

The emotional life of Jesus

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[0 : 00] What some of you are talking about. Does anyone want to be the brave lesson to start?! No, that's fine.

Ask Emma, of course, thank you. As in, you're often the first. Nothing about topic, but you're often first to go, so I'm very grateful for it, so go for it.

All right. I said in our little group that I didn't think culturally people showed their emotions, and others in the group had different opinions, which you'd like to share.

Yeah. Well, we were saying that the older generation tended not to show their emotion, although, or Sima also said that.

She found that some older people were very commanding and in your work.

[1 : 17] Is that right? Yeah. Demanding. Demanding or commanding. Demanding or commanding.

Yeah. Yeah. And, but we also said that, well, I personally think that younger people are encouraged to show their emotion and not really restrain themselves.

Yeah. How do you feel? I think when Princess Diana died, there was a clash between the Queen's way of doing things, which was the old way, stiff upper lip, don't get carried away, just pull yourself together, and the culture saying, we've got to pour out emotion.

So I think modern culture has moved in that direction of pouring out emotion. And some, to the extent that sometimes the emotion is the, is the thing that counts, regardless of what caused it, or whether it's a valid cause or a reasonable cause to feel that way.

But the fact that you feel that way, or claim to feel that way, or show you feel that way, is the thing, is, is the thing. Yeah. Well, that's a really interesting insight. Thanks, Phil.

Any other comments, either on culture or church? Do you mind if we pass the mic to you?

[2 : 38] Mainly for the recording. Just thinking back to our Sema. It depends where you come from, in a way, because different countries, people from different backgrounds, feel freer to show emotion than some of us British people.

Definitely. Yeah. Culture will affect that. So it can be something to do with, you know, where you...

Yeah. And even your upbringing, like home culture. Yeah.

Anything about church? Interested to hear? We commented that perhaps churches can wander between two extremes.

Some are thinking emotions are so important that they spend most of their time expressing emotion and maybe there's not enough feeding of the mind. And then at another extreme, you can perhaps not show enough.

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we were talking down here about sort of... There needs to be sort of a balance.

[3 : 52] So some churches you might go to and people expect you to be full of joy. And then maybe other churches don't show any emotion at all.

Whereas maybe we need a bit more of a balance. Yeah. Final opportunity to say something, if you wanted to. If not, all.

What are you found? My wife and I got to say... Okay, go for it. And Steve can have the final word on it. There we go. Stop twisting. Well, I mean, it's really kind of picking up some of what other people have said.

But I think it's, you know, in postmodern culture, what you feel trumps what you think. Yeah.

Whereas in the church, I mean, as you said, there are a range of views.

There's a happy clappy to the Tao Presbyterian. But really the emotion is not regarded as the primary thing.

[4 : 52] It's a response to something rather than... In Christian thinking, the emotion is a response to a situation rather than the important thing in itself. Thanks.

Thanks, Steve. Helpful to get us going, thinking about this topic of emotions. And I think Steve's right.

In our culture, nowadays, lots of people love to feel things and be guided by our emotions, whereas thinking may have been pushed to one side.

And in terms of church, all I have to add is maybe we think we have to feel a certain way. Maybe we wonder, is it okay?

Is it right for me to cry in church? Is that okay? Is it right for me to feel angry as a Christian? Graham Bynon, an author, says, on emotion, on feelings, to be utterly unfeeling is not to be human.

[6 : 13] In fact, it's to deny part of how God has made us. We are created as thinking, feeling, and acting beings, not as logical machines.

So why we may vary in how deeply we feel things, we all do. So it's to be human to feel things. It's okay to feel things. But we are also made to think and to act as well.

We're not machines. And that's good news. We're going to move on and we're going to think about our subject for this evening, the emotional life of Jesus.

Because Jesus became a man. Jesus was fully human, fully divine. And in his humanity, as sort of, as the ultimate human being, without sin, he can show us what perfect emotions look like.

