



# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

## What Should I Do With My Feelings?

Week of 6.23.2019

- What biblical character would you like to be if you could choose?

BIG IDEA – Engage your emotions in the promises of God and the presence of his people.

Psalms 77

I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me.

2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted.

3 When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints. *Selah*

4 You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I consider the days of old, the years long ago.

6 I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search:

7 "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable?

8 Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time?

9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" *Selah*

10 Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High."

11 I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old.

12 I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds.

13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God?

14 You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples.

15 You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

16 When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled.

17 The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side.

18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook.

19 Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen.

20 You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

- The author of this Psalm, Asaph, was greatly troubled. How did he express his negative emotions?

Then his emotions changed. What actions did Asaph take to change his lament into praise? What lesson does Asaph teach us about our own difficult situations?

- There are two temptations to avoid when we are flooded with our emotions. The Tasmanian Devil approach is to spew our emotions – to have the attitude that our emotions are the most important thing about ourselves.

The Spock approach is to stuff our feelings. Our Christian culture subtly endorses this as the spiritual gift of “self-control.”

Which temptation are you inclined to when you are flooded with emotions?

How did Jesus express his emotions? Give specific examples.

- Read the following quote from *The Cry of the Soul: How Our Emotions Reveal Our Deepest Questions About God* (pp. 149-150). Allender, Dan.

“[Too often] we repress our strong emotions, and too quickly and unreflectively “turn it over to God.” If we are honest with ourselves, however, we don’t really put it in God’s hands—we bottle it up within ourselves. The problem continues to exist, and our fear festers and grows inside of us, alienating us not only from our true emotions but also from God. The irony of faith is that it is not a quiet submission to the fates. It asks, and it shouts; it is a cry that is heard in heaven. Faith does not affect pious language, nor does it presume that honest struggle will be smashed in a fit of divine pique. The irony of questioning God is that it honors Him: It turns our hearts away from ungodly despair toward a passionate desire to comprehend Him.”

What is the danger with our strong emotions in quickly “turning it over to God”?

Does questioning and struggling with our emotions show a lack of faith or trust in God? Why or why not?

Is it sinful to question God about the difficult situations we face in life? Why or why not?

- Read Psalm 56:8 NLT  
You keep track of all my sorrows.  
You have collected all my tears in your bottle.  
You have recorded each one in your book.

What does this verse tell you about God?  
What does it tell you about your emotions?

- When strong emotions are triggered, we often find comfort and emotional release by venting to someone. But actually we are reinforcing something negative in ourselves. Just as with any habit, repetition makes it stronger. How does that impact venting?
- We are meant to go to others with our struggles. God wants us to bring our emotions to church – both positive and negative. What are your thoughts on that?

This might be a challenging question, but it should open authentic conversation in your group. Would you feel comfortable sharing both your negative and positive emotions in your small group community? Why or why not?