

## **Biblical EQ Session 1 - *Commencing The Journey***

	<p><b>What is EQ?</b></p> <p>EQ is emotional intelligence, just like IQ is analytical intelligence.</p> <p>Emotional intelligence is the term we use to describe a complex set of human abilities related to emotional management. The four key aspects of emotional intelligence (Mayer &amp; Salovey) are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Emotional identification, perception and expression</li><li>2. Emotional facilitation of thought</li><li>3. Emotional understanding</li><li>4. Emotional management</li></ol>
	<p><b>What Is Biblical EQ?</b></p> <p>Biblical EQ seeks a biblical understanding of our emotions.</p> <p>It is based on the emotional life of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>It believes Christ redeemed our emotions.</p> <p>It believes we are to become Christ-like in all aspects – including our emotional life.</p> <p>It draws on both secular and Christian insights.</p> <p>It uses the life and ministry of Jesus as the model and the integrating point.</p>
	<p><b>The Advantages Of Biblical EQ</b></p> <p>It has as its model the emotional life of Jesus Christ with His personal presence, self-control, emotional expressiveness and discernment of situations.</p> <p>Thus it has a clear pattern, a master plan that can be used to analyse theories and to determine what is true and false, wise and unwise.</p> <p>Secular theories have no "ideal person" to point to - they merely assemble ideals from their own theories and worldview.</p> <p>In Jesus we have a model , a guide, a point to aim our teaching towards and this is invaluable.</p>

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### **The Power To Change**

To get answers that genuinely help people we need two things, a clear destination, and the power to get there in a reasonable amount of time.

Our clear destination is the image of Christ Jesus, our power to get there is the infilling with, and transforming work of, the Holy Spirit.

### **The Seven Things We Need To Renew**

Renewing our basic perceptions of reality and our perspective on life.

Renewing our individual belief system.

Renewing the purposes and intents of our heart.

Renewing our physical bodies and their influence on our emotions.

Renewing our ability to be aware of and to understand our own emotions.

Renewing our ability to understand the emotions of other people.

Renewing our ability to appropriately express emotion according to the desire of the Holy Spirit.

### **What Kind Of Emotions Should Christians Have?**

While God is an emotional and conscious Being there are some emotions that God never has. God is never envious, lustful, greedy, bitter with selfish ambition, small-minded, or petty. Neither is he anxious or fretful but dwells in perfect peace.

His emotions are positive, holy, noble and appropriate. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.

Since we are called to be "in the image of God", then whatever else that means, it means that at the end of our Christian maturity, our emotions should in some measure share these divine qualities.

We should be "walking in the light".

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### **Holy Emotions**

Holy emotions are those emotions experienced by God such as compassion, joy, and holy indignation and those that accompany life in the Spirit such as praise, worship and adoration.

Holy emotions are derived from the kingdom of light and the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-21, Colossians 3:16-17, Galatians 5:22,23) and are in agreement with true wisdom (James 3:17,18) Holy emotions are the emotions of Christ in us. Holy emotions are not necessarily religious or pious emotions. Admiring a flower or delighting in beautiful music or focusing on the beautiful and the good can also be holy. (Philippians 4:8)

### **Human Emotions**

Human emotions are based in our human situation and the created order and shared by Jesus during His time on earth.

Human emotions includes emotions such as grief, pain, fear, abandonment, sadness and sorrow, anxiety, stress, anguish and vulnerability.

Human emotions are well chronicled in the Psalms.

For the Christian "human emotions: are temporary and in eternity there shall be no more crying or sadness or pain (Revelation 21:4).

While these emotions may feel bad they are not evil or toxic. They can be painful but they are not poisonous.

### **Fleshly Emotions**

Fleshly emotions are poisonous and destructive and include toxic emotions such as malice, envy, selfish ambition, sensuality, bitterness, overpowering lusts and murderous hatred.

Fleshly emotions result in the works of the flesh and in evil deeds.

Their outcome is spiritual death.

Fleshly emotions were not part of mankind at Creation and are not "natural human reactions" (For instance grief is a natural human reaction but bitterness is fleshly. One can have "good grief" without a trace of bitterness. Bitterness is not natural to the human condition.)

Rather these emotions have their source in a dark wisdom (James 3:14-16).

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### Choosing Our Emotional Level

*We are thus called to participate in the holy emotions so that they transcend the human emotions and overcome the fleshly emotions.*

We must choose our emotional level and decide which emotions we will have in our lives.

When disappointment strikes we can choose to: Respond with *holy emotions* and pray through until we trust God and can praise Him as the Psalmist did Respond at the *human level* and sit down disconsolate in human misery and gradually see it through. Respond from *fleshly emotions* and lash out in anger, bitterness, distrust and revenge.

### Why The Mess?

One of the greatest obstacles to emotional health in Christian circles is that we simply don't understand our emotions or we lack proper mechanisms for dealing with them.

Many Christians are ignorant of Scriptural teaching on emotional life and so are left stranded with a few basic techniques that barely scratch the surface of the problem.

### Judging Ourselves And Others

In a puzzling , almost paradoxical way, we also take our emotions too seriously and make them the source of our spiritual self-esteem.

When we feel holy and good and positive we judge ourselves as being "up" spiritually and when we are feeling distant or depressed we judge ourselves as being "down" spiritually.

In fact the connection between emotions and spirituality is fairly loose. Some very happy optimistic people are carnal and worldly, while some serious gloomy types are deeply spiritual - and the reverse applies as well.

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### Are Emotions Important?

The common observation of philosophers and theologians as diverse as Aristotle and C.S. Lewis has been that right affections and emotions form the basis for right morality.

If we love the good and abhor the evil we are far more likely to be good. And if we hate bribes and value integrity we are far more likely to be honest.

### Emotions And Justice

In biblical terms the person who is right emotionally loves good and hates evil.

In their emotions they value what God values.

The emotionally perfected Christian is not just "together" or integrated in the secular sense.

Rather they are righteous and just and holy and perfectly loving.

Our emotions undergird our choices and our choices form the foundations for our character and destiny.

### Jesus As Our Model

It is one of the key teachings of Christianity that our Master and Model is Jesus Christ and we are to be conformed into His image and be like Him in all respects.

(Romans 8:29 NASB) For whom He foreknew, He also **predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

(Ephesians 4:15 NASB) but speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in all aspects into Him**, who is the head, even Christ,

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### Is Jesus Christ An Appropriate Model For Emotional Maturity?

Objections :

The standard's too high.

He was God and sinless, I'm neither.

There isn't enough information in Scripture to make a judgment.

He was Jewish and lived 2000 years ago.

Jesus was a prophet and had the emotions of a prophet.

Jesus? High EQ? Kind of lacking in social skills if you ask me! I'm much more tactful and artful than that.

### Jesus Had Emotions

Jesus experienced:

Hunger (Matthew 4:2, 21:18), Thirst (John 19:28) , Fatigue (John 4:6) ,

He rejoiced at the end of the sending out of the seventy-two (Luke 10:21), marveled at the faith of the centurion (Matthew 8:10) and felt love for the rich, young ruler (Mark 10:21) .

His most frequent emotion is compassion which is recorded 11 times in the gospels (e.g. Matthew 9:36).

Anger was part of life for Jesus such as when He became angry at the Pharisees for their hardened cruelty (Mark 3:5) .

Zeal for God's honor caused Him to cleanse the temple (John 2:17) .

### More of Jesus' Emotions

Jesus grew in stature and in wisdom and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52)

was subjected to high-powered temptation (Matthew 4:1-11)

and learned obedience without sinning (Hebrews 5:8-9) .

He had some of life's more painful emotions as well. For instance He wept (Luke 19:41, John 11:35) , His soul was troubled (John 12:27) and a while later He was "troubled in spirit" (John 13:21) .

Jesus underwent extreme emotional distress to the point of death (Matthew 26:36-41) and prayed with loud cries and tears (Hebrews 5:7) .

Finally of course he experienced an agonizing death on a cross. (Matthew 27:34-54) with its attendant feelings of abandonment (Matthew 27:46) .

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### The Day Jesus Changed!

While Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man there was also a sudden break in His life, a radical change in His emotions and personal authority so that those who knew Him said "where did He get this wisdom from...."

(Matthew 13:54-58 NKJV) And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? {55} "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? {56} "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" {57} So they were offended at Him.

### The Holy Spirit!

Jesus had changed! While Luke shows us that Jesus was a child prodigy (Luke 2:42-50) few seem to have expected Him to turn into a miracle working prophet.

The transition from promising youth to powerful prophet seems to have come at His baptism. There was a massive empowering work of the Holy Spirit that changed Jesus just as Pentecost changed the disciples.

The highest level EQ skills such as boldness and courage and skill in healing and proclamation are Holy Spirit endowed.

### Transformation Is Possible!

EQ change empowered by the Holy Spirit can be remarkable and sudden and leave others astonished.

Simon changes to Peter the Rock at Pentecost.

Saul becomes Paul on the Damascus Road.

Wisdom is given to Solomon and strength to Samson.

Stephen is given 'words no man can contradict' in court.

The Holy Spirit is God, resident in human personality, with the power to change it.

## Biblical EQ Session 2 – *Role of the Holy Spirit*

### The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God, resident in the human personality, with the power to change it.

The Holy Spirit has the wisdom, power and knowledge to make us like Jesus.

The Holy Spirit knows who Jesus is.

The Holy Spirit knows who you and I are, at the deepest level.

The Holy Spirit is creative & powerful. He is perfectly able to do the seemingly impossible job of making us holy.

The Holy Spirit is the source of Christ-like emotions.

### The Holy Spirit & Jesus

Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:20)

Hebrews says that the Holy Spirit prepared the body of Jesus to do the will of God. (Hebrews 10:5-7)

The Holy Spirit gave wisdom and power to Jesus. (Isaiah 11:1-5)

This became evident after His baptism in the Jordan.

The change was so great that the people of Nazareth wondered at it. (Matthew 13:54-58)

The body, mind and spirit of Jesus were brought into perfect harmony and obedience to God by the Spirit.

### The Holy Spirit Works In Us

The Holy Spirit renews our minds. (Romans 8:4-6, 12:1,2)

The Holy Spirit gives life to our mortal bodies – which are the source of many of our emotions. (Romans 8:11)

The Holy Spirit renews our emotions bringing love, joy, peace etc. to bear fruit in our lives. (Galatians 5:22,23)

The Holy Spirit pours the love of God into us (Romans 5:5) so we can endure trials (Romans 5:3,4) become strong and grow into the image of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 3:14-21)

The Holy Spirit is our Counselor, Helper and Teacher (John 14:26, 1 John 2:20,27, 1 Corinthians 2:10-16)

The Holy Spirit gives us power for ministry. (Acts 1:8)



## Biblical EQ Session 2 – *Role of the Holy Spirit*

### The Holy Spirit Changes Us

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NKJV) Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, {10} nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. {11} And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

### Nothing Is Impossible!

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 says that even life-long patterns of sin such as homosexuality, drunkenness, sexual addiction, and criminality can be dealt with by the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit.

Such changes may seem “impossible to man” but are not impossible to God the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, who was involved in the creation of the world, can even deal with the physical and medical basis of addictions and sin.

### Jesus Body & Your Body

The Holy Spirit created the body of Jesus to perfectly express the will of God and be free from the tendency to sin.

God can do this for your body as well.

The Holy Spirit can bring life to your mortal body. (Romans 8:11)

The Spirit can deal with the flesh in both its spiritual and biological aspects.

We are not left at the mercy of our genetics or our addictions.

The Spirit can overcome the flesh (Galatians 5:16-18)

The Spirit can “put to death” sinful physical tendencies. (Romans 8:11-13)

What God did in Christ, He also wants to do for those who follow Him, who are “in Christ”.

## Biblical EQ Session 2 – *Role of the Holy Spirit*

### The Spirit & The Soul of Jesus

There are 11 references to the soul & spirit of Jesus in the gospels: Matthew 26:38, 27:50; Mark 2:8, 8:12, 14:34; Luke 10:21, 23:46; John 11:33, 12:27, 13:21, 19:30

Three things especially stand out:

That Jesus perceived life's situations with His Spirit.

That Jesus was moved on the basis of those perceptions.

That Jesus candidly expressed His emotions to those closest to Him.

### Jesus Perceived Life Spiritually

In Mark 2:8 Jesus "perceived in His spirit".

For Jesus the spirit was the true organ for the perception of reality.

*(Isaiah 11:2.3 NKJV) The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. {3} His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;*

The presence of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus gave Him extraordinary knowledge and wisdom so that He judged situations righteously and truthfully and inwardly. He did not judge situations as they appeared to the eyes and ears or to mere sense perception.

### Jesus Knew The Heart of Things

Jesus judged life's situations with a spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and knowledge that saw into the heart of things.

This special perception that Jesus had shows in many of the gospel encounters and is neatly summarized by the apostle John who writes: (John 2:24 NKJV) But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men.

See also Matthew 9:4, 12:25, Mark 5:30, 12:15 Luke 11:17, John 5:6, 6:61, 64, 13:1-3, 18:4)

This power of insight was from the Holy Spirit.

## Biblical EQ Session 2 – *Role of the Holy Spirit*

### Jesus Emotions Flowed From His Spiritual Insights

Jesus' perceptions of situations □ then led to His emotional reactions

On sensing the darkness of His impending death □ His soul was troubled unto death,

on seeing the grief at Lazarus's tomb □ He groaned in spirit and was troubled,

when the disciples returned victorious □ He rejoiced,

when He perceived the hardness of heart of the Pharisees □ He became angry,

and when He sees masses of people coming out after healing and teaching □ He is moved with compassion.

Jesus then expressed these emotions powerfully but appropriately.

There is always great dignity in the reactions of Jesus Christ. His emotionality was deep and expressive - never trivial, sentimental or chaotic.

### The Five Stages of Emotions

Situation

1. Perception of the situation
2. Personal Beliefs about the situation.
3. Internal Emotion Generated
4. Interaction with our physical predisposition
5. Outward expression of the emotional reaction

### The Holy Spirit At Each Stage

**Perception:** Jesus perceives by both His Spirit and the Holy Spirit who brings these realities to Him.

**Beliefs:** The Holy Spirit writes the law of God on our minds and hearts and forms our beliefs within us as our teacher and the One who shows us the things that God has prepared for those who believe and reveals to us the deep things of God. Here are just a few direct references to His teaching ministry. (John 6:45, 14:26, Galatians 1:11,12 , 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, Ephesians 4:21, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, Hebrews 8:10-11, 1 John 2:20,27 )

**Internal Emotions:** Emotions can proceed directly from our spirit under the influence of the Holy Spirit " and Jesus rejoiced in His spirit.." and emotions such as love, joy and peace are called the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23).

## ***Biblical EQ Session 2 – Role of the Holy Spirit***

### **The Holy Spirit At Each Stage - 2**

**Interaction With Physical Disposition:** The indwelling Holy Spirit gives life to our mortal bodies that we may be renewed and cry out "Abba Father!" (Romans 8:11-15) to our gracious Heavenly Father. His powerful work can break the domination of our lives by sin and addictions.

**Outward Expression Of The Emotional Reaction:** The spiritual basis for revelation that culminates in teaching is shown in 1 Corinthians 2:13... ***These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*** (see also John 8:28)

### **The Holy Spirit And Your EQ**

The Holy Spirit & Your EQ

The Holy Spirit formed the body, mind, soul ,spirit and beliefs of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit produced powerful godly emotions in Jesus.

The Holy Spirit can also form the emotions of Christians.

The Holy Spirit can change the way we see things.

The Holy Spirit can help create more functional and true beliefs which underlie our healthy emotions.

The Holy Spirit can directly generate godly and spiritual emotions.

The Holy Spirit can deal with difficult fleshly impulses.

The Holy Spirit can teach us what to say and how to say it.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **Does The Theory Work?**

If Biblical EQ is true, and non-trivial, it should predict how people process their emotions.

If emotional integrity is closely related to the work of the Holy Spirit then there should be very different results for a) apostles and great Christian leaders verses b) carnal Christians.

These two groups should have very different emotional lives. The great Christian leaders should have a much higher EQ than the carnal Christians.

### **Perception – Apostles & Leaders**

1. They should see the world differently from the rest of us. For them the Kingdom perspective will be the only true perspective.

2. They should be able from time to time to see into the hearts of men and women and to speak accurately to their condition.

3. They should be conversant with dreams, visions and symbolic language. They should readily grasp the prophetic and be excited by the Scriptures.

### **Beliefs – A & L**

4. They should have beliefs that the surrounding culture has not taught them or which it opposes vehemently, beliefs that only God can have taught them.

5. Those beliefs should give them a sense of what is righteous and what is unrighteous like Jesus had when He cleansed the temple and their beliefs should create an unusual zeal within them that consumes them.

6. Those beliefs should give them unusual poise and power in crisis situations like Jesus in the storm.

7. As a result of those beliefs they should resonate with and be emotionally drawn to others who are of great faith, like Jesus resonated with the Roman centurion.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **Emotions – A & L**

8. They should have deep and vivid emotions like those of Jesus Christ.

9. They should have a sense of their emotions being God's emotions and be aware of what they are feeling and able to name it clearly as Jesus did with His emotions.

10. They should be people of authentic and powerful emotional expression - groans, tears, crying, and rejoicing.

### **Physical Nature – A & L**

11. They should demonstrate victory over addictions and sexual temptations and have a renewed physical nature.

12. They should be able to express their emotions in godly ways through their physical bodies.

### **Outward Expression – A & L**

13. These righteous emotions should lead to righteous actions such as when Jesus' compassion moved Him to act.

14. Their emotionality should be an integral part of being a righteous person. Not detached from life like the emotions of an actor or a hypocrite.

15. The course of their lives should demonstrate an ever-increasing wisdom in emotional expression as if God were teaching them how to say things.

## **Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory**

### **Do these predictions hold?**

The apostles and great Christian leaders do indeed show a different order of perceptions, beliefs, emotions, physical victory and gracious outward expression.

Both Scripture and history tell us that the Holy Spirit did indeed produce these things in people who were submitted most fully to Him.

### **Vivid Emotions Vs. Immature Emotions**

Psalms 30 NKJV) I will **extol You**, O LORD, for You have lifted me up, And have not let my foes rejoice over me. {2} **O LORD my God, I cried out to You**, And You healed me. {3} O LORD, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. {4} **Sing praise to the LORD**, You saints of His, And **give thanks** at the remembrance of His holy name. {5} For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; **Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.** {6} Now in my prosperity I said, "I shall never be moved." {7} LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong; You hid Your face, and **I was troubled.** {8} **I cried out to You**, O LORD; And to the LORD I **made supplication.** {9} "What profit is there in my blood, When I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth? {10} Hear, O LORD, and **have mercy on me**; LORD, be my helper!" {11} You have turned for me **my mourning into dancing**; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with **gladness**, {12} To the end that my glory may sing **praise** to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give **thanks** to You forever.