And I've been helped. Most of this is not my own. I've been helped by two people, B.B. Warfield, a 19th century theologian who wrote an influential essay called The Emotional Life of Jesus.

[7 : 26] also been helped by, who I quoted from just now, Graham Bynon, an author, someone who taught me whilst I was at Oak Hill, and a pastor.

Now actually works for the FIC, I think. So much of what I say is indebted to them. Much of what I say isn't really from me at all.

And so, probably rejoicing about that. Warfield says that there are two dangers when speaking about Jesus and his emotions.

One is that we view him as emotionless. That somehow, as perfect man and perfect God, he hasn't got any emotions. We'll see that's not true.

The other danger is, and I think maybe this is more likely, is that we view him as too human. That we see his emotions too much and forget we're talking about the man who is God.

[8 : 30] So hopefully, we don't forget that this evening. But just, good for us to be aware of that. And we sang this morning that hymn, Man of Sorrows.

We read from Isaiah 53 that Jesus is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. He certainly experienced emotion.

He was an individual. He was his own human character as well as perfectly God. And so I think as we look at Jesus this evening, we sort of see a bit of what God is like.

We definitely see what God is like. And his emotions, unlike ours, will always be right and he will always be in control of them. But good for us to see that when we get sad, we can recognize Jesus got sad too.

That when we are angry, Jesus got angry too. And Jesus is our example in these things.

[9 : 42] And he is also our perfect saviour who has died in our place. For all those times, our emotions have affected us to a point where we've sinned.

And so it's good and we can rejoice in Jesus' perfection, but also see his example this evening. And so let's go through a few things.

First of all, Jesus' sadness. John 11, 33 to 36. And we'll pause here for a bit of time, but a lot of these we'll go through quite quickly.

John 11, 33 to 36. where Jesus is at the gravesite, really, of Lazarus, his friends.

And he's just seen Mary weeping. Mary who said, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Verse 33 says, when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

[11 : 00] Where have you laid him? He asked. Come and see, Lord, they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, see how he loved him.

Jesus wept, you probably know, is the shortest verse in the Bible. And it's so powerful, so significant.

It shows us Jesus himself felt sadness, he cried. He's felt sadness here in this context that the death of a close friend.

And people, as they saw him weep, they said, see how he loved him. His weeping, his crying is a sign of his love for his friends.

And we're told in verse 33 that he was deeply moved, deeply moved in spirit. And my understanding of that is that that's a sort of anger, anger at the reality of death and the sadness and disruption it causes.

[12:15] Jesus. That's what we're seeing here. That's pretty powerful. And it strikes me that that's helpful for us as a church family over this year, this calendar year.

We've known lots of people who've experienced personally losing loved ones. And as a church this year, we've grieved together Maureen who went to be with the Lord and we miss her.

Death is a hard parting. And Jesus understands that. And that's good because in my role as pastor, I've had lots of chats with people and some of those chats have involved tears.

and I've been able to say at times I understand it or I don't really understand it but I can see why this is upsetting. All I can really do is listen, read scripture and pray.

But isn't it good that we see in the Bible somebody who doesn't just understand. I might understand your tears but someone who has not just left it at that.

[13:45] He himself went on as we know to raise Lazarus from the dead and even better he himself has conquered death.

And so he understands exactly what it's like to lose someone. He knows that it's hard but even better he has done something about it.

And we know and have the confidence when we speak to the Lord in prayer that he knows what we're feeling. And we also know that if those we have lost are Christians we know they've gone to be with the Lord that they are safe with him the one who himself has conquered death.

Another thing I was thinking is maybe we're told in our culture maybe this is changing but maybe we're told or believe that men don't cry.

I think that's still a stereotype. Don't cry men it's a weakness you're meant to be strong and brave don't show emotion like that.

[15:02] but Jesus is the perfect man and he cries and I am not the perfect man and I know I cry so I take encouragement from this.

