

Study	Gamma 14
Topic	Understanding Our Emotions
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This particular session is actually extremely critical and we spent a lot of time preparing this. It is a bit heavy but important. And we're going to see about understanding our emotions and how basically, we struggle to process all of these things.

Have you had a day where you just felt lousy? You don't know why you felt lousy. Have you had issues where somebody said something to you and it triggered you, it triggered you, don't know why but you got worked up. Same thing you bring on someone else, the other person doesn't react.

So we are emotionally complex and scripture has quite a lot to say to it. God relate to us emotionally and so we need to find out what is the blueprint for this. So let's come before God in prayer...

Turn with me right now to the Book of Genesis and we will look at Genesis chapter 4, very famous text, the story of Cain and Abel. We will begin with chapter 4:1

1 Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth c a man." 2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering, 5but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. 6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." 8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." d While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. 11 Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear. 14 Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. 16 So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Then we jump down to verse 23

23 Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. 24 If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times."

25 Adam made love to his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, h saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." 26 Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on i the name of the Lord.

So this is an important text and quite critically, because this text is the first account of humanity after the fall of man. So they call this in Hebrew a Toledot.

Now you must understand Adam and Eve were supernatural beings, they were created from dust. They became adults. This is the first account of creation from children. So what we are seeing here is a pattern. So this chapter essentially sets the pattern for humanity, it is the blueprint chapter. It's not an incidental narrative. The narrative you will find has a lot of first time in the Bible and it sets a pattern for many things.

Let me give you the first. It introduces the narrative using seven. Now this is the first time the number seven is now occurring in a text. Now is that important? It is. I'll tell you why in a while. It is not just the fact that God tells Cain and put some mark on him. We won't go into those controversies that anybody kills you, it will be avenged seven times. Let me tell you that the poetry you go back and read Abel is mentioned, you know, how many times seven times. Cain is mentioned 14 times, though the word brother is mentioned seven times and Lamech guess which generation is he from Adam? Seven generation. And the name of the Lord, calling on the name of the Lord is mentioned at the 70th time.

The text is very heavily construed around the number seven. Meaning it has divine meaning, so this chapter is very meaningful, it is a blueprint. So that's one. Number one, it is the first time we have offering or sacrifices. So that that's critical and in contrast to is that the purpose of life and the purpose of life is actually give God the best. Now that's critical to what we're going to learn today. People forget all about this because it sets two examples to follow most critically, it is the first time the word sin is used. Never before in the Bible is the word sin used. It is the first time is used.

And of course is the first conflict. It sets the pattern for what we call redemptive history in the battle between the seed of the woman and the serpent. This is the prophecy God tells early on. So the fight now is between Cain and Abel. The fight will continue later on, you find between tribes, Judah and Israel, and it will be between siblings. Between Isaac and Ishmael, between Judah and Israel, between Joseph and his brothers, between Absalom and David. So you first find very interestingly, the family dispute. Now what's quite interesting is all of this comes about because of anger management. That is not incidental.

The first sin coming out, anger management. We are going to deal a little bit of the anger issues, which, Cain has. We are going to break the text into two parts, first Cain and then Abel. Now the first thing is this all emotions can be positive or negative. The purpose of emotion is connection. Notice what God tells Cain, why were you angry? Then it says, sin is crouching on the door, meaning he hasn't seen yet, you know, but he is very angry, you know, he is dangerously close to sinning. Now here is the fallacy that we have. The fallacy we have is that you divide emotions two ways. Being happy is good. Being angry is bad. Being jealous is bad. Being content is good. That's not true. Not true biblically. It's not true scientifically.

Emotions are neutral. We have got to understand this. God is not saying it is sin. I'll give you example. If a man was happy all the time, sometime you ask people, what do you want? I want to be happy. You're telling me you poor person because you're happy all the time, you are the most selfish person

on earth because you feel no sadness for people out there. You feel no sadness for people who are poor. You don't feel any anger all the time. You probably have no feelings. You should feel anger when you read bad news.

There is such a thing as righteous jealousy. So first thing you must understand emotions in itself are neutral. That's the first big mistake. So you can have a propensity towards anger or this or that, that is not a sin. Now what God is telling Cain is, sin is crouching the door, you must master it. That is what he is telling him. Now then he tells you, you must do what is right. It is very obvious. He is telling what is it that he must do what is right? He wants Cain to look back at his sacrifice. Now why is Cain's sacrifice is not acceptable? You find it in first John, he is giving leftovers.