### **The Difference...**

The negative emotions are temporary "weeping may last for a night but joy comes in the morning".

There is a righteous resolution of the emotions, a giving of thanks in the end.

The emotions are primarily directed towards God in a private and appropriate fashion. (They are not "acted out" or dumped on others.)

There is a wide range of appropriate emotions from joy to a troubled spirit. The emotional thermostat is not stuck in just one position e.g. deep gloom or constant happiness.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **The Difference... cont'd**

There is an ability to see good in God in the midst of it all - to sing praise and give thanks. The spiritual perspective is not lost.

There is no stifling of emotions, they are expressed in spiritual terms "that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent".

There is repentance of false perspectives and beliefs. "Now in my prosperity I said 'I shall not be moved..". When God challenges this David repents of his self-sufficiency. People who are out of balance emotionally do the opposite and cling to their self-defeating perspectives

In the expression of emotions there is genuine dignity and beauty. This psalm is poetry!

### **Different Temperaments**

Different temperaments have different uses within the Kingdom of God. Barnabas was a great encourager of the brethren, Peter's high emotionality made him a master preacher and evangelist, Paul's razor sharp mind made him a great one for attending to the operational details and theology of church life, John's mystical temperament pointed to the deep abiding spiritual realities and resulted in wonderful teaching on prayer. Titus seems to have been a born trouble-shooter, Timothy was the sensitive and caring pastor par excellence.

God will use your basic temperament that He has built into you - and even some of your weaknesses for when you are weak then you are strong! Your basic God-created and renewed self is OK! God can and will use it and has accepted it in Christ Jesus (Romans 14:7).

### **Transformed Temperaments**

Being accepted does not mean being unchanged.

The Holy Spirit will take certain parts of your basic emotional temperament and refine them into the image of Christ Jesus.

Paul matured in tolerance and love.

Peter became stable and reliable.

Timothy had to overcome his timidity and learn to suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

As the Holy Spirit convicts you and teaches you and ministers to you a slow but sure transformation will take place that will increase your maturity in Christ and your usefulness to the Master.



## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **Emotions During Revivals**

Powerful emotions are frequently generated during revivals:  
"While I was enforcing these words "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10), God began to bare His arm, not in private but in the open air and before more than two thousand witnesses. One then another, and yet another was struck to the earth, greatly trembling at the presence of God's power. Others loudly and bitterly cried "What must we do to be saved?" (John Wesley)

### **By-Products Of Grace**

Few revivals have been without great emotion.

The revivalist Jonathan Edwards wrote a famous treatise on "Religious Affections.." which established that the emotions were a by-product of grace not its chief aim.

The aim of the godly evangelist is not an emotional audience but a repentant and believing audience.

If the emotions expressed so powerfully indicate that repentance is taking place and that people are meeting with God and having their souls transformed then that emotion is a good thing.

However if it is simply emotionality, hype, manipulated sentimentality etc. and no work of God is taking place then it is unprofitable.

Emotions accompany grace and may be an outward sign of an inward work of God – but they are not compulsory.

### **Maturity & Emotions**

Christian maturity is often portrayed as unemotional, dull and bureaucratic.

Maturity is not the loss of emotions but their deepening, enriching and appropriate expression.

Christian emotional maturity does involve emotional stability - we are not "tossed to and fro...by every wind of doctrine".

It also involves "growing up" in all things and becoming a person participating in the stature and fullness of Christ.

While it involves the stability of Christ it also involves the passion and zeal of Christ (John 2:17, Titus 2:14) and His ability to bless and to care.

In fact part of the purpose of our redemption is to become a people "zealous for good deeds".

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **The EQ of Carnal Christians**

If our model stands the test, then those who resist the Holy Spirit, those who are unspiritual, should be emotionally unformed and immature. If, as our theory predicts, the Holy Spirit is essential for full emotional formation, then unspiritual Christians should be emotional wrecks, or at the least quite shallow and indifferent emotionally.

The carnal Christian is characterized by an astonishing lack of spiritual maturity to the point where they cannot be addressed as spiritual people. Carnal Christians behave like "mere men" and are indistinguishable from the surrounding culture with their actions and reactions. Using our model we can again make certain predictions about the emotional life of those who do not give the Holy Spirit full lordship of their lives.

### **Perception – Carnal Christians**

1. They will see the world in much the same terms as the surrounding culture. For them the Kingdom perspective will be rare and they will be mainly self-centred.

2. They will be unable to see into the hearts of men and women and even empathy will be rare. They will not speak accurately to the human condition.

3. They will be baffled by dreams, visions and symbolic language. They will be bored by the prophetic and struggle with the Scriptures.

### **Beliefs – C.C.**

4. They will mainly have beliefs that the surrounding culture has taught them. They will not hold beliefs that the culture opposes vehemently, and will have few beliefs that only God could have taught them.

5. They will have a very weak sense of what is righteous and what is unrighteous and rarely react to social evil. They would tolerate the selling of doves in the Temple. Zeal will be unusual for them and even undesirable. They will not be consumed by kingdom interests.

6. They will not have unusual poise and power in crisis situations like Jesus in the storm but rather will be prone to anxiety.

7. They will not resonate with and be emotionally drawn to those who are of great faith. Rather they will feel more at home with the world and with other carnal Christians.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

	<p><b>Emotions – C.C.</b></p> <p>8. They will not have deep, vivid and stable emotions like those of Jesus Christ. They will instead be characterized by shallow sentimental spiritual feelings that vary with every wind of doctrine.</p> <p>9. They will have little sense of their emotions being God's emotions. They will often be unaware of what they are feeling and will be unable to name their emotions clearly.</p> <p>10. They will not be people of authentic emotional expression.</p>
	<p><b>Physical Nature - C.C.</b></p> <p>11. They will not demonstrate victory over addictions and sexual temptations</p> <p>12. They will fail to express their emotions in godly ways through their physical bodies.</p>
	<p><b>Outward Expression – C.C.</b></p> <p>13. Their spiritual emotions will rarely lead to righteous actions. Compassion for the lost or the poor will rarely be felt and if felt will not move them to action.</p> <p>14. Their emotionality will be detached from real life and be like the emotions of an actor or a hypocrite.</p> <p>15. The course of their lives will not demonstrate an ever-increasing wisdom in emotional expression. They will go from bad to worse and become increasingly discordant like " a clanging gong and a clashing cymbal" if they should continue as carnal Christians.</p>

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **Carnal Corinth**

The carnality of the Corinthian church is reflected in a long list of very serious sins – the first four chapters detail division, intellectual and spiritual pride, factions, and infighting.

Chapters five and six show they were visiting prostitutes, and engaging in sexual immorality, and incest.

Chapter seven discusses marriage, divorce and the basics of sexually appropriate behavior.

Chapters eight to eleven correct gross disorder such as being drunk at the Lord's Supper, not waiting for one another so one goes hungry while another is full, and participation in idolatrous feasts in pagan temples.

Chapters 12- 14 reveal a paganisation of the spiritual gifts and their use in competitive, unloving and chaotic ways.

Chapter 15 finds them denying the resurrection and being in major error over basic doctrines.

### **James & Hebrews**

The church James wrote to may have even been worse! There they murdered one another (James 4:2) and treated the poor with contempt (James 2:1-13).

The writer to the Hebrews calls his audience in various turns - sluggish, unfruitful, dull of hearing, immature, like children, and says they were neglectful of their salvation, in danger of drifting away from the faith and hardening their hearts to God's Word and on the point of having "evil, unbelieving, hearts" (Heb 3:12).

In chapter 10 the writer goes on to say they are neglecting meeting together and on the verge of giving up the faith, returning to sin and being judged by the living God.

### **What Happened?**

How come churches visited by apostles could end up such a mess?

These churches committed various sins against the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit remains within the believer but is sinned against. Several terms are used such as: Grieved (Ephesians 4:30), quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19) lied to (Acts 5:4), put to the test (Acts 5:9), insulted / outraged (Hebrews 10:29), made jealous (James 4:5), blasphemed (Matthew 12:31) and resisted (Acts 7:51). In Jude the divisive people are said to be "devoid of the Spirit" (Jude 1:19).

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **Sins Against The Holy Spirit**

**Grieved** (Ephesians 4:30) - by unnecessary and immature interpersonal conflict such as bitterness, wrath, slander and malice. The Spirit is a Spirit of love and is grieved by that which is opposed to love. Carnal behavior such as divisiveness and quarreling is anti-love, and causes grief to the Holy Spirit who is constantly trying to mature us in love.

**Quenched** (1 Thessalonians 5:18-21) - by despising the gifts of the Spirit especially prophesy. It implies that his fire - His inspirational activity in prophecy and revival is resisted - perhaps in the name of order, and "cold water" is thrown on attempts to minister in spiritual power.

**Lied To** (Acts 5:4): Ananias and Sapphira conspired in an act of financial deception of the apostles. This was seen as not deceiving men but God and lying to the Holy Spirit. (Acts 5:4) and resulted in them being carried out dead.

### **More Sins...**

**Put To The Test** (Acts 5:9): Again refers to Ananias and Sapphira and refers to their testing the omniscience of the Holy Spirit by thinking they could deceive those He had filled with power and anointed.

**Made Jealous** (James 4:4,5): *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? ... Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?* Friendship with "the world", is seen as spiritual adultery and makes the Spirit jealous. If we love the world (as in worldliness, not as in John 3:16) we enrage the Holy Spirit. Worldliness is often characteristic of carnal Christians and does great damage to their relationship with God.

**Insulted/Outraged/Do Despise Unto** (Hebrews 10:29): Refers to someone who turns back from Christianity to Judaism (or to any other religion) and thus says that the work of the Spirit of grace in his or her life was of no value to them. These are apostates.

### **False Teachers & The Holy Spirit**

**Devoid Of The Spirit** (Jude 1:19): Refers to false teachers who joined into Christian groups and created division leading people away to their own groups. These are probably not even believers to start with.

**Resisted** (Acts 7:51): Refers to the unbelieving Jews who were stoning Stephen and resisting the clear testimony of the Holy Spirit. Later God said to one of those resistant Jews "Saul, Saul, it must be hard for you to kick against the goads..". This term is not used of believers.

**Blasphemed** (Matthew 12:31): Is used of those unbelieving Jews who so deeply resisted the Holy Spirit that they saw the miraculous ministry of Jesus Christ as the work of the Devil and attributed His power to Satan. Again it is never used of Christians.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **The Price Of Sin**

The emotional consequences of sinning against the Holy Spirit are dire indeed.

The more people sin against the Holy Spirit the nastier they become.

In the above verses we see them pilfering, murdering lying, fighting and quarreling.

As the Holy Spirit is quenched, grieved and resisted His love departs and hatred enters into the person.

### **Carnality and Low EQ**

**The poor control carnal Christians have over their emotional life is due to their lack of co-operation with the Holy Spirit and can be seen in:**

**Poor Impulse Control:** Giving in to sexual immorality, drunkenness and even in the disorder of their worship.

**Poor Anger Management:** Most notably the congregation that James wrote to which were murdering each other (James 4:2) and the Galatians which were "biting and devouring" each other. (Galatians 5:15)

**Disintegrating Relationships:** Envying, factions, strife and contentions. ( 1 Cor 3:3

**Low Levels of Personal Motivation:** They are variously described as evil beasts and lazy gluttons (Titus 1:12-14) , neglectful, dull of hearing, and in danger of drifting.

### **Toxic Tongues...**

**Instability:** Following after "the latest" false teachers particularly if they were good talkers and emotionally persuasive (2 Corinthians 11) and being tossed around by every wind of doctrine.

**Lack Of Basic Empathy and Compassion:** Such as saying to a person who was without food or shelter "be warm and filled" and not doing anything! Or dishonoring the poor by making them sit in lowly places in church. (James 2).

**A Toxic Tongue:** Gossip, slander, and the like that proceeds from out of control emotions. (James 3)

**A Poisonous Personality:** Such people are described as a "root of bitterness that defiles many" or like the emotionally rigid Diotrephes who "like to put himself first" and controlled the church (3 John).

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **The Cure For Carnality**

Paul still wrote to, taught and cared for carnal Christians.

Carnal Christians need teaching about Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Carnal Christians need to be filled with the Spirit.

Carnal Christians need to be centered on Christ – not themselves.

Carnal Christians need accountable relationships of grace.

### **Conclusions**

1. The five step model accurately predicts the emotional state of both saintly Christians and carnal Christians.
2. Emotional authenticity is entirely a work of the Holy Spirit . However it can occur to some extent in non-believers who seek it as a work of *common grace*. More commonly it is found in Spirit-filled believers who are walking in holiness.
3. Emotional functionality and authenticity come about through the person co-operating with the Holy Spirit as He forms spiritual perspectives and a Christ-like belief system in the person.

### **Conclusions cont'd**

4. Resisting this work of the Holy Spirit results in emotional catastrophe.
5. Emotionally undeveloped Christians who remain close to God can grow into emotionally adept people just as it seems the originally abrasive Paul did.
6. Co-operating with God means not grieving or quenching the Holy Spirit and being careful to avoid worldliness.

## ***Biblical EQ Session 3 – Testing The Theory***

### **The Big Lesson**

The key factor in real, authentic, godly, emotional development is your relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

Christians need to be born-again and Spirit-filled and obediently walking in the Spirit on a day-to-day basis.



## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

	<p><b>Perception &amp; Life Perspective</b></p> <p>Each of us perceives life in certain ways, we have a certain stance on life, a way of viewing things, a life perspective.</p> <p>We are optimistic, pessimistic, see ourselves as powerful or helpless, as victims or change agents, etc.</p> <p>We also have ways of explaining reality to ourselves – our explanatory style.</p> <p>Our explanations about reality later form our beliefs -so how we explain the world to ourselves is of vital importance.</p>
	<p><b>Experiences Form Beliefs</b></p> <p>Our experiences form our beliefs.</p> <p>When an experience happens to us we explain it to ourselves a certain way.</p> <p>That explanation of our experience then becomes part of our inner world.</p> <p>It then generates our beliefs about reality.</p> <p>We can explain a fever as being due to: a witchcraft, a poison, a virus or the food we ate.</p> <p>The explanation then forms/reinforces beliefs in witches, plots, viruses or the bad cooking respectively.</p> <p>This “explanation forming” is a continuous and progressive process.</p> <p>Developing incorrect explanations of reality in childhood can cause deep misunderstandings later in life e.g. <i>“Bad things must always happen to me because I am a bad person.”</i></p>
	<p><b>Explanatory Style</b></p> <p>We tend to explain things that happen to us as:</p> <p>Permanent OR Temporary</p> <p>Out of Our Control OR Within our Control</p> <p>Pervasive OR Specific</p> <p>Personal OR External</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - Perception

### Optimism

Optimists and people of faith tend to view negative events as temporary, specific and external - and often within their control.

Pessimists tend to view negative events as permanent, pervasive, personal (their fault) - and often outside of their control.

### Pessimism

A pessimist gets a traffic ticket:

“How could I be so stupid” –Personal

“The police are everywhere” – Pervasive

“I’ll never stop getting fined...” – Permanent

“I can’t help it and I will lose my license..” – Low Locus of Control

### Faith Is Functional

Optimistic people are happier, healthier and live longer. (Martin Seligmann)

Optimistic people are more attractive socially.

But pessimistic people are more accurate on details.

The pessimist are “correct” but the optimists are the winners!

People of faith are optimists because they know about the goodness of God.

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - Perception

### Changing Explanatory Styles

Personal, Pervasive and Permanent explanatory styles produce self-defeating beliefs and a negative outlook.

The negative outlook is reflected in negative self-talk.

The self-defeating beliefs we have formed can be reasoned with and our thoughts (negative self-talk) can be disputed with or distracted.

Marshalling evidence against self-defeating beliefs and attacking them logically can slowly but surely lead to a more optimistic outlook.

Sometimes you can “externalize” the belief by writing the thought down on paper or talking it over with a friend.

### Reasoning With Yourself

1. Find a recent incident that caused you some emotional discomfort.
2. Look at the feeling - name and write down the feeling.
3. Try to find the underlying thought that produced that feeling e.g. "I am always stupid".
4. Dispute the thought with facts, Scripture, logic and common sense until you come up with a more functional perspective on the event.
5. Write down the new feeling that comes with the new explanation.

### The Soul

There is more to us than just the “mind” – we also have a soul.

The soul is the place of life and joy and personhood and subjective judgments and valuations.

Our soul quickened by the spirit and makes us a living being.

The soul is also a place of unruly and temporary emotions of daily frustrations, of falling in love, of the joy of a good meal or a wonderful sunset, the smile at a catchy tune, the sentiments at a movie.

It can be a place of tempestuous emotional storms that need to be stilled. The soul can be up one minute and down the next.

In contrast the spirit is a place of grand and timeless emotions, of great joys and piercing sorrows.

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - Perception

	<p><b>Finding Peace</b></p> <p>Bringing the stormy world of the soul under control is one of the great tasks of the Christian life and results in what the Bible calls peace. Peace is when the soul is in the state that God wants it to be in.</p> <p>Peace can be brought to the soul, which is subjective, through things such as a sunset or music of which William Congreve said "Music has charms to sooth the savage breast" . Music seemed to work for King Saul.</p> <p>However such methods are morally neutral and do not form character or do anything much for us in the long run. We need something better.</p> <p>Pure logic does not quite work with the soul to the extent that it does with the mind. "For the heart has reasons that the mind never knows".</p>
	<p><b>The Law Of Likeness</b></p> <p>The law of the soul is the law of likeness . Our souls become like the souls of people we love, admire or emulate or people we respect, see as authoritative, and obey.</p> <p>That is why children become like parents, disciples like their masters and dogs like their owners.</p> <p>Adoration and authority mold the soul.</p> <p>We become like Jesus through loving and obeying Jesus.</p> <p>Thus I have found four methods to work in bringing peace to the soul and giving it a dose of perspective restorer: Christo-Centric Worship, Self-Exhortation, Positive Confession Of Scripture (in its proper context) - and Scripture Memory</p>
	<p><b>Christian Soul-Changers</b></p> <p><b>Christo-Centric Worship</b> – worship that is focussed on Jesus Christ and the cross.</p> <p><b>Self-Exhortation</b> – speaking to your soul and commanding it "be still my soul.." "be lifted up O my soul.." "why are you downcast O my soul..."</p> <p><b>Positive Confession Of Scripture</b> – confessing the relevant promises of God aloud.</p> <p><b>Scripture Memory</b> – memorizing Scriptures that will change your life perspective.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

### Christo-Centric Worship

In Psalm 73 the Psalmist is in deep emotional pain and losing perspective.