It's okay to cry. It's okay to weep. It's not weakness it's part of being human in a fallen world and our tears are God given.

Crying is good for you. Just google it. It's crying good for you. Thankfully though we know in Christ there will one day be an end to tears but whilst in this broken world crying is there and it's needed. Far more briefly Luke 19 verse 41 Luke 19 verse 41 as he approached Jerusalem and saw the city he wept over it.

Jesus is about to speak of judgment that's going to come upon Jerusalem and here he is weeping over it. He doesn't take pleasure in that.

[16:34] I said we'd be brief on a lot of them that is brief. We're going to move to Jesus is joy opposite to sadness is joy so let's move to joy.

Crying is good for you but joy is good for you too. So first of all Luke 10 verse 21 what does Jesus take joy in?

Luke 10 verse 21 at that time Jesus full of joy through the Holy Spirit said I praise you Father Lord of heaven and earth because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and yet revealed them to little children.

Yes Father this is what you are pleased to do. What is Jesus' joy about here? Well he's saying that in response to a preaching trip that has gone well and that joy turns into praise to his Father.

He takes joy that preaching that God's word has gone out something to rejoice in. More of Jesus' joy can we turn to John 15 verse 11 John 15 verse 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

[18:21] Jesus has been speaking about the need to abide in him as the vine and for his people to be obedient to him to his Father and this sort of living brings Jesus joy he says this will make my joy complete if you abide in me and are obedient to the Father and that's our purpose in life as human beings to glorify God to live in dependence on our creator to obey him God God delights in that he finds joy in that and Jesus has come to redeem us so that we can live in obedience to him live in

dependence upon him Jesus finds joy in that and moving on let's see

Jesus is compassion and this is an important one because I think this is the feeling that is mentioned the most of the Lord Jesus in the gospels so Matthew 9 36 Matthew 9 36 I'm going to read 36 to 38 when he saw the crowds he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd then he said to his disciples the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few ask the Lord to harvest therefore to send out workers into his harvest fields Jesus sees crowds of people lost aimless wandering without a shepherd wandering without a purpose in life and it moves

Jesus with compassion and he gives a prayer for his people to pray to our Lord of compassion to ask him to send laborers into the harvest fields!

that's a prayer by our compassionate Lord who is able to answer that prayer we pray to one who has compassion on the lost who is able to raise up people and make divine appointments as we heard this morning to put the right people in the right place at the right time and so that's a prayer we can pray for ourselves and for our city that God would raise up laborers into his harvest fields a prayer we can pray because Jesus is compassionate Matthew 20 Matthew 20 29 to 34 we see more of Jesus compassion as Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho a large crowd followed him two blind men were sitting by the roadside and when they heard that

Jesus was passing by they shouted Lord son of David have mercy on us the crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet but they shouted all the louder Lord son of David have mercy on us Jesus stopped and called to them what do you want me to do for you he asked Lord they answered we want our sight Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes immediately they received their sight and followed him we've got two blind men calling out two blind men who would have been overlooked people rushing by them and they're crying out here for mercy and people tell them to be quiet but look at the difference that Jesus makes Jesus response is far far different to the crowd he stops and he asks them what do you want me to do for you he's interested in that interested in these people that society has no interest in at all and verse 34 we see the word there [23 : 05] Jesus had compassion on them he had compassion on them and did something and that's a good way to define compassion when we're talking about the Lord Jesus an internal movement of pity and an external act of beneficence Jesus felt compassion and then he acted upon that and did something for these people Mark 8 1-3 so he has compassion on the blinds and here he has compassion on the hungry Mark 8 during those days another large crowd gathered since they had nothing to eat Jesus called his disciples to him and said