Now it is not about the primitives of giving things. That means the moment you give leftover to God this is what happens. Leftover of your time, leftover of anything. So God is trying to gently tell Cain, you gave me leftovers and Abel gave the firstborn of his flock. He gave the best. So God is trying to tell Cain and God is basically the first counselor. Why are you angry? You must do what is right. And he counselled him. Sin is at your door. You must master it. So emotions are neutral. You either go for godly worship or you fall into sin.

Number two, emotions are to be processed. This is where we also don't do. You see what the text is telling you. You let your emotion be where it is, it will escalate. Anything lust, sadness, anger and in this case, it goes to very deadly consequences. The fact that this is the first account, the first toledot, it is setting your pattern. Basically God is trying to tell you, this is what sin does. It comes in a seed, is just anger, it could be sadness. Here's one, this one we call it idol; love. You blind in love you see what happens to you? We have cases we do a lot of, I mean, comforting counseling and we have people who you can tell they've been cheated. You know, they fall in love with people who are taking them for a ride, but you cannot see. And you find that the love actually has role of emotions behind that. Again is what we are learning from scripture is always this. There is root and there is fruit.

This is what the New Testament tells us, so the fruit is what you see, but there's a root behind it. So just because a person engages to another guy in anger, there's another root behind it. You think is anger, actually it is something else. I'm in love. I'm in love. No, you're not in love. You've got issues of deep insecurity. This way, we're going to unpeel some of these today. So emotions have to be processed. How do you process it? Look at text, look at what God tells Cain.

Number one, why is your face downcast? What is the text telling you? The text is telling you physiologically you can pick up when someone is angry, you can pick it up. So there is first a behavioral issue. He gets angry. There's a physiological issue you can tell it. One of the most famous, what you call emotion theories around. It says anger for example is universal in its expression. There's no such thing as a Chinese person getting angry a certain way, an African person getting angry another way. Excuse me, you can be Chinese, African, Timbuktu, you all get angry the same way.

How do you show anger? Firstly eyebrows will move. There are three ways of looking at it; eyebrows, cheeks, and mouth. It is universal. There was one person I won't tell you the name. He says he's happy, every time you see him he is frowning, you know what it is telling you is that on a subconscious level, he doesn't realize that he is actually deeply unhappy. Hey, I'm cool. I'm cool. No problem, bro. I'm all right, bro. Hey, no, you're deeply unhappy but you are too proud to see it.

So, I don't want to keep casting this in a negative manner, but it can swing both ways. So emotions are powerful things you need to process it. So as mentioned, they have three core components, physiological, behavioral and cognitive, or some people will call it neurological mental. Here is a simple thing, your emotions will affect your health. So there's what God is wiring us to see. And you are supposed to pick it up. That is why God was the first counselor. You think God cannot see his heart. God says, why is your face downcast? He's setting the pattern for us. That's why counseling is a mandate from scripture.

You look at a person, he looks sad, he looks angry. Looks this, you reach out to him, but the three core component. Now here is where we really get to the key. Emotion left unchecked will spiral to other destructive emotions that master us subconsciously. He started off with anger. The anger obviously moved to jealousy towards the brother that jealousy moved to action murder. After that, when God asked him, where is your brother? What did he tell Him? Am I my brother's keeper.

So he moved from anger to jealousy, to what? To deceit. Deceit seed in the end, when God moved punishment on him, there was no remorse. You know, he was what fearful. Now this is where the number seven comes in, the effects. And here's one thing y'all got to pick up what the text is telling you is not in just one generation. The text is telling you, it is in many generations. That's why the seven number plays in and the story repeats itself with Abraham, Joseph, all the way down because God protects Cain with a symbol of grace. We don't know what the sign, the Mark of Cain is. Olden day they used to say the motto cane was make a guy black skin. It was a very racist way of looking at it. We don't know. The point was, is a mark of grace to, so that he will not be killed.

So when God uses the number seven is divinely sent out as grace. When men uses it, when Lamech uses the, what does he say? Cain seven times, with me 70 times seven. You notice that. So what has happened is that the sin of the father has gone down to the generations you know, and by the time it reaches Lamech we started out with anger, we go down to Lamech is deep head grassy morality. And then that pattern repeats itself. You find it Abraham, Isaac with the same chapter replicated.