The Psalm reflects a time of instability and spiritual crisis. The Psalmist says "my feet had almost slipped", "it was too painful for me", "my heart was grieved", "I was like a brute beast before you".

He had lost his spiritual perspective, he was in deep emotional pain, he was envying the wealth and success of the wicked and he thought it was futile to be righteous. He was on the verge of giving up.

### The Temple...

So the Psalmist goes into the Temple and worships God and his perspective changes.

By worshipping God, his own perception of reality was changed in three areas. He changed his perceptions about the world, himself and God.

Instead of perceiving the wicked as prospering he now saw them as on the brink of destruction.

Instead of seeing his behavior as rational and justified he now saw it as wrong and foolish.

Instead of seeing God as not rewarding him he turns and says "surely it is good to draw near to God".

True worship restored the Psalmist to a right perspective on his faith.

### Self-Exhortation

The process for changing your perspective by biblically-based self-exhortation is:

1. **Awareness:** Become aware of the state of your soul "why are you downcast".
2. **Questioning:** Decide whether it is godly and functional. If it is not godly or functional then don't accept it. Decide it must be firmly corrected and brought into alignment with the Kingdom..
3. **Go Upstairs:** Take your soul before the throne of God either directly or in prayer and worship.
4. **Firmly Command The Change:** Command your soul to change to a more biblical perspective within the background of God's will and covenant purposes.

For speaking to your own soul see: Judges 5:21, Psalm 25:1, 42:4-6, 62:5, 77:2, 103:1,2; Luke 12:19

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

### **Bible Based Positive Confession**

Acknowledge the problem.

Search the Bible and find appropriate and in context Scriptures.

Repeat them out loud declaring them to be true.

### **Scripture Memory**

Memorize Scriptures that are positive and faith-filled and which will help you to change your perspective on life.

The Scriptures bring us encouragement and hope.

Memorizing makes them part of your inner world and available in any situation.

Navigators has Scripture memory cards.

### **Spiritual Perception**

Remember Jesus saw things with His Spirit.

He perceived life spiritually.

His perceptions and explanations were from His Spirit.

The spirit is the place of intuition, dreams, visions and revelation and of the deepest intimacy and the most direct kind of knowledge. It is the deepest part of our humanity and it is the place where we "know that we know.". The primary functions of the spirit are wisdom and perception and knowledge.

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - Perception

### Our Spiritual Perception

Our human spirit is the deepest part of us.

It is in relationship with the Holy Spirit but separate from Him.

The spirit sets the rest of the personality in balance.

The person's spirit contains their inner wisdom as a person and forms their basic outlook on life.

The spirit also gives strength and power to the personality.

Faith, hope and love bring strength to the spirit.

The human's spirit can be full of light and wisdom or dark and embittered.

The spirit can be strengthened in the inner man or broken and weak.

### Before and After

**Prior to conversion** the human spirit is described as : dead, in darkness, under a veil, ignorant, blind and unable to understand spiritual things. ( 1 Corinthians 2:13, 3:13-16 Ephesians 2:1-4, 4:18, 2 Corinthians 4:3,4)

**After conversion** Christians: "have the mind of Christ" "an anointing" of the Holy Spirit the law written on their hearts there is abundant revelation even to "men-servants and maidservants". (1 John 2:20,27, 1 Corinthians 2:14-16, Acts 2:16-18, Hebrews 8:10-12, 1 Corinthians 14:31)

### Sensing Spiritual Realities

This is truly a vast transition in our nature. We go from being spiritually blind and without understanding, to being able to sense spiritual realities and both understand and enjoy them.

We may even sense them so keenly that we are able to edify the Church.

A whole new way of seeing things is opened up. This is variously called "being quickened in spirit", "having the eyes of your heart enlightened." or having one's spiritual eyes and ears "opened" to spiritual reality.

This work of the Holy Spirit that is quite independent of human intellect (see 1 Corinthians chapters 1-4 ).

Some very intelligent people are spiritually blind while some simple folk grasp the things of the Kingdom.

Jesus rejoiced in seeing simple people grasping great spiritual realities by faith alone and being obviously taught by God.

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

### Blessed Are You...

(Matthew 11:25 NKJV) At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

(Matthew 16:17 NKJV) Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

### Praying For Spiritual Perception

Ephesians 1:18 NKJV) ***the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;*** that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

(Philippians 1:9 NKJV) And this I pray, that your love may ***abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,***

(Colossians 1:9 NKJV) For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask ***that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;***

(Colossians 2:2 NKJV) that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

### Spiritual Sensitivity

1. Spiritual sensitivity opens our eyes to God's love and thus allows us to be solidly grounded as persons. (Ephesians 3:14-21)

2. Spiritual perception gives us the right spiritual passions such as Jesus beholding Jerusalem and seeing it with his spirit ,and reacting with compassion. With right spiritual perception we see the lost, our church and our city and our nation through the eyes of Jesus Christ.

3. Spiritual sensitivity allows us to be grounded in faith and in the spiritual realm not on sight and human reason and sentiment alone. (For we walk by faith not by sight.) Moses was able be steadfast in the face of threats from a tyrannical Pharaoh because of his special spiritual perception.

Occasionally people of high spiritual sensitivity will be granted a revelation that turns the whole situation around and has an effect not just on their emotions but the emotions of all involved. For instance Paul's revelation from God during the storm at sea. (Acts 27:21-26)



## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

	<p><b>Major Spiritual Errors</b></p> <p>Inability To Perceive The Obvious: This is called " a spirit of stupor" or spirit of slumber. (Romans 11:8)</p> <p>Paying Attention To Deceptive Spirits (1 Timothy 4:1-4)</p> <p>Spiritual Inflation – being “puffed up” (Colossians 2:18, 1 Timothy 3:6)</p> <p>Being Spiritually Enslaved To Rules And Regulations: This is known as a spirit of bondage and slavery. (Romans 8:15)</p> <p>A Spirit That Lacks Courage And Assertiveness: Paul calls this is "spirit of fear“ (2 Timothy 1:7)</p>
	<p><b>Conditions Of The Human Spirit</b></p> <p>A Spirit of Jealousy: (Numbers 5:14 NKJV)</p> <p>A Hardened And Obstinate Spirit (Deuteronomy 2:30 NKJV)</p> <p>A Spirit Of Ill-Will: (Judges 9:23 NKJV)</p> <p>A Sorrowful Spirit: (1 Samuel 1:15 NKJV)</p> <p>A Distressing Spirit : (1 Samuel 16:14-16 NKJV)</p> <p>A Sullen Spirit: (1 Kings 21:5 NKJV)</p> <p>A Poisoned Spirit : (Job 6:4 NKJV)</p> <p>An Anguished Spirit: (Job 7:11 NKJV)</p> <p>A Spirit Turned Against God: (Job 15:13 NKJV)</p> <p>A Broken Spirit: (Job 17:1 NKJV)</p> <p>A Hasty And Compelling Spirit: (Job 32:18 NKJV)</p>
	<p><b>Conditions cont'd...</b></p> <p>An Unfaithful Spirit: (Psalms 78:8 NKJV)</p> <p>A Spirit That Is Overwhelmed By Troubles:(Psalms 142:3)</p> <p>A Failing Spirit: (Psalms 143:7 NKJV)</p> <p>A Haughty Spirit: (Proverbs 16:18 NKJV)</p> <p>An Uncontrolled Spirit: (Proverbs 25:28 NKJV)</p> <p>A Perverse Spirit: (Isaiah 19:14 NKJV)</p> <p>A Spirit Of Deep Sleep: (Isaiah 29:10 NKJV)</p> <p>An Errant Spirit: (Isaiah 29:24 NKJV)</p> <p>A Spirit of Heaviness: (Isaiah 61:3 NKJV)</p> <p>A Grieved Spirit: (Isaiah 65:14 NKJV)</p> <p>A Merely Human Spirit: (Ezekiel 13:3 NKJV)</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 4 - *Perception*

### The Spirit Of A Person

The human spirit has a vast emotional range. It is not a cool, analytical, emotionless part of the human person. In fact the spirit generates the deepest and most powerful emotions we know.

A person's fundamental outlook on life flows from their spirit and when the spirit is affected this affects the actions of the whole person.

The spirit is vulnerable and can be damaged. Traumatic life circumstances and intense suffering can break the spirit or cause it to be overwhelmed.

The person has some degree of control over their spirit, and this is a good and desirable thing. A person who lacks control over their spirit has trouble with maintaining proper boundaries. (Proverbs 25:28)

The human spiritual realm is subject to change. Moods seem to be linked to a temporary state of the human spirit.

God can cause both positive and negative changes in the human spirit. In Isaiah from a spirit of heaviness is changed into a garment of praise. In the case of King Saul he moves from being anointed with the Holy Spirit to being tormented by a distressing spirit.

### The Four Causes..

Problems with the human spirit have four main causes:

**Sin** – requiring repentance

**Folly** – requiring wisdom and discipline

**Trauma** – requiring inner healing

**Spiritual Attack** – requiring breaking of curses, spiritual warfare and prayer. May even require exorcism.

See my ebook on spiritual warfare at <http://www.aibi.ph/warfare/>

### Summary

Our perceptions, perspectives and explanatory style set the tone for our emotional life and lie behind many of our beliefs.

Our mind, our soul and our human spirit all play a part in forming our life perspective.

Our mind needs to be reasoned with and to operate with functional categories and explanations.

Our soul operates by the law of likeness and authority and needs to love, to worship, and to be disciplined.

Our spirit requires repentance, wisdom, healing and spiritual protection.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intentions*

### Your Internal World

The “thoughts and intentions of the heart” are our internalized beliefs,

They include formal beliefs (such as theological beliefs)

And informal and more personal beliefs such as “No-one could possibly love me”.

These beliefs or thoughts of your heart are often reflected in what psychologists call your “self-talk” which is the “chatter” that goes on inside you as you are doing things “I wish Susan would call, I bet she won’t, ...”

### Our Beliefs

These beliefs are our idea about what is true or untrue, possible or impossible, plausible or implausible.

They contain our conclusions about life and beliefs about God, others, and ourselves.

Unlike perspectives, beliefs can generally be compressed into a single sentence such as “I believe that Jesus is God” or “I think I am totally unlovable”.

### Thoughts & Intentions

The Bible has two categories here; “**thoughts**” which is fairly much all-embracing

and “**intentions**” which are the movements of the will as we plan, vow and scheme our way through life.

The picture we see in Scripture is that these thoughts and beliefs, desires, vows, and inner goals are **generally verbal**.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### Inner Talk

Each thought or intent can be summed up in a **single sentence**.

When the prophets cry out "I know what you are thinking in your hearts it is X" it is always a statement, a sentence that encapsulates the heart attitude.

This inner talk then becomes part of an inner story that the person is weaving about their life.

This framework of thoughts, intents and inner stories forms a major part of the person's belief system.

### The Unrenewed Belief System

Over time we weave these sentences into a sort of a bird's nest of a structure inside us that we call our world-view.

For most people it is a horrific jumble of things they learned at school, life lessons, Grandma's sayings, the latest media opinions and a book they once read.

This internal belief structure is more or less functional and gets people by for the seventy or so years they are on this earth. However for some people it can go horribly wrong and cause them a great deal of confusion and emotional pain.

### The Heart Is Not A Pretty Place

(Genesis 8:21 NKJV) ...Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, **although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth**; ...

(Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV) "The heart is **deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked**; Who can know it?

(Ecclesiastes 9:3 NKJV) This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. **Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live**, and after that they go to the dead.

(Mark 7:21-23 NKJV) "**For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts**, adulteries, fornications, murders, {22} "thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. {23} "All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

	<p><b>Cleaning Up The Mess</b></p> <p>We need more than just “healing”, we need repentance and cleansing.</p> <p>Christians have the blood of Jesus and the help of God the Holy Spirit to help them clean up the mess that is in their hearts.</p> <p>We need to start with some of the huge contradictions that we live with in our belief systems.</p>
	<p><b>Dithering Between Two Options</b></p> <p>It is quite possible to hold conflicting beliefs or inconsistent beliefs or even two entirely different frameworks of belief.</p> <p>Sunday Christians are a prime example. At Church they seem to truly believe the Bible. At work they operate under an entirely different belief system and operate largely without reference to God.</p> <p>Both are real belief systems for them. They choose which one to operate under depending on where they are and who they are with.</p>
	<p><b>YHWH vs. Baal</b></p> <p>In the Old Testament they even had two distinct religions worshipping Baal when it came to farming and fertility and Yahweh when it came to war.</p> <p>Dual value systems such as this have been castigated by the prophets, Jesus and the apostles from one end of the Bible to the other.</p> <p>From Joshua's "choose which day who you will serve" (Joshua 24:15) -- to Elijah's "how long will you falter between two opinions" (1Kings 18:21) - to Jesus and "you cannot serve God and Mammon" (Matthew 6:21-24) - to James and his exhortations against double-mindedness and worldliness. (James 1:5-8, 4:1-7).</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### Tossed To And Fro....

Such people have literally two belief systems and two minds - Scripture calls them "double-minded" and says that they are spiritually unstable. (James 1:5-8)

This instability results from the fact that they are constantly choosing between two or more things they can believe at any one moment.

One minute they choose to operate from the biblical belief, the next minute they choose to operate from greed, superstition or expediency.

Up and down, tossed here and there like the waves of the sea.

### Pathology Within Us

In addition to having multiple belief systems people can decide to hold evil and wicked beliefs or beliefs that are illogical and insane.

Some people honestly and truly believe that the entire world should be organized around their happiness. Others truly believe that they can take what they like and do what they like.

A few believe that flying jet planes into buildings will give glory to God and bring them eternal life in Paradise.

Yet others believe that worshiping an idol will give them spiritual power and good fortune.

The birds nest of human beliefs inside us can become very toxic and result in pathological life choices.

### Is It All Bad?

The heart of the natural man can go badly and seriously wrong through adoption of a self-centered and toxic world-view which incorporates ungodly and illogical beliefs.

This is not the total picture though. Even in the OT we find people described as being penitent in heart and having hearts set on the Lord.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### The Learning Heart

Christians do not necessarily believe what they think they believe.

Christians are generally still learning to believe that which they think they believe. This is the difference between believing something as a notion or as a doctrine and really believing it so that it is operational for you under stress and pressure.

A test of this is "How much pressure does it take before you start to doubt that which you are sure you believe?"

### The Panic Point....

Ask yourself the following two questions:

1. "If I was out in a small boat on the Sea of Galilee and the waves were high and the boat was about to sink would I be calm or would I be afraid?" Would Jesus say to me "I have not seen such great faith in all Israel" or would He say to me "Why are you afraid O ye of little faith?"

2. "How low can the bank account go before I start getting anxious and doubting that God will provide? Where is the point at which I choose to panic?"

### Learning To Believe

The difference between the answers we put in the bible study booklet and the answer we give to the actual pressures of life can be startling.

Our notional beliefs and our operational beliefs under pressure are different.

This may not be due to double-mindedness but just to the need to mature, learn and grow.

**As committed Christians we are continually learning to truly believe that which we think we already believe.**

So we can see that the goal is to have a consistent and fully Christian belief system that is the sole one we operate from, and which is operating at the level of the thoughts and intentions of our heart and guiding our daily conduct and informing all our emotional responses.

This belief system will fill us with joy and give us poise and calm in the middle of life's trials. It will be heart level, practical, biblical, strong and singular. Our lives will ring with faith and authenticity.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intentions*

### The Pure Heart Of Jesus

When we look at the beliefs of Jesus we find there is no “birds nest”, but instead a purity and simplicity that is stunning. His thoughts were always pure and Scriptural and logical and right.

Jesus is never for a single second, fearful or anxious or halting between two opinions. When the Devil offers Him all the kingdoms of the world He does not say “Let me think about that for five minutes.”

Jesus heart was so fixed on God and so pure in its intentions that He did not hesitate or waver even under strong temptation.

Jesus was pure in heart and did not sin even in His thoughts and intentions.

### Blessed Are The Pure In Heart

If we are to be like Jesus in all aspects then we must head towards purity of heart. At first this seems to be a long and impossible journey.

Purity of thoughts and intentions seems both unsafe in a wicked world (unless we lock ourselves away in a monastery) and impractical to achieve in one lifetime.

Yet the promise of Jesus in the Beatitudes is that “The pure in heart will see God”. (Matthew 5:8) and He seems to be calling us to the impossible journey of sorting out and cleaning up our birds nest, changing our beliefs and coming into fellowship with Him.

### Scriptures On Purity of Heart

(Matthew 5:8 NKJV) Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

(1 Timothy 1:5 NKJV) Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,

(2 Timothy 2:22 NKJV) Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

(Titus 1:15 NKJV) To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.

(1 Peter 1:22 NKJV) Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

(1 John 3:2-3 NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. {3} And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.



## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### 6 Good Reasons To Change

**1. God cares about your beliefs** and weighs them up. He judges the thoughts and intentions of your heart. (Romans 2:15,16; Jeremiah 11:20; Hebrews 4:12).

**2. Jesus expects us to be increasing in our faith** and in fact is quite demanding about it! The expectations He had of his disciples included being calm in storms (Matthew 8:26), walking on water (Matthew 14:31), believing in miraculous provision (Matthew 6:30), being able to understand parables (Matthew 16:8), and being able to cast out demons, heal the sick and raise the dead (Matthew 10:8). When they failed to do any of the above they were rebuked (Matthew 17:20). The phrase "O ye of little faith" (see the references in Matthew above) shows that the disciples were expected to learn to believe Jesus with ever-increasing faith. Jesus does not call us to have a static level of faith. Rather we are called to develop a growing "mountain-moving faith" that starts from small "mustard-seed" beginnings. (Matthew 17:20).

### 6 Reasons cont'd

**3. Theology interpenetrates reality. Every belief is theological.** Carl Jung used to say that every human problem after the age of 35 was spiritual in nature. In a similar vein even the small voices, the dark mutterings of the human heart and the wretched small-minded beliefs that people have are a form of rebellion against God and a dwelling in darkness. For instance to believe in your heart that the world stinks is to malign the Creator. To vow that you will always play it safe and that you will never love again is to retreat into darkness and flee the love of God that He puts into people to reach you. Thus all your beliefs have a theological component and need to be brought into the light of the Word of God.

**4. How we believe determines what we receive.** "According to your faith be it unto you". (Matthew 9:29, 15:28). Conversely having an unstable, worldly or double-minded faith means we will receive nothing from God (James 1:5-8, 4:1-8). Faith can bring healing (Matthew 9:22, James 5:15-18) is a prerequisite for receiving wisdom from God (James 1:5-8), for daily provision and reduction of anxiety (Matthew 6:30-34) and makes all things possible (Mark 9:23).