I have compassion for these people they already have been with me for three days and have nothing to eat if I send them home hungry they will collapse on the way because some of them have come a long distance Jesus sees these are hungry people in front of them he's been with them and teaching them they need food if they go home they're going to collapse and Jesus isn't prepared for that to happen and his compassion on them moves him to act and to arrange food where are they going to find the food well as you'd see if you read down it's no problem for Lord Jesus to provide food out of very little for this huge crowd and finally Luke 7 verse 12 to 13 apologies that sort of cut off the screen a bit

Luke 7 as Jesus approached the town gate a dead person was being carried out the only son of his mother and she was a widow and a large crowd from the town was with her when the Lord saw her his heart went out to her and he said don't cry and he went up and touched the buyer they were carrying him on and the bearers stood still he said young man I say to you get up and the dead man sat up and began to talk and Jesus gave him back to his mother Jesus sees a funeral going by nobody comes up to him and says please help rather Jesus sees it sees the coffin sees the widow widow who has nothing lost everything her husband and her son are dead and she's alone and pretty helpless but

Jesus sees this and his heart went out to her he was moved with compassion and he was able to act by raising her son from the dead remarkable compassion for this woman and people respond saying God has come to help his people they recognize God was at work here in the compassion in the raising of the dead but also in the compassion Jesus is frustration and Jesus felt frustrated Mark 8 11 to 12 we're back in Mark 8 again Mark 8 verse 11 the Pharisees came and began to question Jesus to test him they asked him for a sign from heaven he sighed deeply and said why does this question why does this generation ask for a sign truly I tell you no sign will be given to it then he left them got back into the boat and crossed to the other sides he sighs deeply that has a sense of a

deep groaning of the heart feeling frustrated not because he was particularly impatient or bad tempered but he was just fed up of the ignorant questions asked by the Pharisees they were so clever in so many ways and yet so dumb he knew their motives inside he knew what they were trying to do remember when Jesus healed the paralytic Jesus knew what they were thinking and responded and it causes him real frustration two more

[28 : 28] I think Jesus is angry so Mark chapter 3 1 to 6 we be thinking about anger specifically next week but just to see Jesus gets angry Mark 3 1 to 6 another time Jesus went into the synagogue and a man with a shriveled hand was there some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus so they watched him closely to see if he would heal them on the Sabbath Jesus said to the man with a shriveled hand stand up in front of everyone then Jesus asked them which is lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil to save life or to kill but they remained silent he looked around at them in anger and deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts and he said to the man stretch out your hand he stretched it out and his hand was completely restored and the

Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus Jesus is angry just to get you thinking a bit more make sure we're still awake what does Jesus get angry about here stubborn hearts do you say yeah deeply distressed to their stubborn hearts absolutely do you see anything else yeah yeah insensitive to the man absolutely they're trying to catch Jesus out yeah they don't really care about the man and they're trying to catch Jesus out particularly will he heal on the

Sabbath verse 2 Jesus says isn't it better that this man is healed do we care about the body the people Mark 10 verse 14 when Jesus saw no verse 13 from verse 13 people were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them but the disciples rebuked them when Jesus saw this he was indignant he said to them let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these we're told Jesus was indignant he felt angry that people would stop children from coming to him and yet we see in these little children an example to us of child like trust we're seeing we're seeing

Jesus not just the man of sorrows but one who shares deeply our emotions compassion distress anger sighs groans joy another one Jesus is love let's look at John 11 verse 3 John 11 verse 3 at the beginning of the account with Lazarus being ill and dying we see that the sisters sent word to Jesus saying Lord the one you love is ill

Jesus had a close friendship a bond with Lazarus he loved him and John 13 23 we won't look at the John 21 one John 11 verse!