How you deal with deceptiveness, you find it with Joseph. He was the deceiver. The father was a deceiver. You find it later on David with women, Solomon was worse. So always there is a pattern. So the emotional trip carries on, you know, now what are we going to look at today is basically this here is the fundamental lesson. And I'm going to give you some signs now. Emotions go back to basic few core emotions. You deal with these core emotions you deal with the rest. What we want to do is that we tend to deal with it at a symptom level. So for example, the guy is anxious. I want to deal my anxiety, your problem isn't anxiety. There is a core emotion behind it. And that core emotion is the one that you got to deal with.

And so what the science is telling you is that, there are at least four maximum eight core emotions. Most, psychologist rates it as four to eight. Deal with this, you deal with the rest, but there's a very important teaching. You try to deal with your deceitfulness, your anxiety, your depression, your loneliness. You deal with the root, that symptom is easier to handle. You get where we're going with this. No that's important. So let's go into a bit of the science over this.

There are two reasons why this happened. Okay, one we have what we call a fight or flight response. You see that here? What do you do? He fought. You either fight. What is fight? Anger. You flee, what is flee? Fear What are we noticing? We are noticing what, a pairing. They are on extreme perimeters. That means fear is the opposite of anger. This is what the science is showing you. That's the first pair.

The second here we see is also found in Abel. Abel is finding his joy in the Lord. Cain is not, he is very sad. There's a second line. Where's your happiness? At the extreme end of happiness is sadness. So there is the second pair. So fundamentally here are the four emotions you deal with joy, sadness, fear and anger. These are what they call your pillar emotions. Deal with them at the root, the symptom will be easier to be dealt with. So let's show how this is done.

I'll show you some famous theories on this. This is probably the most famous theory. This is developed by the late Dr Robert. He call this the Emotional Wheel. I'll give you the first cut. You see down there, joy, and you have sadness. You notice the middle ring. He has eight emotions; sadness, surprise, fear, trust, joy, anticipation, anger and disgust. I notice he has done it to primary colors. All these are colors. Now notice that. So I'm going to give you three lessons.

Number one, to protonate the eight emotions. Let's not dispute it. These are the ones that create everything else.

Number two, their intensity. If you push joy up it is serenity. When it becomes intense its ecstasy. Notice the emotion is neutral, but ecstasy can be very dangerous.

Now look at sadness. Intensely it is grief. Not intense, it is passiveness. Same thing with fear, very intense terror, not intense is apprehension. So there is a intensity. So most scientist agree with this for decades. So emotions are intensity. Number two, emotions are on polar opposites. So to understand the emotion of sadness, you must understand the corresponding emotion of joy. To understand the emotion of anger, you must understand the corresponding emotion of fear. To understand anticipation, you need to understand the corresponding emotion of surprise. Then you must understand how the emotion splits itself in intensity. It goes upward to serenity, if it is joy it goes downward to ecstasy, sadness to grief, pensiveness, et cetera, et cetera.

Here is the third emotion, they call it blended emotions. Emotions combine themselves to form what is known as complex emotions. Love is the combination of joy and trust. Submission is trust and fear. This is very true. It is biblical, Godly fear and trust. I have faith in the Lord, I fear the Lord and I am submitting. So every emotion you have is a mix. So you can read this polar opposites. You can read this as a loop; you can read this in intensity.

Now I'm going to show how this works in a very simple manner. I will simply find this for you. Dr Gloria Wilcox's Feeling Wheel is used very heavily in a form of therapy known as emotionally focused therapy. You are critical. Let's find critical in the list. You can find critical at two o'clock. Polar opposite of critical, if you move across that actually it is faithful. Now the first thing you see, what is critical got to do with faithful.

You see, you don't see the connection, right? But there is everything, because faithful is what you get when you are not critical. The moment you're not faithful to me, I lose trust. When I lose trust, I build a wall. I build a wall, anything you do I criticize you. You see where we're going with this?

So second one, energetic versus lonely. You say, what is energetic go to do with being lonely. Now here is very important. When people are lonely, you know what they do, they eat, and they eat sugar stuff. You know why the eat sugar stuff, because sugar is a dopamine spike. Sugar gives you the rush and because sugar gives you the energy. So you fix your binging by what, by finding a proper outlet for

energy, not by trying to cut down on your sugar. It wouldn't work. You find it is polar opposite. Then you solve it at a level. So this is what science is doing.