### 6 Reasons cont'd

**5. Creedal faith is insufficient.** Even the demons have correct theology in the sense that they believe that God is one - and tremble (James 2:19). Thus merely creedal belief is insufficient for salvation. Belief must be authentic, loyal to God, of the heart and worked out in real life. (James chapter 2). The great men and women of God all had extraordinary personal belief systems that set them apart from their generation. (Hebrews 11)

**6. Letting unbiblical and dysfunctional beliefs linger can cause them to become stronger, more dysfunctional and more painful.** Working on them now may take work, but leaving them will make it much worse later on. (*Proverbs 4:23 NKJV*) *Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.*

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### The Difference...

Every church has miserable grumpy Christians alongside radiant faith-abounding Christians. Well what's the difference between the two groups?

Both miserable and faith-abounding Christians have heard exactly the same sermons and been to exactly the same bible studies and mixed with exactly the same people in exactly the same neighborhood church and can tick exactly the same boxes theologically.

But only the faith-abounding Christians have taken the time and effort to make sure their inner personal beliefs line up with God's Word.

### Complaining Or Believing?

Grumpy cynical Christians have decided not to really believe. They would much prefer to complain.

Faith-abounding Christians have decided that with God's help they will interpret reality properly and have paid attention to their heart.

They have decided that they will "truly believe" and have put effort into their faith.

Now they reap joy and have much more successful Christian lives.

### From The Marketplace

Even the secular world has discovered the benefits of working on your belief system. The Dale Carnegie / Zig Ziglar "positive-thinking" movement with its affirmations and personal motivation demonstrated the power of working on personal beliefs.

It turned lousy salesmen into better salesmen. It turned unhappy, unenthusiastic people into happy enthusiastic people. It caught a fragment of the Truth (taken incidentally from the founders' familiarity with the Bible) and applied it successfully to daily life.

Why were salesmen so keen to systematically adopt a new belief system? What motivated them to try? Why wasn't it left in the "too hard basket?"

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### Why They Changed

1. They met other people who seemed successful and who said positive thinking was the key to success.
2. These other people demonstrated an alive and enthusiastic personality they wanted to possess.
3. They compared their personality and results with that of the positive thinkers and decided to change.
4. Positive thinking made intuitive sense and the short sayings had a "ring of truth" to them.
5. The system was skillfully presented.
6. The system was simple and easy to apply.
7. Initial success was swift and this reinforced the effort required to change their beliefs.

### Kingdom Application

If salesmen can diligently work on their belief system in order to sell insurance then surely we can work on our belief system in order to grow in the Kingdom and become mature in Christ?

Our target is more than just being happy, positive and motivated.

Our goal is to have a sanctified and transformational set of beliefs that give us the emotions that make us whole Christians and empower service in the Kingdom.

### 7 Steps To Changed Beliefs

1. We enter into a situation where we do not function as well as we would like emotionally.
2. We reflect and ask : "What beliefs are underlying these undesirable emotions"
3. We probe further and ask: Are these beliefs true and biblical and in accord with the facts?
4. We construct new better, more factual and more biblical beliefs about that situation.
5. We reinforce those beliefs to ourselves.
6. We then re-enter the situation and test our new beliefs to see if they help us function better.
7. We look at the results scientifically and objectively and decide whether to keep the new beliefs, modify the new beliefs or to stick with the old beliefs.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

	<p><b>Frozen In Fear</b></p> <p>Incorrect beliefs can give rise to strong negative emotions such as fear, doubt and hesitancy.</p> <p>These emotions can hinder or even paralyze our ability to obey God.</p> <p>Faith is supposed to be expressed in works which are to be done in love.</p> <p>Incorrect inner beliefs can make us freeze up, not do the works, and shrink from expressing love.</p>
	<p><b>Good Works – Good Beliefs</b></p> <p>Works are a guide to us as to whether or not our faith is truly alive, saving, living and productive.</p> <p>Our works indicate to the world which beliefs we hold that are strong enough for us to live by and act on.</p> <p>Works are a reliable guide to what we truly believe in our heart. In a sense our works are our true doctrine.</p> <p>Our works are the outworking of those beliefs, which we are prepared to act on, live by and stand for in daily life.</p> <p>Paul is very definite that we are not saved by works of the law. But he is also very definite that faith working through love (Galatians 5:6) should result in good works that God has prepared beforehand for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10).</p>
	<p><b>Inner Conflict</b></p> <p>Inner conflict can stop us doing the good that we want to do.</p> <p>This inner conflict can be due to conflicting thoughts and intentions in the heart.</p> <p>I want to serve God vs. I must please my parents</p> <p>I want to be pure vs. I want to be sexy</p> <p>I will go to seminary vs. I will never be poor</p> <p>I want to forgive vs. I want justice</p> <p>Even childhood vows can even affect present actions.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

	<p><b>How The Heart Works</b></p> <p>The heart runs by “event time”. “After I grow up, then I will get married” .</p> <p>The heart is binary – on/off, and issues are either resolved or unresolved.</p> <p>The heart often needs a signal to tell it that an issue is now resolved or no longer current. Issues remain “on” until they are switched “off” .</p> <p>There is little distinction between internal events and external events. A realistic fantasy can be “as real” as an event.</p> <p>The heart works by associations and similarities. If something is “like A” it may elicit the same response/fear as “A”.</p>
	<p><b>Some Examples</b></p> <p>An old embarrassing memory is “just as fresh” now as it was twenty years ago. (Unresolved memory)</p> <p>People who “cannot relax” often over-use words like “always” e.g. “I must always study hard” rather than “I must start hard until the exams are over than I can relax”. (Needs to be “switched off”)</p> <p>A person vaguely similar to your old headmaster can still scare you. (Association)</p> <p>A nightmare can have physical symptoms just like a real event. (Fantasy can be as real as reality)</p>
	<p><b>Intents – Inner Vows</b></p> <p>An inner heart vow, couched in absolute terms, such as “I will never let myself be hurt again” or “I will never be poor” can have amazing power.</p> <p>They will remain current until they are “switched off”.</p> <p>They can lead us into conflict with God’s will.</p> <p>Such vows often need to be altered or renounced. (On paper, with prayer)</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### Pablo

Pablo the programmer has a very high IQ.

He failed first year university due to personal problems.

He made an inner vow "I must never fail again"

So he has always played safe and been employed in dull government jobs that are well below his ability level.

He only uses his ability around friends in contexts where he cannot fail.

He cannot be convinced to complete his degree or aim for higher things.

His vow has caused him to live well below his potential.

### Revoking Vows

**Revoke Personal Vows:** Revoke old vows that are now contrary to the will of God. Your promises to yourself are not as important as Christian obedience. Even do something as formal as writing the old vow on a piece of paper and writing "revoked" across it and then burning the piece of paper. Sometimes you may have to revoke a foolish vow you made to God in which case you should tell Him the reason you are revoking it and ask His forgiveness. It is for good reason that oaths and vows are banned in the New Testament (Matthew 5:33-37, James 5:12).

### Never Say Never...

**Change Absolute Language:** If you say to yourself "I have always got to.." then its like fixing a mental switch in the "always on" position. You have told your mind that you have always got to do X and it will receive and record that instruction as a permanent injunction, a law of the Medes and Persians.

**The mind is fairly literal:** It will take always to mean always and never to mean never. Words like "always", "never" "have to", "go to", "perfect" and "100%" jam our mental switches in the "on" position.

**With enough absolutes we feel stuck, anxious and stressed** as we receive multiple simultaneous urgent instructions that we have programmed into ourselves. . It is much better to give yourself an "out" by using language like "generally I should" and reserving the absolute language for situations that are truly absolute.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intent*s

### **Making Yourself Ill**

**Avoid Psychosomatic Language:** The repeated and emphatic-use of the language and metaphors of illness can sometimes make us ill.

For instance men who often tell themselves that their wife is a "pain in the neck" tend to suffer from - you guessed it - a pain in the neck - and people who "can't stand it any more" get knee trouble!

This is termed psychosomatic language, somatic metaphors or "conversion" depending on your school of thought and was first noted by Sigmund Freud.

In extreme cases repeated self-talk such as "If that happened I would die.." can become like an internal vow.

### **Intents – Games & Life Scripts**

Eric Berne's best-seller "Games People Play" and transactional analysis explore the area of the intents of the heart.

People play often quite complex "games" with others to get a "payoff".

Some games are life-long and become "life-scripts".

Playwrights and novelists are keen observers of these games.

### **Awareness!**

**Face Up To And Become Aware Of The Intentions Of Your Heart:** It can be difficult for some people to admit that they are complex and full of conflicting motivations. To admit to sneaky, dishonest, crafty or manipulative intentions is not easy for Christians. Many people are completely blind to this darker side of their character. Pray and ask God to reveal the thoughts and intentions of your heart to you so that you can bring them into the light and deal with them.

## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intentions*

### List Your Intentions

**List The Various Conflicting Intentions:** This is sometimes all that is needed. For instance a teenager may find that he has two intentions: 1. To be on fire for God and a powerful witness for Jesus .2. To still be popular with the cool, tough, non-Christians he knows. He can then work out what to do and resolve the tension. Perhaps he needs to accept that following Christ has a cost at times. Simply listing the various intentions of our heart then judging them biblically may be enough to resolve the dilemma.

### Evil Intentions

**Confess Them to God:** Confess your wrong motives and intentions to God and ask His forgiveness and cleansing.

**Make No Provision For Evil Intentions:** Do not give yourself the means of carrying out your wrong intentions. Deny them what they need if they are to be implemented. If your wrong intention in your heart is murder - don't buy a gun. If the wrong intention in your heart is adultery - don't rent a hotel room. If the wrong intention is stealing from the church offering, make sure someone is with you when you count the money. This principle is what helped Augustine give up his loose living and become a Christian..

(Romans 13:12-14 NASB) The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. {13} Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. {14} But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

### Inner Resistance

By **externalizing our beliefs and intentions we sometimes can get a handle on them** and deal with them. This is often the real benefit of those management exercises such as setting priorities and doing mission statements. On a personal level if you start setting goals and priorities and coming up with a personal mission statement you will often run into **awkward uncomfortable feelings of resistance**. When you do get them try and identify them, and **write the feelings of resistance beside the goal or priority**. Bring the conflict to the surface and into the open.



## Biblical EQ Session 5 – *Thoughts And Intentions*

### Use Event Time When Planning

**Prioritize and Schedule Good Intentions Using Event Time:** Sometimes the inner paralysis comes from a whole host of good intentions all wanting ***urgent attention at once***. All having their "ON" lights flashing so to speak. . The resulting overload, confusion and stress can be stop us getting much done at all. Use the event time of the subconscious to prioritize them. First I will do A, then, after that's done I'll pay attention to B, then when that's completed to C and D. Jesus gives nearly all His instructions in event time "after you have" "when they" "wait in Jerusalem until" etc. This is the most peaceful and relaxing way to do things. So when you are clogged up mentally with a whole lot of competing good intentions in your heart write them all down on a sheet of paper and then group them first these, then after those then these here etc. Though the tasks are not done yet the issue of their urgency is resolved in terms your sub-conscious mind can understand and you will feel more at peace.

### Positive, Specific, & Concrete

**Frame Thoughts and Intentions Concretely And Positively:** When you rework your thoughts and intentions it helps if they develop into a ***concrete specific picture of a positive desirable future***.

For instance a struggling student should frame the goal "I will pass in Mathematics" rather than "I will not fail in Mathematics".

When we see the biblical healing commands they are ***faith-filled, positive and have the desired end state in view***. Jesus did not say to the lepers "Leprosy be rebuked" instead He said "Be clean" and Peter and John did not say to the lame man "Lameness be gone" instead it was "Rise up and walk".

We need to be solution-focused not problem focused. ***The positive end result is what is to be put before the eyes of our heart***.

These positive end results in Scripture are also expressed in concrete terms. This seems to work better. "They will beat their swords into ploughshares" has more power in our being than "weapons will be recycled into agricultural implements".

I do not know precisely why but when we state our goals and beliefs in concrete, positive, picture terms we seem to lay hold of them much more effectively.

### Plausibility Structures

**Constantly Review Your "Plausibility Structures":** We have limits to what we believe is possible and impossible, probable and improbable, plausible and implausible. The anthropologist Peter Berger calls these our "plausibility structures" and says they vary greatly from culture to culture.

Christians need to reworking their idea of limits ***so that they line up with Scriptures view of what is possible and impossible, plausible and implausible***. Jesus says nine times in the gospels "nothing is impossible with God" or "all things are possible with God". His life and miracles reflect His commitment to this belief.

The limits we place on our life are often really limits we have placed on God through having plausibility structures inherited from the world rather than from the Scriptures

## **Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization***

	<p><b>Our Beliefs Are Formed In Community</b></p> <p>A large percentage of our beliefs are passed on to us from the groups we belong to – such as families, friendship groups, nations, cultures, schools, colleges, the military , political parties, and our local church.</p> <p>Communities have formed both our formal and informal beliefs, our doctrines, our prejudices our hopes and our fears.</p> <p>If beliefs are critical to our emotional health and beliefs are formed in community then fairly logically having the right kind of community will be a big help in emotional transformation</p>
	<p><b>Emotions In Community</b></p> <p>Destructive communities such as dysfunctional families, tyrannical businesses and religious cults are highly damaging emotionally.</p> <p>Constructive communities such as loving families, successful businesses and healthy churches are very positive emotionally.</p> <p>Communities can form right beliefs, build faith and help make us strong and healthy Christians.</p>
	<p><b>Learning Well</b></p> <p>We learn, change and grow best in an adventurous, faith-filled Christian community.</p> <p>We can learn on our own but we generally end up re-inventing the wheel.</p> <p>We can learn in a classroom but it often lacks the ability to touch the deepest parts of us.</p> <p>The best way to learn is personal discipleship in a faith-filled community.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization*

### The Twelve

How did the disciples get to increase in faith? How did they learn?

How did they go from astonishing incomprehension at the start of His ministry to men of God and founders of the faith at Pentecost?

These were the most successful spiritual learners in history so lets look at how they learned and maybe we can learn the same way.

### How They Learned...

1. The disciples made themselves teachable apprentices of Jesus. They decided to be learners not know-it-alls.

2. They were prepared to give up significant comfort in order to learn. (Matthew 19:27) .

3. They broke with their usual patterns of living that reinforced their current belief systems. They left their fishing nets or tax offices and followed Him.

4. They planted Jesus' teaching in their hearts. They probably learned the same lessons over and over again because years later they could reproduce them word for word to their hearers.

5. They had a strong desire to inherit the Kingdom of God. In fact it dominated their personal ambitions. (Matthew 18:1-5)

### How They Learned cont'd

6. They expressed a strong desire for specific personal growth e.g. "Lord, teach us to pray".

7. They accepted Jesus' authority over them and simply went where He went, ate what He ate and did whatever He commanded. Even when Jesus rebuked them they did not sulk.

8. They believed that what Jesus said was true, absolutely true and sought to align their beliefs with His. (John 6)

## Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization*

### How They Learned cont'd

9. They watched what Jesus was doing. They saw miracles and had their view of reality enlarged.

10. They asked lots of questions and sought to understand.

11. They discussed among themselves what Jesus said and did. (Matthew 16:7, Mark 10:26)

### How They Learned cont'd

12. They accepted Jesus' high view of the authority of the Scriptures. (Matthew 5:17)

13. They took risks in order to learn such as Peter trying to walk on water or their various attempts at healing.

14. They lived with high levels of ambiguity, confusion and mystery. They seemed to accept mind-stretching confusion as the price of learning anything worthwhile. (Mark 9:32 , John 10:6 etc.)

### How They Learned cont'd

15. They very gradually moved away from being competitive to co-operative. They stopped trying to outdo each other and instead, by the time of the resurrection appearances were trying to encourage and edify each other. They became an encouraging, learning community.

16. They tried to do what Jesus was doing. They started with baptizing people in large numbers (John 4:1,2) and continued to exercise their faith in healing and deliverance ministries and did so with some success (Luke 10:1-24).

17. They increasingly accepted responsibility for ministry. At the beginning they were fairly passive followers by the end they seem to have roles assigned to them. Eventually Jesus was able to deliver the Great Commission to them without incongruity. (Matthew 28:18-20).

## Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization*

### **The Learning Organization**

Jesus and the disciples formed a learning organization, a community filled with disciplined learners in which beliefs were transformed and spiritual greatness produced.

It is almost impossible to be deeply transformed outside of community or as part of a community that is antithetical to one's new beliefs and growth.

Small groups of friends seeking God together such as the Holy Club at Oxford under John Wesley and the Haystack Prayer Meeting have produced mighty revivals.

### **Eight Creative Tensions**

1. Emotional safety - Spiritual adventure
2. Clear basic doctrines - Room to experiment and discover new things about God
3. Clear and definite leadership - Being without compulsion, exercising Christian freedom.
4. Sense of history, common purpose and tradition - Open to new methods & new territory, adaptable
5. Know they are part of the solution – Humbly dependent on God.
6. Homogeneous and united leadership - Great diversity in membership
7. God has brought this community into being - The drive to add more to the community
8. Not focused on money - True abundance, care of the poor.

### **Emotional Safety – Spiritual Adventure**

Its impossible to grow very far in God or go on much of an adventure if the atmosphere is emotionally unsafe and you do not know when you will next be criticized or hurt.

Christian communities must be safe for learning to occur.

On the other hand they also need to stretch people because it is when we are stretched that we learn best.

So we also need spiritual adventure..

Some churches over-emphasize emotional safety to the point of coziness and become nurseries.

Others over-emphasize spiritual adventure and become demanding, strained and critical.

Thus emotional safety and spiritual adventure need to both be present in every learning community.

## **Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization***

### **Clear Doctrines – Room to Think**

Clear basic doctrines are needed for spiritual stability. A learning community needs its “times tables” and alphabet so to speak.

Well-established doctrines such as the Trinity and salvation by faith are not up for grabs.

Good churches teach solid foundational truths at great depths.

Good Christian communities also build on the foundation. They try to find out new things for this generation and discover truth about missions, counseling etc.

Good churches explore God’s truth so that as Martin Luther said “More truth may yet break forth from God’s Word”.

### **Good Leaders – Without Compulsion**

Good communities have good leaders. Jesus led the disciples, the apostles led the early church and Paul led his band of missionaries.

These are definite clear leaders who tend to call the shots and who are treated with respect.

The leaders impart definite vision and set the clear bounds in which the learning community joyfully operates.

Such leaders lead in freedom and refuse to compel people to follow them. Jesus never forced anyone to follow Him. In fact He seemed to drive many away. (See John 6).

Leaders of learning communities are not obsessive, compulsive people who fret over every detail and create an air of dread and compulsion in their wake.