[33 : 07] Sorry 13 23 13 23 one of them the disciple whom Jesus loved was reclining next to him and we believe that that's John the writer of this gospel and I think we see that Jesus had particularly close relationships he loved everyone he loved the whole world but he had particular close companions Lazarus and Mary and Martha and John refers to himself as the disciple Jesus loved maybe for much more reasons than that but we're seeing that Jesus definitely had close relationships friendships with people but we also see his love for someone else in a different way Mark 10 21 Mark 10 21 Jesus looked at him and loved him one thing you lack he said go sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven

Jesus looked and looked at this rich man in the eyes full of love wanting him to change his heart one thing you lack go sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven then come follow me he had direct things to say to that loss of his compassion his love on the lost final one mark 14 final one then we'll sing something and then we'll sort of draw some conclusions and apply this to us mark 14 33 i'll read from verse 30 they went to a place called gethsemane and Jesus said to his disciples sit here whilst i pray he took Peter James and John along with him and he began to be deeply distressed!

and troubled my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death he said to them stay here and keep watch going a little further he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him abba father he said everything is possible from you take this cup from me yet not what i will but what you will Jesus felt deep distress knowing that soon he would face the horror and torture of execution on the cross he's completely committed to carrying out God's plan of salvation but he also knows the agonies and distress of this Luke even tells us that it was in such anguish and distress that he sweated drops of blood sorrow pain anguish distress in the Lord Jesus and yet even in his praying in his actions he knew the plan he knew where he was to go verse 41 the hour has come look the son of man is delivered into the hands of sinners rise let's go here comes my

betrayed and on that cross said it already but he died for all those times those emotions that we feel have led us to sin those angry violent outbursts those times of sadnesses that have caused us to seek satisfaction and help in other things rather than the lord Jesus and for those times which our compassion on someone has led to inappropriate interactions and for the times we have found joy in sin rather than joy in our gods those times and more Jesus has died for us living perfectly even with the full range of human emotions he experienced and let's let's sing somewhat something we're going to sing a song which talks about our emotions but particularly sadnesses but talks about God being the God of all comfort the God of all compassion the God of all nail wounds who's known our griefs and it ends by giving the Lord glory God of all glory it's to a tune that we'll know the tune of be thou my vision and hopefully a helpful song for us to sing when we're thinking about this so we'll sing this and then we'll say one or two more things so Jesus we've seen Jesus's perfection in emotion see he felt emotions which is being human trying not to fill them would be denying God's created order and humanness and is not being Christ-like and Jesus as the perfect human still had emotions we've seen that and they're always good they're always right and he's always in control of them a warfield said this various as they are they do not inhibit one another a compassion and indignation this is talking about Jesus compassion and indignation rise together in his soul joy and sorrow meet in his heart and kiss

each other strong as they are not mere joy but exultation not mere irritated annoyance but rating indignation not mere passing pity but the deepest movement of compassion and love he felt emotion strongly not mere surface distress but an exceeding sorrow even unto death but they never overmaster him and he remains ever in control they're always right and appropriate when he felt sad it was because he was rightly and truly sad but John Calvin says this about our own emotions he says our feelings are sinful because they rush on without any restraint and know no bounds but in Christ they were composed and regulated in obedience to God and they were completely free from sin so as

Calvin is saying that human emotions are subject to sin so how can we grow to be like Jesus in our emotional life a few things to say firstly there are influences on our emotions I don't want to undermine that our personality some of us naturally are bright and chirpy some of us are naturally more reserved some of us naturally will cry a lot and some of us will rarely ever cry God has made different personalities and that's a great thing praise God for the diversity in human beings praise God for the diversity amongst us something to rejoice in but our personalities that will have an effect on the things we feel so will our background and upbringing we alluded to that just a little bit at the beginning some of us have been raised by parents who show different emotions some will have experienced lots of affection from our parents others may move no more anger some of us have experienced very little from our parents some will have been raised in homes where we're told to cry others where we're told don't cry man up our background and upbringing will have an effect even today on how we feel things our culture we've said a little bit about our culture in the [42 : 38] UK it seems we're changing in terms of emotions people are saying more follow how you feel whereas some years ago stiff upper lip don't show any emotion and we even have our subcultures if you're in a posh private school you might be told to stop being so emotional whereas maybe if you were on a council estate in a school there maybe you're encouraged to let your emotions out so different subcultures will have an effect and also tiredness health and hormones hormonal levels may play havoc with our emotions if we're simply feeling overtired that will have an effect on our emotions and maybe we simply just need to get a bit more sleep or be eating better our health situations too personally

