



Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Church-wide Initiative

Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult:

Part 7 — Luke 10:25-37

Intro. Series. Our thesis: Emotionally health and contemplative spirituality, when interwoven together, offer nothing short of a spiritual revolution, transforming the hidden places deep beneath the surface of our lives. Read Chapter 9.

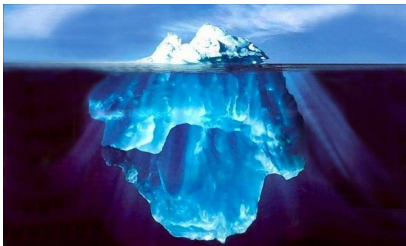
1. The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality
2. Know Yourself that You May Know God
3. Going Back in Order to Go Forward
4. Journey Through the Wall
5. Enlarge Your Soul Through Grief and Loss
6. Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath
7. **Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult**
8. Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life.”

We have people into Contemplative Spirituality – Bible, Worship, Gifts, Hearing God – but emotionally maladjusted. Then people in counseling, social work, 12-step groups but without developing their contemplative side.

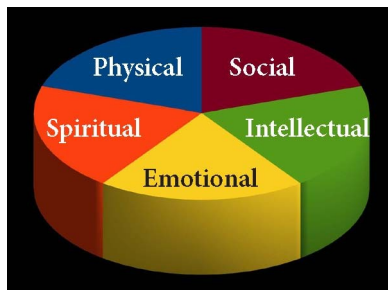
That is the theme of the parable/our text

Jesus brings out the point that it is possible to have a disconnected spirituality.

Pete Scazzero Quote: “Before a Christian I was a maniac (didn’t know how to feel, what to do with sadness/pain). I came to Christ.



The iceberg. Behaviors changed. What didn’t change because it was not addressed was the emotional component



So my core way of loving and emotionally connecting to others reflected how my family did or didn’t do – mature relating/loving.



There would be no other chapters/pathways without this one. This was the link between unhealthy spirituality and healthy spirituality, between being spirituality marked by pretense and hypocrisy and spirituality marked by realness/authenticity.

This is about practically apply and walk out biblical principles.

Myth 1

When I accepted Christ and He lives in me, growing into an emotionally mature adult is natural.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

— your position (Israel and Egypt) “all things became new”.

Myth 2

Christians ability to love those around them is qualitatively different than those outside the church.

– Divorce rate, parenting, sexual immorality, greed, conflict, and anger — very similar to non-Christians. Our quality of love (in general) is not that much better – underneath the surface beneath closed doors.

Nobody would debate that being a spiritually mature Christian is loving well. Problem is most people have not learned to practically and effectively apply truths of Bible to love others.

e.g., quick to hear and slow to speak, speak the truth in love, be angry, and sin not The Bible tells us to love but not how. WHO KNOWS HOW TO DO THESE 3 THINGS PRACTICALLY?

Here is a little inventory for you to examine where you are. (These things come out in your closest relationships, more so than at work)

Infant

- feels a need, but can only cry.
- must wait for parents to figure it out.
- becomes angry if parent is inattentive
- Adult as Emotional Infant.
- treats others as “objects to meet my needs”.
- acts like tyrant and wins through intimidation.
- unable to empathize with others.

Child

- can communicate but still dependent on others.
- acts out feelings of pain, fear and resentment.
- lacks skill to openly discuss and negotiate getting needs met.
- Adult as Emotional Child
- acts out resentment through distance, pouting, whining, clinging, lying, withholding, appeasing, lying.



- does not openly and honestly express needs.
- Adolescent
- rebels against parental authority.
- defines self in reaction to others, fears being treated as “child”.
- “don’t tell me what to do”.
- Adult as Emotional Adolescent
- cannot give without feeling controlled or resentful.
- capacity for mutual concern is missing.
- defensive, threatened by criticism.

Adult

- able to ask for what they need, want, prefer – clearly, directly, honestly, respectfully.
- desire for relationships to win.
- able to listen with empathy.
- willing to risk saying what is needed without attacking.
- respects others without having to change them.
- able to resolve conflicts maturely and negotiate solutions.
- gives themselves and others room to make mistakes and not be perfect.

Parable – Person who models mature loving

v.25 — a lawyer (expert in law) Religious scholar. WRITTEN TO US. CHURCH GOERS

v.26 CHRIST – Can say the right answers — TOUGH PEOPLE. LOVE GOD/OTHERS.

But it eventually comes out. Who is my neighbor?

v.30 Man going from Jerusalem to Jericho 18 mile road passes through desert and rocky country.

robbers — stripped him — naked and beaten up — nasty/shamed

beat him — left him half dead.

v.31 – Priest and Levite — Know Bible. Whole life is to love, serve God. SEE MAN. DO NOTHING

Neither investigate the crisis or help.

Had a lot on their minds. Distracted. Had disconnected spirituality from loving well.

Been said: “Busyness is greatest enemy of spirituality.”

MANY POSSIBLE REASONS: preoccupied? Frightened? Feel inadequate? Exhausted after 1 month in temple? I’m only one person – person mangled Avoiding defilement? Not to touch a dead body!!

1000 possible reasons

MOST IMPORTANT – THEIR HEARTS NOT SOFT/MOVED. LACK SOFT HEART OUT OF WHICH COMPASSION FLOWS.

By comparison:

*****v. 33** “Sees and takes pity” — *compassion* — KEY word used by Jesus.

Shock of story – Samaritan – bad doctrine! To Jews – going to hell. 2nd class. Inferior.