They do lead and they lead in a clear and definite manner, however it is without any heaviness, without “lording it over” the flock, and without compulsion.

### **Sense of History – Open To New Methods**

Learning communities are well-defined. Somehow tradition helps learning. Some of the most creative and successful missionary societies have long histories and a definite sense of tradition that gives them wisdom.

We need a solid sense of who we are and what we are about, common purpose, continuity, clarity of vision, and wisdom passed down through the informal teaching and discipling structures of the community.

On the other hand such long-lived organizations can become smug and bureaucratic.

No mission statement or tradition can be so authoritative that it can overturn God’s will.

When God speaks about a change in our culture then we are to listen and implement it.

The learning organization uses its strong foundations to confidently plunge into new things for God.

Learning communities are stable and continuous allowing people to learn deep lessons in relative security and to prudently and wisely explore new options for ministry and Christian living.

## Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization*

### **Aware They Are Part Of The Solution – Humbly Dependent On God**

Learning communities know they are part of the solution not part of the problem.

They know they have something to offer their members and even to offer the world. They are positive and they are going places.

On the other hand they do not think they ARE the solution. They humbly point beyond themselves and say “Jesus is the answer!”.

They combine humble dependence on God with a deep sense of mission and calling and the belief that they can do something for the world – with God’s help  
Homogeneous Leadership – Diverse Membership

The leaders need to be united as a team.

Too great a diversity of views in a leadership team can lead to conflict and stagnation.

Mentoring leaders ensures they are brought into the culture of the leadership team.

On the other hand membership should be very accepting and inclusive.

Learning organizations should be able to tolerate a wide range of views and cultures in the membership.

### **Founded By God - Open To Others**

The early church saw itself as a community formed by divine mandate for divine purposes. This sense of being formed by God and used by God gives a powerful dynamic to the learning organization.

However the learning organization should not be unduly puffed up by this and thus become exclusive or spiritually proud or separate themselves from other believers who do not seem to share their sense of vision and mission.

They should not draw boundaries around themselves too tightly. The early church in Jerusalem was a very open, humble and welcoming place.

Learning organizations should always be open to new members and believe that there are yet more to be added to the flock, “others not of this fold”.

They should also maintain open linkages of real integrity with the rest of the body of Christ. To draw the boundaries too tightly is to become a club or even a cult.

A learning community sees itself as formed by God and involved in His purposes yet is humble and gracious and open to new people and to fellowship with the rest of the body of Christ.

## Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization*

### **Not focused on money – True abundance**

A learning community has a healthy attitude to its financial needs.

On one hand it knows what it means to be dependent on God, excited about His provision and free from the love of money.

It is thus free to experience His transforming challenges to material comfort.

On the other hand the learning organization truly cares about its members and their financial needs.

The early church took great care of its poor and in the post-Pentecost Jerusalem church “there was none among them who lacked” (Acts 4:34). Thus it is God’s clear desire that His Kingdom should not contain any abject poverty.

The New Testament regards God as the Master and money as the servant to be used for Kingdom purposes.

Learning organizations need to be free from the love of money, living lightly, simply and adventurously but able to take care of people and their financial needs and use finances to accomplish God’s will on earth.

Neither crass materialism nor financial disorder is God’s will for a learning organization.

### **Starting Up...**

Create a united leadership group that shares the same passion and direction. Pray for 6-8 people (say 3-4 couples) to start things rolling.

Don’t decide on any forms or structures at the start. Just meet in a home and spend some time studying the Gospels and Acts together and looking at early Christian community. Allow the Scriptures to speak to you and the Holy Spirit to lead you into the forms the groups should take.

Act on what God reveals to you.

Invite others to join you after a while.

### **Changing Where You Are**

Discuss the eight tensions in a leadership team meeting.

Pray for wisdom

Start changing a few areas that most need change.

Stop that which is not working or is not biblical

Do more of that which does work - and is biblical

Create adventure and a learning atmosphere.

Allow risk-taking and experiments

Introduce personal discipleship and mentoring.



## **Biblical EQ Session 6 - *The Learning Organization***

### **From Theatre To Community**

No-one is ever matured in a theatre.

Successful Christian community will move us from being mere spectators to loving participants in the grace of God.

Community involves risk and takes time.

Community means living out the “one another” commands in the New Testament

Community means we must “turn our chairs” and face one another and engage.

### **Community Makes Us Real**

In a learning community we live out our Christian beliefs and they become real – to us and to others.

We gain healthy Christian beliefs which lead to a healthy emotional state.

People are matured in families, groups of friends, marriages and good groups.

They are matured in communities that speak the truth to one another in love.

People are not matured in a theatre, even by the best performers.

When we turn churches into theatres we rob Christians of the chance to mature.

So structures and beliefs and emotions and community and maturity are all part of one seamless whole.

## Biblical EQ Session 7 – Emotions And Our Physiology

	<p><b>Emotions Affect Us Physically</b></p> <p>(Psalms 31:9-10 NKJV) Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; <b>My eye wastes away with grief, Yes, my soul and my body!</b> {10} For my life is spent with grief, And my years with sighing; <b>My strength fails because of my iniquity, And my bones waste away.</b></p> <p>We are incarnate, in the body, and our soul, spirit and body interact and communicate.</p>
	<p><b>Jesus' Body &amp; His Emotions</b></p> <p>Under duress Jesus wept, groaned deeply, and even sweated drops of blood. (Luke 22:44) So we see Jesus' emotions affected His body.</p> <p>His body also affected His emotions? Jesus felt His physical life just like we all do and even cried from the cross "I thirst".</p> <p>However the physical life did not dictate His behavior or responses; even after fasting forty days in the wilderness Jesus was able to resist the temptation to turn the stones into bread.</p> <p>Jesus was tempted in all points as we are including by emotions generated from within the human body and by the intense cravings of the flesh. Yet He was able to resist His physical desires when it would have been sinful to give in.</p> <p>At the correct times He quite legitimately satisfied His physical needs with a drink of water from the well or a breakfast of fish on the beach.</p>
	<p><b>The Christian's Body</b></p> <p>Christian belief has it that the spirit and soul reside in a good body, which has unfortunately been tainted by the Fall.</p> <p>The body now has evil resident within it. (Romans 7)</p> <p>The body needs to be redeemed.</p> <p>Just as the spirit and soul are redeemed so our body will be redeemed at the resurrection of the dead.</p> <p>The body you have now will be transformed, rise from the dead, become immortal and be glorious. ( 1 Corinthians 15)</p> <p>The body is for God and God is for the body. (1 Corinthians 6:13)</p>

## **Biblical EQ Session 7 – Emotions And Our Physiology**

	<p><b>When The Body Affects Us....</b></p> <p>This interface between the soul and the body is complex and poorly understood yet it is one of the main areas of problems in the Christian life.</p> <p>What about people who have bouts of depression that are induced by the medication that keeps them alive?</p> <p>Or the terror of a child with high fever and delirium?</p> <p>Or the weariness of chronic arthritis or the sudden emotional swings that come to people with spinal damage ?</p> <p>These emotions arise unbidden and unwanted from neurological damage and from chemical imbalances in the body. Yet they affect us deeply and are a large part of our spiritual struggle.</p> <p>Where emotions have a physiological basis changing the underlying physical condition will often bring emotional relief.</p>
	<p><b>Sin Or Substance?</b></p> <p>Anxiety – can arise from too much caffeine</p> <p>Rage – from alcohol, particularly rum &amp; spirits</p> <p>Violence &amp; Cruelty – met amphetamine addiction</p> <p>Depression – can be a side-effect of barbiturates</p> <p>Hallucinations – can be caused by eating the wrong mushrooms.</p> <p>Passivity – from over-use of marijuana</p> <p>Lust – is a side-effect of certain anti-depressants</p> <p>Mood swings – hormones, Mysoline etc.</p>
	<p><b>Emotions &amp; The Brain</b></p> <p>Quick “fight or flight” reactions tend to be based in the amygdala.</p> <p>Self-control &amp; social skill seems mainly located in the higher regions of the brain such as the pre-frontal cortex.</p> <p>New non-intrusive imaging techniques are helping us locate areas of the brain associated with various emotions.</p> <p>Brain damage can affect emotional control.</p>

## **Biblical EQ Session 7 – *Emotions And Our Physiology***

	<p><b>Stress &amp; The Brain</b></p> <p>The brain is like a computer.</p> <p>Like a computer it can clog up and “hang” when its ability to process instructions becomes overloaded.</p> <p>Overload comes when what we are trying to do is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Too much</li><li>Too complex</li><li>Or too urgent</li></ul> <p>The decision about what we shall process and attend to is mainly made by the reticular formation.</p>
	<p><b>Selective Attention</b></p> <p>Say you are driving along listening to music.</p> <p>Then suddenly a child on a bicycle swerves in front of you.</p> <p>Your mind moves attention from the music to the impending accident.</p> <p>This switch in attention and processing is made very swiftly by the reticular formation.</p> <p>It decides that the bicycle is more urgent and more important.</p>
	<p><b>Overload</b></p> <p>If three bicycles , a tractor and a deep ditch suddenly appear you cannot cope with them all at once.</p> <p>Your mind is overloaded and may either freeze up, or panic and make a rash choice.</p> <p>We can only cope with “so much” before we run out of processing space and feel “clogged up” and anxious.</p> <p>Taking on too much or taking on things that are too complex places us under stress.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 7 – *Emotions And Our Physiology*

### Stress Breakdown – Stage 1

Firstly our system fires warning bells about the overload we are experiencing and we feel stressed and anxious and uptight and tense.

These uncomfortable feelings are trying to tell us that we are doing too much and it would be a good idea if we slowed down.

They are saying “You are driving yourself too fast, back off.”

Many people ignore these warning signals, they like “driving fast”, living on adrenalin and they have an image of wanting to do more than others. So they suppress the anxiety by an act of will and keep going.

### Stress Breakdown – Stage 2

In stage two the person loses control of emotions and finds themselves getting angry or upset very easily. They can cry one minute and laugh the next. These sudden emotional changes are termed “emotional lability”.

The person in stage two stress breakdown also lose their ability to adjust to change and to motivate themselves to get started though once they have started they can work as hard as anyone else.

The system is beginning to crumble at this point and the person becomes subject to psychosomatic disorders as the body tries to slow the person down. These include migraines, headaches, asthma, dermatitis and hay fever.

The immune system suffers and resistance bacteria and viruses already present in the person’s body may be able to cause disease. These include common infections such as colds and ‘flu, herpes virus infections, mouth ulcers, lobar pneumonia, boils and pimples, tonsillitis and urinary tract infections.

### Stress Breakdown – Stage 3

1. Avoidance of sensory stimulation
2. Development of intolerance, and
3. Apparent change in personality.

The brain’s circuit breakers have cut in. Everything is being rapidly simplified to reduce the number of issues the person has to deal with.

In order to **avoid sensory stimulation** the person may retreat to the countryside, separate from their partner, stop having sex, avoid loud music and stop going to shopping centres. Sounds will seem too loud, ice too cold, lights too bright. They will switch off the radio when others turn it on. They will go outside and walk around and just “space out”.

## Biblical EQ Session 7 – *Emotions And Our Physiology*

	<p><b>Intolerance</b></p> <p>Development of intolerance is a mechanism for making life easy to classify, so the reticular formation can deal with the backlog. If the shades of grey and complex questions can be eliminated life becomes simple and things can be processed again.</p> <p>If everything can be reduced to the binary states the brain is most comfortable processing, then it can whiz through the decisions. As the decisions are made the clogged up feeling goes and some of the stress can be removed.</p> <p>In third stage stress breakdown people become totally intolerant of small things “If you leave your shaving hairs in the sink I will leave you”. Just a small thing, that was previously tolerated or laughed at, becomes a major drama. Things previously tolerated become unable to be tolerated in third stage stress breakdown.</p>
	<p><b>Change In Personality</b></p> <p>Lastly the person in third stage stress breakdown may have an apparent change in personality and change their values. They may be unable to resist cult recruiters, they are easily brainwashed, they have sudden changes in beliefs and ideas and attitudes that required some will or effort to maintain are likely to be abandoned.</p> <p>Some talk of a strange feeling of peace and purity that comes with this process as everything gets radically simplified.</p> <p>There is also a loss of the “law of strength”. Normally a slight tap on the knee elicits a slight movement and a large tap on the knee a large movement. The law that a small stimulus generally elicits a small response and a large stimulus a large response is known as “the law of strength” and is a sign of a normal functioning of the nervous system.</p>
	<p><b>Getting Rid Of Stress</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Am I trying to do too much?</li><li>2. Is what I am doing too complicated?</li><li>3. Is what I am doing too urgent? Am I trying to do too many things in too short a space of time?</li><li>4. I what I am doing “too important”. Am I telling myself that virtually everything is important?</li></ol>

## **Biblical EQ Session 7 – Emotions And Our Physiology**

	<p><b>Inner Language &amp; Self-Talk</b></p> <p>Words such as “should”, “must” ought”, “have to”, got to” create the feeling that the task is compulsory, urgent or important.</p> <p>If you have “got to” do everything and “have to” do it “right now” – you soon feel overloaded.</p> <p>You are telling your brain that EVERYTHING is important so it cannot prioritize inputs properly.</p> <p>Eliminate “should”, “must” and “have to” or use them very sparingly.</p> <p>Speak to yourself in calm, controlled, positive , gentle terms.</p> <p>List tasks in event order, not time order.</p> <p>Time deadlines create inner pressure, event order is more natural and relaxing.</p> <p>“I will do X after lunch” is more relaxing than “I must do X before 2 o’clock”</p>
	<p><b>Driving Forces – Control &amp; Ambition</b></p> <p>Some people become stressed out and ill pursuing unrealistic inner drives and ambitions.</p> <p>Others strive to control everyone &amp; everything. This means they must attend to many things simultaneously - which is very stressful.</p> <p>Some have a strong urge to please others that makes them take on too much work.</p> <p>Trying to reach an imaginary “top level” quickly can create a stressful urgency in every action.</p> <p>Other people imagine they are responsible for a large number of people or even “the whole world’.</p>
	<p><b>A Quiet Life...</b></p> <p>(1 Thessalonians 4:11 NKJV) that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,</p> <p>(1 Timothy 2:2 NKJV) (pray ) for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.</p> <p>(1 Peter 3:4 NKJV) rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.</p>

## **Biblical EQ Session 7 – *Emotions And Our Physiology***

	<p><b>Production Or Fruit?</b></p> <p>Most people don't care that much about your numerical output .</p> <p>They do care about how you act and react.</p> <p>They do care about how you treat them.</p> <p>Is the fruit falling off the tree? Are patience, kindness, and gentleness, being ditched because you are in a hurry?</p> <p>If slowing down by 20% makes you 100% better in your relationships - then it is obviously worth it.</p>
	<p><b>Calming Down</b></p> <p>Use "To-Do" lists.</p> <p>Schedule tasks - then live one day at a time.</p> <p>Have clear and conscious priorities.</p> <p>Cease making everything important.</p> <p>Delay some seemingly "urgent" tasks</p> <p>Delegate simple jobs that take up brain-space.</p> <p>Ditch trivial and unnecessary tasks and decisions.</p> <p>Cut down on sensory overload.</p> <p>Simplify life and keep it simple.</p> <p>Develop a clear sense of order. Avoid clutter.</p> <p>Do not "crash diet" or expose your body to extreme physiological stress.</p>
	<p><b>Health &amp; Healing....</b></p> <p>Pray for physical healing</p> <p>Pray for emotional healing</p> <p>Pray for deep spiritual healing</p> <p>Get good medical advice</p> <p>Have a check-up</p> <p>Check your medications and their side-effects</p> <p>Have a diet that is healing and balanced rather than full of stimulants, salt, &amp; sugar.</p> <p>Avoid pollution, allergens and unhealthy environments</p>



## **Biblical EQ Session 7 – Emotions And Our Physiology**

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit can give life to our mortal bodies (Romans 8:11)

The Holy Spirit can give us victory over physical impulses, lusts and addictions. (Galatians 5:16-18)

The Holy Spirit can give us wisdom in how to live peacefully and bear the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22,23)

The Holy Spirit and the Scriptures give us a balanced and eternal perspective on life so we are not as stressed out.

If we set our minds on the Spirit we will know life and peace. (Romans 8:4-6)

### **The Peace That Surpasses...**

(Romans 8:5-6 NKJV) {5} For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

(Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; {7} and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### The Role Of The Mind

(Romans 8:4-6 NKJV) that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. {5} For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

The decisive factor in Biblical EQ is the Mind of the believer. If it is set on the flesh and we are carnally minded the result is death. If it is set on the Spirit and we are spiritually minded the result is life and peace. Chapter after chapter of Biblical EQ has demonstrated the truth of those two statements in Romans.

### Fight, Flight Or Mastery

When we are faced with a challenging situation we have three possible emotional responses – fight, flight or mastery.

“Fight OR Flight” is often an adrenaline based, un-thought-out response that gets us into trouble.

Personal mastery is the Jesus response and the most effective way to live.

### Fight OR Flight

An adrenalin-based response that may be appropriate when dealing with a tiger.

Not very useful in the daily lives most of us lead.

Blood rushes to the muscles and the body gears up for action. Blood is thus diverted away from the brain.

This makes us unable to think clearly or respond wisely.

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

	<p><b>Cain</b></p> <p>(Genesis 4:3-8 NASB) So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. {4} And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; {5} but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard.</p> <p>So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. {6} Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? {7} "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must <b>master it</b>."</p> <p>{8} And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.</p>
	<p><b>Road Rage &amp; Agoraphobia</b></p> <p>Road Rage results when the "fight" response is triggered by a minor stimulus.</p> <p>Agoraphobia results when the "flight" response becomes over-activated and leads to panic attacks.</p> <p>Inappropriate aggression and inappropriate fears and "flight" responses are almost in epidemic proportions in many countries.</p> <p>Emotional self-control and mastery is needed.</p>
	<p><b>Jesus &amp; Mastery</b></p> <p>Jesus demonstrated mastery of any and every situation He was presented with. At no point in His life did Jesus give in to the adrenalin-filled panic of a fight or flight response.</p> <p>He neither fought the soldiers who arrested him or fled them. Throughout His entire trial demonstrated an amazing degree of personal mastery.</p> <p>His actions were masterful, strong, wise and spiritual.</p> <p>His Spirit-filled mind had total mastery over His flesh and His instincts.</p> <p>This gave Him power, poise and a degree of personal authority that seems to have been the main aspect of His personality that people admired and is frequently commented on in the gospels. (Matthew 7:29, 8:9, 21:23-27, 28:18-20, Mark 1:27, Luke 4:32, Luke 9:1, 10:19, John 5:27, 7:17, 12:49, 14:10, 16:13, 17:2)</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### Jesus vs. Satan

Jesus was not thrown even by encountering the Devil in person.

