, anger, or guilt?