

*In  
search  
of*

# Truth and Right

*Tim Henderson, Editor*

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*"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)*

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Christ**

## *Serving God With Emotion*

*By W. Frank Walton*

*"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).* The prime imperative of true religion is to love God supremely with our entire being. This includes lovingly serving God with our God-given emotions! An emotion is a strong mental feeling prompted by an evocative mental idea.

A factual grasp of Scripture's presentation of God's loving nature and holy being should evoke love for Him, which is cherishing, reverencing and honoring Him. How thrilling that One so High and Holy is concerned with little me (John 3:16)! A rational knowledge of God should engage our emotional energy to strongly desire a closer relationship with Him in loving obedience (1 John 5:3).

**1. Emotion Abused.** "Emotionalism" is allowing subjective feelings (which are often selfishly volatile) to manipulate and deceive our objective reason, instead of letting rational truth guide our inner emotions. This is the error of *"a zeal for God not according to knowledge"* (Romans 10:2).



Seminarians from the Fraternity of Yahweh, are "moved by the spirit" to the beat of a samba.

Religionists, such as in Pentecostalism, Mormonism, etc., too often rely on subjective feelings for ascertaining a belief in religion. "I feel it in my heart" is often elevated above the divine standard of truth in Scripture for guidance, which leads to error.

God clearly warns us that our subjective emotions are a deceptive, unreliable guide in religion (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). *"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

| TIMES OF SERVICES              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>SUNDAY</b>                  |          |
| Bible Classes*                 | 10:00 AM |
| AM Worship                     | 10:45 AM |
| PM Worship                     | 6:30 PM  |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b>               |          |
| Bible Classes*                 | 7:00 PM  |
| (* Bible Classes for All Ages) |          |

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**2. Emotions Balanced.** We should not conclude that the abuse of emotion means we should suppress our God-given emotions in serving Him. In fact, the Bible teaches it is sinful to serve God unemotionally!

We're commanded to have emotional fervor in obeying God: "*not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*" (Romans 12:11). "Fervent" (Greek—zeontes) means "boiling." How many are on fire for the Lord (Acts 18:25)? Intellectually knowing God's truth should motivate emotional fervency in serving the Lord. Zeal is an emotional reaction to a rational understanding of God and His will.

Jesus said we should show emotional excitement in faithfully serving God. Even when persecuted, He said "*be glad? and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven*" (Luke 6:23). Let's not be religious reactionaries who merely react to what's wrong, instead of being proactively guided by truth. Wisdom knows how to balance the rational understanding of truth with the emotional response to it.

Wilson Adams well observed in the 2005 Florida College Lectures: "I am equally concerned about those who have a desire for truth but no desire of heart? When was the last time you wept during a sermon because it touched your heart?... Certainly zeal without knowledge has always posed a clear and present danger but equally harmful to the people of God is knowledge without heart? Do your children see you as enthused about worshipping the God of eternity as they see you excited about a Saturday ball game or anything else that captures your heart? Little eyes are watching" (True Worship, pp. 12-14).

The thrilling, life-changing gospel is not a stoic faith of cold, emotionless facts, rote rituals and sterile knowledge. Too many churches seem emotionally lethargic like Sardis (Revelation 3:1). They're so externally sound in the truth that they are sound asleep! Uplifting, Spirit-filled singing should come from hearts filled with worshipful enthusiasm, not drag on like a death march (Nehemiah 12:27,43; Ezra 3:13, Psalm 103:1). Appropriate and earnest "amens" would be welcomed by most gospel preachers to help emphasize the importance of the truth.

**3. Authorized Emotions.** God our Father isn't impassive toward man, but has deep, tender emotions for our welfare (Hosea 11:8-9, Ezekiel 6:9, Luke 1:78). Jesus was emotionally eaten up with zeal in serving God (John 2:11). He was emotionally angered by men's hard hearts (Mark 3:5). He felt just like the Psalmist: "*Rivers of water run down from my eyes, because men do not keep Your Law*" (Psalm 119:136). Jesus was emotionally involved, "*as a man of sorrows*" (Isaiah 53:3), in caring about man in order to save Him (Hebrews 5:7). He wept over the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35), as well as the tragic rebellion of the Jewish nation (Luke 19:41).

Also, Jesus served God with great joy and inner emotional peace (John 14:27, 15:11). He was emotionally thrilled with joy over His disciples' spiritual progress (Luke 10:21). Jesus shows us the proper place of emotional energy that ignites faithful service to God. The apostle Paul was emotionally stirred, as Christ's finest servant of sacrificial service. His love for men's souls evoked tearful preaching (Acts 20:31) and tear-stained letters (2 Corinthians 2:4). The emotional nature of genuine brotherly love is seen in Paul's tearful farewell to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:37, cf 1 Peter 1:22, Romans 12:10).

We should be emotionally involved in one another's lives and "*rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those that weep*" (Romans 12:15). Distant relationship in the church is from stoically keeping our emotional distance from one another, which is wrong. We see Barnabas put joyful passion into preaching the truth (Acts 11:23). He preached the truth not just from the top of his head but from the bottom of his heart. In the Scriptures, as in the Psalms, we see the entire spectrum of human emotions engaged in serving God, from the tears of a penitent prostitute (Luke 7:38) to the "*great joy*" of spiritually enthusiastic people who obeyed the gospel (Acts 8:8,39).

The whole of our service to the Lord must be done "*heartily*" (Colossians 3:23). Knowledge of the truth must energize our emotional fervency to be "*always abounding in the work of the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 15:58)!

***Don't Forget:***

## ***News N Notes***

### **Sick:**

- Josephine Clow is in Wierton Medical Center
- Vicki Renshaw
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband
- Marie Roberts
- Terry Smith's brother George.
- Faith Kress, Linda Marshall's niece
- Ed Roberts father
- Grace Lancaster
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother.

### **Nursing Home:**

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers

### **Shut-ins:**

- Ethel Mahan
- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Rhea Henthorn
- Pauline Midcap
- A card, phone call or a visit can really brighten someone's day.

### **Gospel Meetings:**

- Elk Fork church of Christ
- March 25-30—Jeremy Joy—7:30 PM
- Middlebourne church of Christ
- April 1-6—Danny McKibben—7:00 PM

*We would like to invite you to a series of*

## ***Bible Based Lessons***

***March 29-31***

***7:30 PM each evening***

***Thursday—Daniel Reugg***

***Friday—Brian Price***

***Saturday—Tim Henderson***

*at the*

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