During the temptation in the wilderness Jesus met the Devil in a face-to-face spiritual encounter of incredible intensity.

Jesus neither fled nor fought. Jesus mastered the situation, resisted the temptations and used His authority to deal with the problem.

He mastered the temptation to avoid the encounter and thus preserve himself from possible spiritual harm. He faced the dangers of the Devil at full force. He stood His ground against pure evil.

Also Jesus did not launch into an aggressive tirade against Satan. There was no raw and red-necked stream of spiritual vitriol directed against the Devil.

Instead Jesus defeated Satan through the calm use of God's authority based on God's Word. Jesus mastered the situation.

### Threatening Situations

The biblical example of Jesus in the wilderness shows us how to react - even if we think a situation is utterly evil and threatens our health, identity and success (as the wilderness temptations did for Jesus).

We do not need to get upset and become reactive.

Nor do we need to pack our bags and run.

We just need to calmly and authoritatively expose that situation to the truth of Scripture and the authority of God.

We want to end up moving through life as Jesus moved through Israel, and cope with our pressures and threats as He did.

### The Perfect Golf Shot

Don't "bash" the ball.

Don't "drop out" or run away from the situation.

Think, select the right club, rehearse the trajectory and shot in your mind, then calmly hit the ball just where you want it.

Mental mastery is like golf. Practicing situations over and over until we do not fear them but can move through them with poise and power.

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### **Mastery Is Possible**

Mastery is not some elusive state like “sinless perfection”.

Mastery is a daily, practical emotional skill that you can practice and use in thousands of ways.

You can see it in action every day.

You can improve visibly in a few weeks of practice.

You already have the skill within you.

### **The Telephone**

Imagine you are having an argument, a real shouting match, you are furious and your face is red and you are thumping the table.

Then the telephone rings and you pick it up.

As you do so you stop shouting, you become polite, you say “Good morning, how can I help you” etc.

You have switched from “fight/flight” to self-mastery in a few seconds!

You did this because you knew it was necessary.

### **The Red Button**

In trains in Australia there is a big red Emergency button behind Plexiglas.

If you break the glass and press the button the train will come to a stop.

You also have a “red button” that can stop the “train” of your fight / flight response.

When you picked up the telephone and became nice you chose to press “the red button” and stop your adrenaline filled reaction.

You need to become aware of your “red button” and how to use it to remain calm and masterful in all situations.

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### Excuses...

But they deserve my anger.....

But I cannot help running away....

How can I help it if I am surrounded by turkeys...

It suddenly comes upon me and I cannot do anything about it....

It feels so much better to “just let them have it”.

How else will stupid people learn...

Its my nerves, I am fearful by nature...

Retreat is so much safer...

All of the above are LIES that you have believed.

### Counting The Cost...

How much have you **lost** by blowing up, running away, resigning, writing angry letters, avoiding situations you should face, being fearful etc?

If instead you had mastered these situations where would you be today?

Has giving into your adrenalin been worth it?

### The Mind Gives Victory

You need to switch ON the Spirit-filled mind.

You need to switch OFF the adrenalin-filled responses of the flesh.

If you focus your mind/attention on your rage, your anger, your fears or your feelings of being slighted you will keep activating the fight-flight response.

If you reach for the Red Button and ask God the Holy Spirit to take control of your mind and focus your attention on things above you will find peace , calm and self-mastery

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### Standing In Line

You are standing in a long line to pay a bill at a bank. You have been there for half an hour, the line is still long and the tellers do not seem very fast or very bright. You are beginning to get really frustrated.

You can focus on your irritation and the tellers' inefficiency and get progressively more upset.

Or you can ask the Holy Spirit to fill you and take charge of the situation. This will often flood you with feelings of calm.

Take your attention off the irritation.

Focus your attention on God.

### Defining "The Mind"

By the Mind Paul does not mean various individual thoughts or mind as intellectual activity or a set of intellectual abstractions or the "Sub-conscious" or the dream world.

Rather mind is the mental framework of the person. For those of you who enjoy Greek the **phren word family** phroneo, phronema and phronesis , phronimos is in view here. We use the word Mind this way in the phrases "single-minded" or "open-minded".

***The mind is controllable and can be focused by the believer. The mind is the only part of our consciousness that we can control, and therefore it is of vital importance.***

### Defining The Mind cont'd...

Paul asks us to **set our mind** on various things such as the Spirit, things above, and the pursuit of maturity.

Thus the mind is that part of our total consciousness and awareness that we have some control over.

**The mind is what thinks when you do some real thinking.**

The mind is where you receive and mull over wisdom and where you make real choices about your actions.

It is that part of your consciousness that you can control and exert and which bears a close relationship to the "real you".

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### **“Phren” In The New Testament**

The mind in the sense of the **phren** word family generally means the wisdom and understanding especially of the righteous (Luke 1:17, Ephesians 1:8).

This mind be set on various things.

When Jesus rebuked Peter he said he was “not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” (Matthew 16:23, Mark 8:33), the legalistic Romans nit-picking about food and drink were literally “rules-minded” in the Greek (Romans 14:6).

The mind can be set on the flesh or the Spirit (Romans 8:5,6) and things above (Colossians 3:2) or on earthly things (Philippians 2:19), which caused Paul to weep.

Due to the renewing and infilling of the Holy Spirit we can even have “the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:14-16) and when we are humble servants we have a mind like Christ’s (Philippians 2:5). On the other hand we can have a childish mind (1 Corinthians 13:11, 14:20)

Unity of mind is important and Christians are to be one-minded and like-minded. (Romans 12:16, 15:5, 2 Corinthians 13:11)

This word family can also mean the careful, prudent mind, that which thinks of others, the mindful and thoughtful person (Philippians 1:7, 4:10).

### **Its Your Choice...**

Thus it is clear from the New Testament that the sort of mind we end up with is entirely our choice.

We can focus or mind on God’s interests or man’s interests, the Spirit or the flesh, the things above or earthly things.

We can choose to be humble, like-minded, unified and thoughtful of others or we can choose to be puffed up, childish, contentious, worldly and carnal.

### **Only The Mind...**

The mind is the only part of our consciousness that we can focus and direct therefore it is the only part of us that can give us mastery.

A million dollars will not give you personal mastery. People who win the lottery often end up poor because of their lack of personal mastery. The money has not made them masterful.

A strong body will not give you mastery except of certain physical skills. Athletes can be enslaved to alcohol or drugs.

Education will not give you personal mastery, there are many well educated people who are small-minded and weak-willed.

Willpower won’t give you mastery as the will can simply become stubborn and inflexible, unable to adapt to changing situations and thus lead to inevitable defeat.

Even religion won’t give you mastery. Many people are enslaved by cults, caught up in bondage to religious guilt or overtaken by idolatry and superstition.

Only the adaptable, flexible, trained, focused and disciplined mind can bring mastery.



## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### A Quick Clarification

I am not advocating mentalist philosophies, mind science, Christian Science, or think and grow rich kinds of mental mastery. They are half-truths.

The mind is not a terribly significant force in itself. The mind does not have the ability to create heaven or hell as Blake thought. God creates Heaven and Hell. Reality is His creation, not ours.

The mind does not create the world but it does enable us to move through it with poise and power.

The mind is not God. The mind works best when it is set on God.

In biblical terms personal and emotional mastery is a product of the mind set on God and imbued with His Word and authority.

The unaided mind operating alone by itself cannot produce mastery of the kind we see in the life of Jesus Christ.

For that kind of mastery we need more than positive thinking. We need a direct connection to God and the mind must be resolutely set on God, on the Spirit, on things above, on the Kingdom, and the righteousness thereof.

### Three Truths

So we see that we are faced with three universal truths:

Firstly that personal mastery is the only wise option.

Secondly that such mastery is solely a product of the mind.

Thirdly that the mind becomes masterful as it is disciplined and focused on something outside itself.

This book maintains that the highest degree of mastery can only be attained when the ‘something outside itself’ is God.

You can achieve a sense of mastery by focusing your mind on fencing or gymnastics or horse-riding but you won’t end up like Jesus just by focusing on those things.

The mind must be directed onto Christ. That is its proper place.

### Directing The Mind Onto Christ

This directing of the mind is a forceful and decisive activity.

It is not speculating about Christ or studying or daydreaming about Christ.

It is similar to standing outside yourself and directing yourself onto Christ.

Like standing at the top of a high-dive tower and looking down and plunging in with total commitment.

It’s choosing where your life energies will be focused and your mental processes directed.

The whole of the mind is fixed on Christ and directs the total life energies of the believer in that direction.

As this focus is attained everything else is entrained, the emotions, the will and the responses.

## Biblical EQ Session 8 – *The Masterful Mind*

### Mastery Involves Rules

A great writer still has to follow the rules of grammar.

A great badminton player still has to follow the laws of the sport.

Christians have to follow the commandments of Christ.

Mastering the Christian life involves following the rules – but is much more than just merely following the rules.

A great chess player follows the rules - but the game is much more than mere rule-keeping.

Once the rules become internalized - then real living begins!

### Pre-Requisites

The absolute prerequisites of spiritual progress are that you are:

born-again with a new nature from God

that you have the filling of the Holy Spirit and

that you are single-mindedly devoted to God in obedience to His word.

Unless you are born-again you do not have a new nature. Without the new nature it's an impossible job.

If you are not Spirit-filled and led by the Spirit in your daily life then you will not have power over the flesh (see Galatians 5:16-18) and you will struggle continually and lose continually.

If you are not single-minded you will be double-minded and double-minded people receive nothing from the Lord (James 1:5-8).

### Practical Techniques - 1

**Pay attention to your physical state.** If you realize that your fists are clenched and your neck is rigid and you are physically tensed up and alerted for danger then try to undo those physical states. Unclench your fists, rub your neck, relax your posture. The fight or flight response is partly a physical response and as we undo its physical correlates it will lose much of its power. Perhaps try and relax or use deep breathing if you are tense, guarded or explosive.

**Be aware of the magnitude of your emotional responses** and the quick “zoom” to anger or anxiety that the fight or flight response produces. Learn to recognize when you are zooming to disaster and practice keeping a lid on it.

**Take time to think.** Use your God-given right to choose your response. Do not just respond on auto-pilot. Once you stop and think you are far more likely to choose a good and much more optimal solution.

**Disengage.** If you have started to move into attack mode pull back the troops! Go for a walk, cool down. Have a pray about it.

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### Practical Techniques - 2

If you are going into a situation that you know aggravates you (such as dealing with an annoying person) try to **make a conscious decision about how you are going to react in that situation**. Then **rehearse your balanced and biblical reaction** over and over in your mind. Perhaps seven times or seventy times seven? (see Matthew 18) Train yourself mentally to react rightly just like professional golfers 'see the ball going in the hole' even before they make the shot. Use mental rehearsal to disarm potential conflict situations.

In the converse of this - **don't mentally rehearse the wrong response**. Don't see in your mind's eye a picture of yourself strangling the boss of the phone company. It may be very satisfying but it is not helpful. It is educating yourself in the wrong direction.

Use the '**what would Jesus do?**' question as a quick reference.

### Practical Techniques - 3

**Question your perceptions of threat**. Is this really a life or death issue? Am I getting tensed up over nothing? What does it say about me if I am so easily riled? Or on the flight response: Is it really that bad? Is the world going to end over this? Is this fear, anxiety and emotional reactivity helping me? Has running away from things helped or hindered my life?

**Learn to find your emotional center** and to live from it and to know when it is in balance and out of balance. This is quite difficult for many people.

**Some people will push you** wanting you to explode so they can take advantage of your immature reaction. Be alert to this and deliberately react the opposite way they are pushing you. (1 Corinthians 4:12) For instance when they revile you greet them with a blessing. (1 Peter 2:23 NKJV) who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

### Practical Techniques - 4

Remember that when you react rightly to unjust treatment that "**great is your reward in heaven**". So rejoice and give yourself a pat on the back when you keep your cool. Positive reinforcement for good behavior. (Matthew 5:11)

**Do not return evil for evil**. (Romans 12:17) Keep a lid on your desire to retaliate. Leave retaliation to the Lord. (Romans 12:19) If we return a blessing instead we will inherit blessing. . (1 Peter 3:9).

If people rip you off and insult you **don't escalate it into a life or death struggle** over honor and pride. This is what Jesus means when He says "do not resist him who is evil". (He does not mean that the police should not arrest robbers!) Rather it means "don't let the evil person push you into a full-scale, adrenalin packed, fight or flight response". Deny the natural man's urge to strike back. If he slaps you, turn the other cheek, if he takes your cloak, let him, if he makes you walk a mile, go two. If he says "give me money" let him have some. (Matthew 5:38-42). Deny your reactivity and show you are made of different stuff

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### Practical Techniques - 5

**Don't let unkind, ungrateful, stingy, mean or small-minded people get to you.** God is merciful to the unkind and ungrateful and we have a great reward in heaven when we do likewise. (Luke 6:35) Brush their meanness to one side without taking it too personally and treat them as well as you can with reasonable safety (because some are quite toxic).

**Do not get your ego hooked** into the game of “Christian comparisons”, my church is bigger than your church etc. This only leads to fuming and fighting.

**Do not let theology push you into fight or flight mode.** Only debate under circumstances that are harmless to the hearers (such as with good friends in the ministry) unless of course there is an urgent apologetic reason. Even then your speech should be seasoned with salt.

### Practical Techniques - 6

**Learn correct responses** by modeling mature Christians and by studying the heroes of the faith.

Make a personal **commitment** to grow in this area.

Have some friends keep you **accountable** for your reactions and encourage you to maturity.

Enjoy the **feeling of grace** rather than the feeling of explosive emotional power.

### Flight – Into Agoraphobia

Life circumstances cause the person to reach, at some point in their life, a point of **nervous exhaustion** in which fear that already exists cannot be suppressed or controlled by the will and during which new fears can be easily implanted.

**Strange frightening thoughts then appear in a tired mind.** The person worries about these thoughts. This further activates the fight or flight response and exhausts the person and so they have even less energy to control their fears with. More fears then surface, the person then worries, and so on in a vicious circle. The strange thoughts in the tired mind eventually reach such an intensity that they lead the person to the threshold of panic.

A small incident then triggers a full-scale **panic attack**, which, if this spiral continues, may become the first of many.

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### Disengaging From Your Fears

Mastering such fear means moving away from the fight or flight response.

Instead of trying to fight the fears or run away from them they are just accepted.

This position of not fighting and not running away disengages the fight or flight response, lowers the adrenalin levels and helps the person think.

They are encouraged to go slowly because the need to “hurry” or take action activates the fight or flight response.

They are encouraged to rest, eat properly and recover strength and get over their prior depletion. This enables them to get some perspective on their fears.

### Floating Through...

The only way to deal with fear is going through. “Even jelly legs will get you there”.

Of great importance is “floating through” difficult experiences. The problem with fearful people is they engage life too tightly. When you grab life too tightly it bounces you round and you end up either struggling with it or fleeing from it.

A bit of detachment can lead to peace of mind. “Floating through” can help people survive normally traumatic experiences such as shopping in a large mall. The person floats through the shop door, floats around the store, floats up to the counter, floats out the money and pays for the goods and floats out again.

The person is slightly detached but not dissociated from reality and is able to do the task that was impossible before.

### Four Key Concepts

1. Face, do not run away.
2. Accept, do not fight
3. Float, do not tense.
4. Let time pass – do not be impatient with time.

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### Reacting To Spiritual Experiences

Powerful spiritual experiences often invoke the fight or flight response.

We need to face them, not run away from them

We need to accept them calmly – and evaluate them wisely.

We should quietly move through them and not become threatened and aggressive.

We should let time pass, weigh them up carefully, and not rush around in response.

### An Intimidating Workload

Face the workload, don't run from it.

Simply accept that it has to be done, don't see it as a threat.

Make a list, put it in order of priority and float through it one task at a time. Don't tense up and become hurried and nervy.

Let time pass. Stop watching the clock, if you are working efficiently and doing the jobs in order of priority then time is not the problem.

### Solution-Focussed Thinking

Focus on finding the solution rather than analyzing the problem.

When we focus on the problem we end up blaming, analyzing, and often activate the fight or flight response.

When we focus on the solution we use our creativity and our sense of mastery and become constructive people.

Paul Problema gets a flat tire, finds the nail, analyzes the nail, works out how the nail got on the road, is still stuck there two weeks later fuming in anger and crusading about nails on roads.

Sam Solution gets a flat tire, gets the jack, takes off the wheel, puts on the spare and is driving home ten minutes later. Watches Paul Problema's campaign on TV and laughs.

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### S-F Thinking In Action

Just find a solution. Don't ask why the stream is flooding or sit around analyzing the water quality – just find the bridge and walk across.

Avoid the paralysis of analysis.

Don't see problems everywhere. Learn to **see solutions everywhere.**

Big problems sometimes have really simple solutions.

If you do what you have always done you will get what you have always got.

Ask what is working and do more of it.

If it's not working stop doing it.

Don't fix the blame – fix the problem.

### Jesus & Solutions

Jesus had an amazingly solution-focused approach to life.

In the gospels Jesus says "nothing is impossible with God" or "all things are possible with God" a total of nine times.

Jesus finds solutions for blind people, lepers, demon-possessed Legion, Lazarus in the grave, five thousand hungry listeners and a boat full of disciples on a stormy sea.

Whatever the problem there was always a solution and the solution always gave glory to God. The faith of Jesus searched for, found and activated solutions.

### Summary

We are to move away from the visceral and self-defeating reactions of the fight or flight response to the noble, practical, solution-focused and faith-filled responses of the sanctified believer.

Mastery is the balanced command of our consciousness in every situation so that we act according to the will of God.

The instrument for doing this is the mind. The mind is the only part of our consciousness that we can focus and deploy.

We can use it to stop automatic responses and to master our emotions.

We can focus the mind on God and things above and be connected to His eternal power.

We can use the mind to give us poise and power when we face our fears.

We can search for positive faith-filled solutions to pressing needs so as to give glory to God.

Mastery can be practiced and is greatly assisted by solution-focussed thinking.

## **Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating**

### **Christians And Emotions**

Like it or not God has made us to be emotional beings. He wants us to have emotions – His emotions.

He wants us to weep over the lost, be moved with compassion for the oppressed, be outraged by injustice, provoked by idolatry and angry at the hard of heart.

He wants us to love the sheep in our charge, be caught up in the agony of intercession and have hearts full of hope.

The Christian life, properly lived, is awash in emotion. However it is not merely sentimental, trite or unstable.

Truly Christian emotions have a majesty about them. They resonate with the Kingdom and participate in and agree with the Truth.