Anxious versus content, is this quite obvious. Apathetic was daring. Why apathetic, because you never took risks in life. So this one is used very heavily by a lot of people, they just print it out, people with what we call borderline personality disorders use this. They basically track the feelings. Now what I'm suggesting in a very simple tool is this. Let's just say you feel bitter. You ask yourself what is the opposite of what you want to feel, and then you track it from there. So let me, let me go back to the example that I gave you.

The wife said, I asked you to do something, you said you do, you didn't do it. Husband says, no matter what I do not good enough for you. So we process the wife's point of view. The wife will say, if you slow down, I see his frustration. I hear he is saying. Well, no matter what I do not good enough for you. I know slowing down, but I don't trust him. He has disappointed me before. Fair point. Now you're attaching anger with disappointment. Disappointment if you look at the wheel is a subset of what disappointment is hurt, is a sadness subset.

So what happens now you are being pulled up is also a sub. So you're now hurt is a subset. So now you deepen that emotion. Why then did she whack him? Because she doesn't want to be hurt. So what basically she did was she put a wall and she yelled across the wall. That is the safety mechanism.

So the base emotion isn't anger, it is actually fear of disappointment. Secondly is hurt. These are the two emotions. So you don't deal with the anger, you deal with the hurt and you deal with the fear. That's how you process this thing, there is fruit and there is root.

Now where you take you from there, having that in itself is not enough. You need to communicate that to the husband. So if you find a safe space and it is not easy. If you go to your husband and say, look, this is why I yelled at you. You think easy to do, is not easy to do. After you do that, you process the emotion again. How do you feel? Quite likely two emotions come out. Number one, very scary but number two, you feel good and then you have now created a new narrative, a new platform. You see where I'm going with this.

I told you today is very heavy but it's very, very meaningful.

So let me recap a bit, you settle your emotions by going to your core emotions; four at least fear, anger, sadness and happiness. You can take the other four. You track his intensity, you track its polar opposite. There is a basic technique they use. That teaches you to diagnose your own emotions.

Let me wrap them. How Abel's death points us to godly practices in emotional management? Now emotions, theories, those are what people teach us. Let's go back to scripture. You see the text is giving you two choices, and it gives you the pattern of life. The pattern of life is there is only one basic emotion above all, the joy in worshiping God. All our problems come from this.

That's why Piper says no in his book, *Desiring God*. The first chapter is worship. The reason why you and I got so much emotional dysfunction is because we are not worshiping God. We are giving God leftovers. And here's the thing you don't realize it and I don't realize it. That's why you and I are unhappy, frustrated, angry and all of that and we are trying to deal with the emotion in isolation. It's not going to work.

Your core emotion is worship of God. If we give our best to God, our time, our lives, our everything and be like David in Psalm 27 in the midst of war, who do I want in heaven beside you, just you, sitting in a temple worshipping God. When you find yourself that place, it will spill from there.

So that's the first thing you, you pick up.

The second point is that if a male, you can get it up. The purpose of life is not to avoid sadness, fear, shame or disgust. We are not here to teach you therapy, we are teaching you discipleship because Abel is the first martyr. The purpose of Christian life is not avoidance of negative emotions. The purpose of Christian life is to rise above negative emotions and not let that trap you and snare you. And here's the thing. You are blind to it, you can't see it, but the whole idea is not to do it because Abel worshiped God, he loved God. He found his joy in God. What did it get him? It got him killed. That's the pattern for us. Some people will become Christians because they hope being a Christian solves all their emotional problems. God is not interested in that. God is interested in your everything, and if it costs you, it will cost you. So there's a second point.

Third one, the blood of Abel points us to the blood of Christ. So you process all your core emotions in light of the gospel. Let me tell you how to do it. Joy, the question is what brings you joy? Is it your job, your family, your kids, all your joy is found in the Lord, in the worship of the lord and doing godly things. Once you have that, then the polar opposite of that is sadness. Sadness is if you take away my job, you take away my kids, you take away all of that, yes there will be sadness but it will not kill me. You see where we're going with this second year?

Fear. If I love the Lord like Abel, I recognize it comes with martyrdom. What the world throws at me I am not anxious. This Philippians chapter four, chapter three, chapter two, then the opposite of it is anger. It doesn't affect me. The anger I have is righteous anger. I learn to forgive people. So here is the key way dealing with it. You deal with all your emotions by looking at how Jesus dealt with it on the cross. And if you just take the first four; joy, sadness, anger and fear that is four and meditate on how Jesus did it on a cross. And then you processed it against your own life issue. I tell you why your life will be less stressful one. Seriously, I've tried working on this is me and my life, not so tangled.