I've got eczema and it's been quite bad over the last year and that makes me feel really down and frustrated at times so our health will have an effect so that's practical matters which affect our emotions but also Jesus would say our hearts Luke 6 43 to 45 Luke 6 43 to 45 Jesus says no good tree bears bad fruit nor does a bad tree bear good fruit each tree is recognized by its fruits people do not pick figs from thorn bushes or grapes from buyers a good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart for the mouth speaks if you look at an apple tree you know it's an apple tree when it bears fruit and if you sit by an apple tree determined to wait for plums you'll be sitting there for a long time Jesus is saying in this passage that the fruit in our lives shows what kind of tree we are we're not trees don't worry I'm not going weird but it's an illustration because what comes out of us Jesus here specifically talks about our words for the mouth speaks what the heart is full of what we say

shows something of our hearts but so do our decisions and our actions and our emotions and so it's right that we guard our hearts proverbs 4 23 some wisdom for us above all else guard your heart for everything you do flows from it so we can think like when we get angry what does that show about our hearts it can show something of what we love maybe we've got angry because we feel out of control in a situation and it shows we love to be in control probably haven't got time to discuss this at a great length but I'll read this example out this is pinched from a book by Graham Bynon on emotions it's an example from a man called Paul Paul says my career was going well I'd shown some initiative and had been rewarded for it I was climbing the ladder faster than those around me it was great and I gave myself to it with all my heart all this gave me great satisfaction and a feeling of confidence until the day I fell ill I've not been able to work properly since devastated and depressed of course being ill long term is rubbish but there's been more than that behind my feelings of devastation and depression and just from what we read maybe one or two people shout out what do you think Paul's devastation and depression has revealed to him about his heart yeah career his idol made his career his idol yeah he loved success he loved climbing up the ladder at work and when that was taken away things went bad so here's his reflections he says I just loved being successful I loved being seen to be successful I loved it more than anything else in life and when it was taken away I felt terrible it showed me what I really loved it showed him his heart our emotions do that they show us something of our hearts but the good news for us is this God is in the business of changing hearts I will end by looking at these verses in Titus chapter three we could probably spend another evening another sermon looking at the heart so apologies if this feels quick if you've got questions got things you want to talk about after this please do let me know love to chat love to answer questions either after the service or do get hold of me during the week [49 : 19] Titus three four to six!

to been justified to been to! have!! I've read more than I was going to and that's okay um Titus here um sorry Paul to Titus um particularly um want us to see that he said he saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit talking about our inner heart renewal um gonna basically just tell you what Graham Bynum thinks of this that washing and renewal of the spirit cleans up the rubbish dump of our hearts so that we love and desire the right things we will start to hate sin and love holiness we will feel compassion contentment joy peace and fear and every other emotion and we do so because our hearts will start to value things rightly God is working in us in inner heart transformation he's started this lifelong process of changing our hearts growing us to be more like the Lord Jesus and final thought if our heart response comes out of what we love how is our love for God how can we seek to grow more in love for God this week every day our sinful hearts surely need to reorientate to God pointing back to God because our hearts are sinful our hearts are deceitful but the good news is the Holy Spirit is in us he is changing us and we need to daily remind ourselves of the gospel of the scripture of the word of God remind ourselves of the one who's loved us first and given himself first for us whilst we were still enemies before we could do anything good and look to him for help I'm going to stop there let's just have a moment of silence and reflection for ourselves and I'll lead us in a brief prayer and then we'll sing to close and to to to to to to to to