### **The Quality Of Our Emotions**

People and their emotions are like bells.

Some people are like alarm bells going off anxiously and loudly. Some are chipped and cracked and when they “ring” the sound seems painful or like the bells on old-fashioned trams noisy, clanging, rattling.

Yet others are like shop bells being rung by everyone that enters their life. Some are like a carillon, gentle, and beautiful and silvery; finally there are those that are deep and resonant and summon the countryside to worship.

The aim of Biblical EQ is to produce people who ring true and ring deeply with the emotions of God. People whose very emotional presence is a declaration of the Kingdom of God.

To do this we must get a handle on our emotions, we must be able to name them and we must start to choose which emotions we will express and which emotions we should deny.

### **Identifying Our Emotions**

Many people cannot clearly identify their emotions. They simply use general words and phrases such as “good”, “bad”, “up” and “OK”, instead of more specific and useful words like “disconsolate”, “elated” and “perplexed”.

For others feelings are just a confused blur.

Yet others are so hurt that pain overwhelms all other finer feelings and for those people the emotional choice is constant pain or oblivion.

Many chose oblivion via drugs, alcohol, or promiscuity and increasingly they escape into the total oblivion of death through suicide.

Such people need help. They need to untangle their emotions and work through to peace.

So being able to “feel their feelings” and being able to identify and name their emotions is a crucial first step.



## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### The Importance Of Accuracy

Another reason why good emotional identification is important is that mistaken emotional identification can lead to spiritual disaster.

For example take the common confusion between love and lust. A young person who confuses these two can end up in a disastrous relationship.

Love and lust are opposites as looking at 1 Corinthians 13 soon reveals: “Love is patient (but lust is impatient), love is kind (but lust is cruel), love does not envy (but lust envies much), love does not parade itself (but lust is an exhibitionist)... and so on.

If we think we are feeling one thing but are in fact feeling its opposite all sorts of havoc can be unleashed.

Regret and repentance can seem similar. However regretting being found out is far different from repenting from sin.

Unless we can correctly identify emotions in ourselves and others we can make serious mistakes in judgment.

### Studying Our Emotions

For information about emotions and the fine differences between them the Psalms, classic poetry, novels and good literature are excellent sources. The portrayal of emotions by great authors helps us to get in touch with our feelings and to discriminate between them.

Of course writing our own poetry, keeping a diary, painting, joining a drama group or attending a 12 step group or workshop can also be ways to get in touch with buried feelings and gradually sort out the emotional knots within.

As we do so it is initially important to simply accept the emotions that surface rather than leaping to spiritual judgments before the process is complete.

Making spiritual judgments about the emotions we experience is often counter-productive and causes us to express some emotions and repress others to conform to a spiritual standard or model that we have been taught in church.

### Blessed Believer

**The Blessed Believer:** The ideal Christian is a person of great faith who prays fervently and receives great blessing from God and lives in abundance and happiness free from anxiety and turmoil. Salvation is easily and joyously and often instantly received. Abraham, Isaac, David and Solomon are seen as models Can easily focus on material blessings as a sign of God’s approval.

**Expresses:** Praise, gratitude, thankfulness, joy and contentment. “Rejoice in the Lord always”. Salvation is from misery to happiness. Happiness is a sign that Jesus is in your heart.

**Represses:** Sorrow, depression, grief, anxiety, genuine doubt, feelings of weakness and inadequacy, disappointment , any sense that life has treated them in an unfair manner. Negative emotions are construed as indicating a “lack of victory”.

**Model fails when** life appears to be far less than blessed such as when life appears to be unjust or unfair or when pain is overwhelming or during grief and sorrow. Job is the classical example of a blessed believer being challenged by life.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### Penitent Pilgrim

**The Penitent Pilgrim:** The pilgrim is escaping judgment and heading away from the World which is doomed. The Christian life involves separation from sin and worldliness and the serious pursuit of salvation which only relatively few attain and which is a perilous journey. Pilgrim's Progress. Lot escaping Sodom. James

**Expresses:** Sorrow for sin, seriousness, self-examination, correction of faults, penitence, intense prayer, travail, joy over forgiveness, righteous anger, woe, and pessimism over the world.

**Represses:** Frivolity, laughter, flippancy, playfulness, sensuality, attraction to worldly things, sexuality, pride over achievement, romance. Positive emotions are treated with suspicion.

**Weak Area:** Can become legalistic and joyless. Fails to give proper place to the goodness of Creation and creates rebellion in people brought up in this system who learn life is not as grim as portrayed.

### Independent Achievers

**The Independent Achiever:** Emphasizes being in ministry and achieving things for God. A Christian is measured by the size of his or her ministry and how they achieved it alone as their personal vision. Strategic thinking, business skills and personal success are highly prized. Models include Nehemiah and the apostle Paul.

**Expresses:** Faith, hope, vision, optimism, joy, and the emotions of the will and the mind.

**Represses:** Tend not to be artistic and may lack compassion at times. They avoid necessary introspection and reflection. Doubt and fear are repressed rather than faced.

**Weakness:** Can lead to burn-out. Works for some people but can destroy others. Their spouses often suffer.

### The Child Of Nature

**The Child of Nature** is still living in the Garden of Eden and feels free to express all kinds of emotion. Spontaneity, freedom, expressiveness, artistic skill and creativity are high on the agenda.

**Expressed:** Nearly all emotions are freely expressed. Creativity, joy, freedom. The inner child is given freedom to play.

**Represses:** Discernment, wisdom, truth and responsibility. Can be undisciplined and immature emotionally.

**Weakness:** Can become overly sensual and fall into moral disorder. There is a tendency to anarchy and irresponsibility. Lacks power and authority.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – *Naming And Evaluating*

	<p><b>Sacrificial Servants</b></p> <p><b>The Sacrificial Servant:</b> Its what you give up for God that counts. The Christian “has no rights and is there to “spend themselves for God” and “burn out for Jesus”. Spiritual indicators include remoteness of where one serves and the poverty of conditions. David Brainerd is a model example.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Enthusiasm and passion for God and devotion to the cause.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Most emotions are repressed or sublimated including most natural affections.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> At times is the stuff of cults. Tends to love God alone and sacrifices self, family and neighbour to the cause. Sacrifices can backfire later on and be like “dynamite on the altar”.</p>
	<p><b>Serene Saints</b></p> <p><b>The Serene Saint:</b> Like Yoda in Star Wars these are the unruffled and wise contemplatives full of peace and deep emotions. Their goal is tranquility of soul and union with God and self-mastery.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Tranquility and peace, gentle emotions, prayerful devotion, saintly emotions, mercy.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Anger and most intense emotions including sexuality are repressed.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Can be weak at critical moments and fail to tackle issues of justice and practical issues of life. Can become very selfish and inward.</p>
	<p><b>Radical Revolutionaries</b></p> <p><b>The Radical Revolutionary:</b> Enjoys turning over the tables in the Temple. Seeking after justice they identify with the Old Testament prophets. The ideal Christian is a counter-culture revolutionary who brings transformation to society.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Righteous anger, passion for justice, indignation , wrath. Vision, hope and even optimism may also be present.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Tend to be overly serious and lose natural playfulness and joy. Gentleness and meekness may also be lacking.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> In some contexts this is very much needed in others it is totally inappropriate. Not a whole of life perspective for most people.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

	<p><b>Energetic Evangelists</b></p> <p><b>The Energetic Evangelist:</b> The ideal Christian sees many people saved. They are master communicators who are always witnessing. They have strong personalities are enthusiastic and clear sighted.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Black and white emotions. Enthusiasm, passion for the lost, joy, exuberance.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Reflective quiet emotions are often seen as impractical.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> Lacks any understanding of ambiguities and complexity, a very confined and narrow model that only works for people with one spiritual gift.</p>
	<p><b>Aggressive Apologists</b></p> <p><b>The Aggressive Apologist</b> defends the faith from error at every turn and exposes heresy, cults, witchcraft and deception as well as contending with other belief systems. The ideal Christian is knowledgeable , theologically correct, logical and able to debate others so that they convert to Christianity or correct their ways.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Reason, logic, righteous indignation, anger, forcefulness, suspicion,</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Playfulness, gentleness, creativity, sympathy, mercy,</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> Tends to distrust emotional expression and be overly logical and dry. Can make a person very rigid in their later years.</p>
	<p><b>Ecstatic Enthusiasts</b></p> <p><b>The Ecstatic Enthusiast:</b> Led by the Spirit they are “on the move for God” and express strong enthusiasm for spiritual things. Spiritual ecstasy is a sign of God's presence.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Trance states, ecstasy, passion, enthusiasm, joy, exuberance, praise, thanksgiving.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Critical faculties, analysis, contemplation, thinking, reflection and negative emotions such as pain, grief and disappointment.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Tends to spiritual burn out and can be very unstable and insufficiently critical. Tends to fall for fads and is too simplistic for many of life's deeper practical issues.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – *Naming And Evaluating*

### The Reasonable Man

**The Reasonable Man:** Wisdom and Reason are the voices of the Spirit who leads Christians into a balanced and moderate life that reflects proper priorities and which is well adjusted to the social context the believer lives in. Extremes are interpreted as a sign of a dysfunctional personality.

**Expresses:** Reason, analysis, ethical reflection, conventions and social mores, well-tempered emotions, kindness, gentleness, reasonableness. “Moderation in all things”

**Represses:** Strong emotion of all kinds is disapproved of as well as any major breach of social standards.

**Weakness:** Tends to worldliness and spiritual skepticism.

### The Perfect Man

**The Perfect Man:** Like Confucius’ concept the perfect man is without inappropriate emotion or any visible faults. Emotion is carefully guarded and kept under control. The perfect man is upright, ethical, has perfect manners and social perception, and is extremely humble and meek.

**Expresses:** Proper behavior, loyalty, humility, meekness, convention, submission, restraint, ethics, duty. “Being without fault in one’s conduct in life”.

**Represses:** Anger, pain, intimacy, vulnerability, affection.

**Weakness:** Because how others perceive the Christian is of ultimate importance it can produce harshness and hypocrisy. Can be cold and distant.

### Good Samaritans

**The Good Samaritan** Love of neighbor expressed as social action and deeds of mercy mark the true Christian. Kindness, gentleness, mercy and helpfulness are the premier virtues.

**Expresses:** Mercy, gentleness, kindness, hospitality, inclusion, practical deeds of love and compassion.

**Represses:** Exclusion, rejection, unkindness of any sort, tries to develop a very inclusive and non-theological faith.

**Weakness:** Has much merit but can become just social work without a true saving gospel being proclaimed.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

	<p><b>Principled Idealist</b></p> <p><b>The Principled Idealist</b> is characterized by seeking the high and noble life lived by principles and virtue and self-renunciation for the Ideal Good. People are valued by their principles, intentions and ideals without reference to actions.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> High ideals and aspirations, concepts, ideas, justice, philosophies, ambition, personal striving for high goals, vision.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> The mundane, earthy, concrete details of daily life, attention to detail, diligence. Earthiness and pragmatism are perceived to be un-spiritual.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> Frequently disorganized. Often so focused on the external goals that they lose personal insight and can become dishonest and treacherous.</p>
	<p><b>Perceptive Pragmatists</b></p> <p><b>The Perceptive Pragmatist</b> is able to sum up life quickly and fix problems on the spot. A Christian is measured by their skills in analysis and implementation.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Analysis, evaluation, enthusiasm, practical knowledge, authority, wisdom, toughness, shrewdness, energy.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Empathy, kindness, compassion, mercy. Most emotions are not felt deeply and they tend to be deemed as irrelevant. <b>Weakness:</b> Tend to come unstuck in mid-life and feel a deep sense of meaninglessness. May neglect relationships. May see virtue as impractical.</p>
	<p><b>Intelligent Instructor</b></p> <p><b>The Intelligent Instructor</b> is a learned Christian who teaches well and can exegete the difficult verses of Scripture. The goal is knowledge of God and wisdom and knowledge are equated with progress in the Christian life. Academic prowess is prized and church is often made into a classroom. Ezra is a model.</p> <p><b>Expresses:</b> Moderate emotions suitable for the classroom - Balance, evaluation, discipline, kindness, gentleness, logic, intelligence, knowledge, reasoning, humor.</p> <p><b>Represses:</b> Strong passions are suspect. Practicality may be lacking. Distrusts the subjective and non-cognitive areas of the Christian life. Often lacks celebration and praise.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> Can become dry, dull and overly rational. Praise and worship tend to be seen as only teaching tools.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### All These Models Are Incomplete!

None of the above emotional models can work for all believers.

There is no “right model” in that list.

They are all incorrect at some point or other.

Being in a group that only honors one of these models can be difficult and confining.

Jesus as our model transcends all these “boxes” that we try to put people into.

### God Will Challenge Your Model

God will not be satisfied with you being less than Christ-like.

He will work on the difference between the model of faith you have adopted and Christ as revealed in and by the Scriptures.

Your mental model of the ideal Christian undoubtedly has many Scriptures that support it – but here and there it can be improved and in fact needs to be improved if you are to be fully like Jesus.

In my Christian life I have had to do a major revision of my faith about every seven years or so.

I move from a certain model to a more Christ-like one then that in turn is challenged and revised and so the process goes on.

### Changing Our Mental Model

How then do we correct our mental model of the Christian faith – particularly one we are quite committed to?

Read one of the gospels and note the difference between how you act and react - and how Jesus acts and reacts.

Would you be happy being a friend of publicans and sinners? Would you let a prostitute touch your feet? Would you say “You cannot serve God and Mammon” with conviction?

At those points where your model and the gospel model disagree you must decide to change and become like Jesus.

Other clues are inner discontent with where you are at (maybe its your model of Christianity that’s wrong), or a desire for something more.

Go with your questions seeking their answers in the Scripture and “brick by brick” you will build up a more mature idea of what it means to be a Christ-like person.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### Culture & Upbringing

You may need to make a calculated decision to move beyond your culture and upbringing, accepting that which is good and rejecting that which is evil and moving to maturity in Christ.

The Jewish Christians in the book of Acts had a most difficult time doing this because they were so sure of their superiority of Jewish culture and practices and of the need to be circumcised.

Their model of Jesus was that He was “a good Jewish boy who kept the Law” – and He did!

However He also accepted Gentiles!

Chapters ten to fifteen of the book of Acts detail with the terrible tension Peter and the Jewish Christians faced when the Gentiles accepted the gospel. A church-wide conference had to be called to resolve the issue.

Changing models of faith was not easy then and its not easy now.

### So far we have seen that...

We need to be able to identify individual emotions.

When we become aware of emotions we tend to quickly judge them as good or bad.

We tend to use an “emotional model” to do this – which we get from our family, our culture or our church.

This model tells us which emotions to express and which emotions to repress.

We need to change that model to a more Christ-like model of emotional expression.

This may involve difficult cultural and personal changes.

### Reacting To Strong Emotions

The next section will deal with how we react to, evaluate, and manage strong emotions, including strong religious emotions.

There are two main spiritual errors when it comes to the expression of strong emotions in the Christian life.

The first is **giving expression to carnal emotions** such as wrath, bitterness and clamour. This is called “**grieving the Spirit**” and is mentioned in Ephesians 4:30,31.

The second error is **the repressing of holy emotions** that arise within us because of the work of the Spirit. This is called “**quenching**” the Spirit and is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:19.



## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### Jesus And Strong Emotions

From incidents such as His cleansing of the temple, His cursing of the fig-tree, His groans at Lazarus' tomb, His rebukes of His disciples, His blazing anger at the hard hearts of the Pharisees and His rejoicing at the return of the disciples from their ministry trip; we can say Jesus had many strong emotions.

Jesus was a fully emotional Jewish man filled with the Holy Spirit and sent on a holy mission for the glory of God.

The strength of Jesus' emotions flowed from the power of His perceptions and the strength of His beliefs.

If you are filled with the Spirit, and see Heaven opened, and know the truth, and believe the Scriptures, and are truly on a mission from the Lord then your emotions will be strong and clear and grow in strength and grandeur.

The reverse is not true, strong emotions do not mean you are spiritual. People can be gripped by all sorts of strong and yet fleshly emotions.

Strong emotions can be both godly and fleshly. Jesus was powerfully emotional but was without sin. How did He do it? He exercised self-control.

### Emotional Self-Control

Jesus openly expressed holy and righteous feelings.

Jesus completely controlled all tempting, fleshly and wrong emotions.

Jesus calmly accepted as part of life human emotions such as tiredness and being troubled in spirit.

Jesus was fully aware of his emotions and made choices about how to handle them.

He did not express every emotion, nor did He repress all emotion, rather He lived in a Spirit-filled balance.

### Recovering Repressed Emotions

A few people are told from a young age to keep emotions, particularly negative emotions, completely under wraps.

Such people may have to give themselves "permission to feel" those emotions that they have denied themselves over the years.

Such emotions may include sensual emotions, pleasure, anger, disappointment and grief.

Gradually coming to feel long lost emotions can take some time. There is frequently a deep fear that control will be lost.

It needs to be remembered by such people that they have successfully controlled that emotion for perhaps thirty or more years. They know how to put the lid on the box when they have to.

It is most unlikely they will truly lose control but the experience will feel new and a bit scary at first.

Eventually the recovered emotions will lead to the deeper resonances of life and a fuller and more meaningful existence.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### The Holy Spirit And Self-Control

Christians need to move from repression and denial of emotion to proper self-control of emotion.

Thus the Holy Spirit will not **quenched** by being good emotions being stifled; or **grieved** by inappropriate emotions such as wrath or bitterness being expressed.

This makes the person of the Holy Spirit absolutely central to the Christian's true experience of emotion. It is as He is released in His fullness that we move into the emotional life of our Savior.

Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and operates under the leading of the Holy Spirit so that we enter into holy emotions and forsake fleshly passions and ungodly wrath and dissension.

Through the leading of the Holy Spirit and His infilling we become a joyous, loving, holy and zealous people filled with holy emotions and the fruits of the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-21, Colossians 3:16-17, Galatians 5:16-23)

### Alive In The Spirit

True Holy Spirit led self-control is neither apathetic nor stoical on one hand or irresponsible and indulgent on the other.

The Holy Spirit leads us to express emotion wisely and truthfully but also joyously and with depth and intensity. Shallow sentimentality is not found in the Scriptures. People of faith are deep, resonant and have a grounded-ness about them.

The people of the Living God are most fully alive. That is what makes Christianity attractive.

Many people say of the time they first met Christians "they had something about them, a joy that I really wanted." The Holy Spirit filled believer is emotionally alive and emotionally substantial.

### Emotions Do Not Define The Truth

While the Holy Spirit produces joy and peace, the presence of joy and peace does not necessarily indicate the presence of the Holy Spirit.