Jews and Samaritans hated each other – 2 races, 2 different religions, 2 political views. “He who eats the bread of Samaritans is like the one who eats the flesh of pigs.”



THINK OF PERSON YOU WOULD THINK IS DEFINITELY NOT RIGHT WITH GOD.

To appreciate it — Person w/ different religion, political views, race?

NT — starts in intestines and proceeds to affect your whole body.

“Compassion, so intense and vivid that you feel it in your guts.” In his body!

Takes him to inn, gives practical medical care, spends \$, pays 2 wks.

exposes himself to possible danger from same robbers also

v.37 CHRIST ends w/ emphasis on DOING — Present tense – “do constantly” in sense of lifelong action

GO AND DO LIKEWISE!!!

Jesus – starts with heart of someone who has received mercy! Luke 18: tax-collector.

The only way you can begin to live this text:

REALIZE THAT IS YOU ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD – CHRIST THE GOOD SAMARITAN

We were all naked, shamed dying, bleeding on road. When CHRIST saw us — COMPASSION

CHRIST traveled, left heaven — was stripped, killed, attacked. Gave not oil but HIMSELF

****Only if you experience that will you be a neighbor. The only thing will change you.

You are alive through the free grace alone of someone who gave you grace

Good Samaritan – loves maturely (emotional adult)

boundaries/limits. Does not bring victim back to his home nor obligate himself financially for rest of his life. Does not try to be everything. Does continue on his journey.

Become Aware of Your Family of Origin’s Capability for Emotional Connection.

Many cultures and family make large investment in our educations, learning vocation but few make any investment in our growing into emotional maturity.

Your ability to love well is connected to how emotionally secure the environment you grew up in was. That is all you know.

Can you recall being comforted as a child after a time of emotional distress (cut from team, divorce, best friend moved, betrayed)?

[Share a specific memory of a time when one of your parents comforted you when you were upset, scared, or sad for some reason?]

The goal – not to find fault but to gain honest picture of what might have gone wrong in early years so you can begin a journey to growth and maturity.

Story of Cynthia

You either experienced comfort from your parents/ or it was absent. It is important to look at your family’s ability to emotionally connect. Were you taught, for example, to identify and express what was going on inside you/your feelings? – this is a key to knowing ourselves. When a parent/caretaker listens and asks questions, we become more self are.

Result – some of us hide feelings and avoid vulnerability.

We carry invisible barriers to love well.



Our lessons in loving well/emotional maturity start as children and last. They form an imprint on us. — create a core pattern of how we relate.

- our early experiences taught us how important – or unimportant- our feelings and the feelings of others are. When emotional connection is lacking, you learn to restrict emotions and minimize what is bothering you.
- If you got it you can give it – But if your needs were not recognized, welcomed, and attended to, how can I give it.

Questions:

- Did you learn to trust?
- Did you learn to respect others and take turns?
- Did your parents/caregivers understand your behavior?
- Were your feelings allowed? (How your parents handled fear, shame, anger, sadness, jealousy, being critical)
- Were you allowed to be the child? (Many children end up taking responsibility for their parent's feelings)
- Did you learn independence and dependence?

When we have no memories of comfort and our parenting we received was less than ideal – from these damaged imprints rise styles!

Take Practical Steps of Discipleship to Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult

Don't be deceived. Growing in to an emotionally mature adult can be terrifying.

Becoming a Christian does not automatically make you into an emotionally mature adult but it does give you the courage, power, grace to do so. Christ inside of us – enormous power! Grace enables us to take risks and do things different than imprints on our past and us.

We go back to go forward.

I hope you are saying: I CAN'T. THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DO!

Who then can be saved? “With man this is impossible but not with God. All things are possible with God”

e.g. Marathon running — training is slow and gradual

e.g. Dance lessons with others — slow

e.g. Caterpillar to butterfly — not overnight

Get into EHS group, marriage group, seminars (expectations around Christmas). Get group together...

Hopefully — also a mature church community provides models!

ONE SKILL TODAY – Daily Temperature Reading

1. Appreciation
2. New Information
3. Puzzles



4. Complaints with Request for Change
5. Wishes, hopes and dreams
6. Reflect on what we want – ourselves, relationships, life

Break into groups

1. Appreciation — find something in the last week that you are appreciative for.

We are always thinking, it's never enough.

Cultivate a structure to be thankful.

Example:

Wishes, hopes and dreams

Find something small

Example: I hope I can have an hour to read.

DO IT.

Cf. Matt. 25 – In last day God will tell true from false CHRISTians – “Did you feed hungry, give something to drink to the thirsty, invite the stranger in, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison”

Doesn't seem to fit in NT. Only social workers going to heaven?? _

APPLY Allow Jesus to Be Your Good Samaritan

God requires nothing to save you. (Not even having certain feelings)

Come and bring nothing

Requires no mental qualifications. (Not smarts)

— I cannot find any reason why God should forgive me. Person I am.

God says “FOR MY SAKE”

Invitation is a command – COME

“I am without strength!” — CHRIST meets you where you are.

Only CHRISTianity – of all world religions.

Paul in 1 Cor.13 “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. IF have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

God invites us to practice his presence in our daily lives. At the same time, he invites us “to practice the presence of people” by loving them well. Jesus' contemplative prayer life resulted in his ability to be a contemplative presence with people. In the same way, out of our contemplative time with God, we are called to be prayerfully present with people, thereby revealing to them how precious they are to God.