People can feel at peace after a bottle or two of wine! People experience joy and peace when they convert to Buddhism, a New Age group or even to Islam.

People join cults because they feel better there than at church. Cults can feel warm, loving, tranquil and enlightened. Cults often meet the emotional needs that were not met in the local church and someone has said "Cults are the unpaid bills of the Church."

Thus good feelings are no guide to good theology. The opposite may also be true, bad feelings are no guide to bad theology. The prophets – who spoke the truth – found many people reacting negatively to them.

Negative emotions are no indication of error and positive emotions are no indication of truth. Thus good emotions are not a guide to good theology neither are difficult emotions an indication of wrong theology.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### Emotions Express The Truth

Emotions are a valid response to truth but not a valid guide to truth.

Jesus reacted emotionally as He perceived the truth but Jesus did not arrive at the truth via His emotions. He arrived at the truth via Scripture.

Jesus wept when He saw His friends grieving as Lazarus's grave. He was moved by compassion when He saw people sick, harassed and lost. His emotions were a response to His perceptions in a framework filled with God's truth.

However Jesus never said "I feel X therefore I will believe Y". His emotions moved Him to act however His actions were based on truth revealed from the Father.

His emotions did not show Him what was true or false – they just moved Him to act on what He already knew (from Scripture) was true or false.

We do not follow our emotions, rather we need to follow the truth – and express emotion as we do so.

### Powerful Good Feelings Can Lead Us Astray

Good feelings can be intense, global and very convincing. There is such a thing as very strong temptation.

There are "wonderful" emotions that can lead us into adultery, drugs and alcohol addiction, gambling, and acts of self-destruction. These emotions feel true, authentic and valid *at the time*. They may even feel "cosmic" and like a form of self-awareness, self-discovery or enlightenment.

Affairs can seem totally "right" in their initial phase, the first drink for an alcoholic "feels terrific", the guru makes people feel "at one with the Universe".

Unless there is a solid examination of the truth and awareness of the consequences these powerful emotions can lead people to shipwreck their lives.

### Resisting Emotional Entanglement

Rather than repressing our emotions and unmet needs we need to be aware of our heart and discipline it according to the truth.

During a mid-life crisis the best advice is "acknowledge your feelings but follow the truth."

It is perfectly Ok to acknowledge to yourself that, "I am strongly tempted to have an affair" as long as you stare that fact in the face and decide to refuse the temptation because you love God.

It can also help to look at the consequences and say, "I will not do so because that is wrong and destructive and would make shipwreck of my life."

By acknowledging the temptation and refusing it you can grow in emotional and spiritual maturity. Acknowledge how you are feeling – then make a godly decision.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – *Naming And Evaluating*

### **Instinctive Reactions**

There is a place for hunches, gut feelings, emotional signals and awareness of emotional atmosphere.

Emotions are able to reduce a very complex situation down to a certain feeling or impulse and they do this very quickly and efficiently.

A young man sees a lady and feels “Wow, she is the one.” this judgment may be made in a second or two.

That judgment however will need a lot of further examination before it can validly lead to marriage.

### **Emotions And Our Thinking**

Emotions can act as swift initial assessments of complex situations – but only as initial assessments.

This is useful in that our emotions select the situations that our reason will go to work on and analyze.

A young man cannot analyze the suitability of every young lady he meets – that would be impractical.

Rather he thinks about those he is attracted to. Thus his emotions select first and his thorough evaluation follows later.

Emotions can make us attracted, suspicious, repelled, guarded, curious or astonished at a given situation.

Sometimes this initial impression is validated by further thought at other times it is proved totally wrong.

### **Emotional Damage And Mistakes**

When emotions are damaged the ability to form accurate impressions of situations also suffers.

Emotionally damaged people tend to be prone to mistakes in judgment. They rush into love, they hold back from friendship, they gamble on foolish ventures, and they run from shadows.

People who have been emotionally damaged should not enter into a significant relationship or project until they have healed to the point where they have functional and accurate discernment.

They should look at their decision-making and be careful – seeking the advice of friends and family and striving to be as objective as possible.

Even if their ability to assess situations was good before it will not be as good now.

This loss of judgment can be alarming but it is temporary and will pass in time as emotional healing takes place.

## Biblical EQ Session 9 – Naming And Evaluating

### Emotions & Spirituality

The spiritual life and the emotional life are thus very closely connected and our meaningful spiritual experiences are nearly always highly charged with emotion.

Truth, for the believer is real and living and meaningful and the discovery of truth – those great “Aha!” moments are frequently deeply emotional.

When Ezra read the Law the Jews wept (Nehemiah 8:1-9). Truth and emotion went hand in hand.

The scientific age with its view of truth as clinical and unemotional is rooted in Greek Platonism not in biblical (and especially Hebrew) reality.

In the West it has led to false dichotomy between theology and emotionality that is even reflected at the level of denominational differences.

Part of the appeal of the New Age is having teaching that is expected to be emotionally and existentially meaningful.

### Discernment

God is not concerned with the volume of our emotions as He is with the channel we are listening to: The Spirit or The Flesh.

Some people are highly emotional, others are quiet. That is fine. What is important is that we do not quench godly movements of the Spirit or give way to fleshly outbursts.

We need to be discerning of our spiritual experiences. Powerful dreams, visions and experiences can be the Holy Spirit. They can also be from deceiving spirits. We need to check them against Scripture.

Demonic counterfeits tend to be either: inflating, accusing, terrifying or seductive.

Godly dreams and visions tend to be Scriptural, clear, specific, wise, insightful and holy.

### Emotions Are Not The Boss

Your emotions are not in charge. Your mind is the decision-maker.

It is never compulsory to follow an emotion - even a very powerful emotion. You do not have to rush after every emotional impulse thinking it is a leading of the Holy Spirit.

All such impulses must first be weighed up by the Spirit-filled, Scripture-soaked mind.

You acknowledge the emotion. You then make a decision about it using your mind – whether to express it, or whether to rein it in.

Day by day you will become a stronger person not tossed here and there by every strong emotion that comes your way.

You will hop off the roller-coaster of your own emotions and start to take charge of yourself and your destiny.

Best of all you will learn to be a Spirit-filled Christian and be able to consistently demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

	<p><b>Social Skills</b></p> <p>The first key social skill is to be able to <b>recognize the emotion</b> that the other person is feeling. If this is incorrect, then all social responses flowing from the mistaken emotional identification will also be incorrect.</p> <p>The second key social skill is to <b>respond in an appropriate and in-context manner</b>.</p> <p>The context of all Christian social skills is Spirit-filled <b>AGAPE love</b></p>
	<p><b>Jesus And Emotional Recognition</b></p> <p>Jesus was able to accurately read emotions in Himself and in others. This made His ministry very effective.</p> <p>Jesus judgment of others was not by sense perception alone for Scripture says He did not judge “by the hearing of the ear or as the eye sees” (Isaiah 11:3).</p> <p>Rather He judged by the Spirit of the Lord. His connection with God gave Him the perception, beliefs, wisdom and understanding with which to make accurate judgments about other people.</p> <p>Jesus’ advice on the topic of discerning other people was generally simply to look at their actions, not their words and especially to look at the fruit of their lives. (Matthew 7:20)</p> <p>Jesus recommended careful and prayerful analysis based on facts taken over time.</p>
	<p><b>A Complex Task</b></p> <p>It seems sophisticated neural processing is needed for the recognition of emotions and that it is based in an almond shaped part of the brain called the amygdala. (Damasio et al. found that bilateral damage to the amygdala impaired the recognition of emotion from facial expressions.)</p> <p>To give you an idea of how complex this task is, “affective computing” or teaching computers to recognize emotions in humans, struggles, even on fast computers, to obtain a 50% success rate on just 8 basic emotions.</p> <p>The complexity of the task of accurate emotional recognition means that it is a task we are learning all life long.</p>

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### In Ministry...

Sensitive and caring ministry to others depends on being able to accurately recognize and understand the source of emotion in others. Without this skill pastoral care will be clumsy at best and damaging at worst.

This is becoming increasingly difficult as in our multi-cultural societies ministry means reading emotions of people from different backgrounds, genders, and ethnicities than our own.

Any pastor of a church of any size in the modern world will have to be able to read the feelings of people of half a dozen races and a wide variety of professional and economic backgrounds. We cannot run away from this challenge but must embrace the learning required to be emotionally competent ministers in a complex world.

Interestingly some research done with the Penn Emotional Recognition Test suggests that introverts have better skills at recognizing emotions than extroverts. Thus quiet sensitive counselors and spiritual directors may indeed be the ones to look for when you want your emotions deeply understood.

### Emotional Discernment Tips - 1

1. Start from a neutral position as free as possible from your own baggage. The more emotion you are carrying – and thereby projecting onto others, the more inaccurate you are. A study by Walz showed that aggressive men saw more anger in other people than was really there. The aggressive men were projecting their own anger onto others. This mislabeling led to behaviour problems in life as they reacted in hostile ways to this perceived but non-existent aggression.

2. If you do have a great deal of pain, do not try counselling others until you have dealt with it. This is why I recommend that Christian counselors and ministers who have been recently divorced take two years out from the ministry until their emotions have been worked through. There is generally too much baggage there to be accurate in reading emotions and to be therapeutic in counselling.

### Tips - 2

3. Do not take the latest bit of psychology you have read and dump its conclusions and observations on everyone. In general look at the objective facts about the person first then, much later, employ your theories.

4. There is no prize for the hastiest judgment. Suspend religious judgments until all the facts are in. Hasty labeling of clients and leaping to spiritual conclusions is unwise and potentially damaging. There is plenty of time to come to conclusions, so use it wisely and well.

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### Tips - 3

5. Listen to understand and not to judge. There is indeed a place for confronting sin – after we have fully understood the situation. If we seek to understand first and listen intently and with intelligence and wisdom our words of admonition will be far fewer, much more on target, and more easily accepted by the parishioner.

6. Expand your own emotional vocabulary. For instance use words like exhilarated instead of “up” and ‘satisfied” instead of “good”. By becoming aware of a wide range of emotional terms as they apply to yourself you will be soon able to pick up these finer emotional tones in others as well. Roget’s Thesaurus is a good starting point.

### Tips - 4

7. Use the “mirror principle” to work out what the other person is thinking. By the mirror principle I mean the observation that what A thinks of B is generally the mirror opposite of what B thinks of A. For instance if you think someone is very tall then you probably look short to him or her. If you think that certain people are quiet and polite they probably think you are loud and rude. And if you think young people are loud and over the top and energetic they probably think you are staid, quiet and a bit on the slow side.

People are often seeing you in an exact mirror image of how you see them.

8. If you can get hold of a “chart of emotions’ do so. These charts have dozens of different facial expressions with the emotions labeled underneath. A counselor should be able to help you get hold of one.

### Tips - 5

9. Don’t just read one aspect of body language e.g. facial expressions, voice, body language or verbal statements. Survey the whole person and watch for patterns as a whole. For instance a person with their arms crossed may be just cold from the air-conditioning – not rejecting what you are saying at all. You need to look at all the other factors as well.

10. Try and figure out what they are not saying as well as what they are saying. For instance if a client talks freely about everyone in their family with the exception of their father – about whom they are totally silent, then there may be something worth exploring.



## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### Tips - 6

11. Study crowds and pick up on social distance, actions and reactions. The location of the person in the room, who they are talking to, how many people they move amongst and the degree of animation they are showing. For instance a person who is feeling timid may be in the corner of the room, the person who is feeling lonely may be on their own, the socially insecure may be glued to just one person etc.

12. Assume that even the most seemingly irrational behavior seems intelligent to the person doing it. Then try and work out what that reason is. What thought is behind it? What need are they trying to meet? What emotion is driving it?

### Misreading Emotions

Most of us have an area that we “get wrong” consistently when reading others.

A “false positive” is mistakenly thinking the situation is better than it is. Most men think their marriages are good when their wives think otherwise. Thus the men have a “false positive” when it comes to reading their wives emotional state.

A false negative is when a person thinks a situation is bad when it is in fact good or OK. For instance a person from a rejecting family may see anger or rejection around them in normal friendly social situations. They have a “false negative” when it comes to reading others emotions. They “fill in the blanks” with rejection and find it difficult to believe they are accepted.

### The Impact

False reading of other people’s emotions leads to mistaken actions and reactions on our behalf.

People react to “shadows” instead of realities and defend themselves from perceived emotional threats that simply do not exist.

We do not just react to circumstances we react to our interpretation of those circumstances - particularly the emotional perception – whether we are liked or disliked, accepted or rejected, valued or despised.

Therefore people who habitually see the world as disliking them, rejecting them and despising them are going to find life tough going.

This is indeed tragic if their fears are unjustified and their rejection is only in their own mind.

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – Social Skills

### Sources Of Mistakes

Errors In The Basic Facts. Reliance on rumor etc.

Filtering The Facts - so that some aspects are emphasized and some heavily discounted.

Becoming Mystically Intuitive - "I sense in my spirit that so and so has a Jezebel spirit". This often lacks an objective basis in fact or is a power play that makes the speaker look spiritual and perceptive and labels their enemy with a stigma that is difficult to contest or remove.

False Correlations: "He drives a Mercedes so he must be a good person."

Lack Of Basic Insight: We may be unable to know the difference between "personality" and "character" and see past the mask the person is projecting.

### Understanding Strange Reactions

Remember - to them their reaction makes sense.

Firstly acknowledge the emotion as real. It may seem bizarre but it is never the less being expressed.

Next, search for the concept that the person is acting on or reacting to. With the exploding teenager the concept they are reacting to may be "you don't listen and you don't understand".

Try to put that concept in a single phrase or sentence. Once you have boiled down what they are reacting to in one sentence you have probably got the gist of the matter.

Then ask "why have they come to that conclusion, is it a mistaken conclusion or a correct conclusion, and what can I do to help the matter?"

### Facts, Feelings & Identity

What are the **facts** of the situation?

How are they interpreting those facts and thus generating certain **feelings**?

What are they sensing about their **identity** – is their core being under threat in some way?

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### Appropriate Expression

Timing – There Is A Time For Every Matter

Place – Private & Public Emotion

Intensity – Strong With The Strong, Weak With The Weak

Balance – Light & Shadow

Emotional Truth & Authenticity – Don't Fake It Till You Make It.

### Love – The Perfect Expression

Emotions should be shared in a way that demonstrates **true Christian agape love.**

The Holy Spirit wants to produce agape love in us and will assist us in this process.

(Ephesians 3:14-21 NKJV) For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, {15} from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, {16} that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, {17} that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, {18} may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; {19} **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.** {20} Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, {21} to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

### Love Changes Us

1) We are strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner self.

2) This leads to Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith.

3) We then become rooted and grounded in love

4) We comprehend with all the saints the greatness of the love of Christ

5) That we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In this last section we shall try to explore this process and how it helps us with our Biblical EQ

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### The High Ground

The high ground of the spiritual life is agape love.  
The love of Christ transforms us and makes us like God.  
How we love ourselves, our neighbors, our enemies and the Lord are the big questions concerning our character and Christlikeness.  
Love is the ultimate in Biblical EQ

### Loving Our Enemies

(Matthew 5:43-48 NKJV) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' {44} "But I say to you, **love your enemies**, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, {45} "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. {46} "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? {47} "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? {48} "**Therefore you shall be perfect**, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

***Loving our enemies is a sign of spiritual perfection.***

The path to spiritual perfection is the path of loving our enemies, overcoming our fight or flight response, exercising our biblical EQ skills and dwelling in a perfect benevolence towards all, free from animosity, hatred, revenge and the spiteful impulses of the flesh.

That is high ground indeed.

### A Definition Of Love

Love is a lawful and practical way of life, which we live out from Christ within us, in a common benevolent connection with God and with others.

Love is not lawless, selfish or impractical.

It is a way of life, not just a sentiment.

It flows from Christ within us and from God.

It is benevolent and seeks the good of the other.

It involves personal connection to God and to others.

This connection supplies the strength to love.

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – Social Skills

### Two Balloons

Imagine two balloons, one large and impressive and highly inflated - but which has a slow leak.

The other is small at the moment, but is connected to an air pump which constantly fills it.

Over time, the first balloon will become flat.

In time the second balloon will become immense.

A broken, sinner connected to Christ, will, over the ages of eternity become “filled with all the fullness of God” and become a magnificent and splendid, immortal and spiritual being.

Conversely a king or emperor that is not connected to Christ will be subject to decay and become an object of horror.

Connection to the love of God is our only hope for sanctification and for glorification.

### The Connection With God

Through the transforming work this connection works in me I gain mastery over the fight or flight response, over the flesh and all the wrong impulses it contains.

Through this connection I find the power to be obedient and I obey, in the Spirit, not according to the letter.

Over time the Spirit produces His fruit in me and I bear love, joy and peace and become humble, meek, patient, gentle, kind and full of self-control.

I begin to love my enemies and pray for those who persecute me. I have the strength in the inner self not to retaliate.

I become rooted and grounded in love and my world moves from being self-centred to God centred and other-serving.

I start communicating with grace and ministering effectively and grasping the height and depth and width and length of the love of God until, many years from now, I am filled up with all the fullness of God.

### One Spirit With God

(1 Corinthians 6:17 NKJV) ***But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.***

(Ephesians 2:13-22 NKJV) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. {14} For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ...{17} And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. {18} ***For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*** {19} Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, {20} having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, {21} in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, {22} in whom you also are ***being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.***

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### Maintaining The Connection

God has brought us near by the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from sin and allows us to approach the throne of grace in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16). We have access to the Father through the Spirit and this access is so intimate that Paul says we are joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him (1 Corinthians 6:17). We are at peace with God (Romans 5:1-5) and the love of God pours into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us.

Yet as we saw earlier we can grieve and quench and resist the Spirit by sinning. Maintaining the connection means maintaining a good relationship with the Holy Spirit who is our access to God (Ephesians 2:18).

### Maintaining The Connection - 2

To keep that connection wide open and draw near to God we must purify our hearts if we are double-minded and put away sin (James 4:8). We also need to deal with speculative spirituality that can disconnect us from the Head which is Christ (Colossians 2:19).

We have to flee greed and worldliness and the love of money and pursue virtue as Timothy did so that we may lay hold of eternal life (1 Timothy 6:10-12).

Keeping our connection strong may involve some vigorous effort, in the midst of persecution we may have to hold fast and not deny the faith. (Revelation 2:13).

### The Connection Is Safe

The relationship with God is rock solid on His side. We do not have to do anything to please Him. We are justified by faith alone and not by any works of the law. We are safe in grace.

Its like a marriage in a country where there is no possibility of divorce. You can sin all your like in that marriage and legally it will never rupture. It is rock solid. But if the husband loves his wife and values their relationship he will not sin against her.

Similarly we are safe with God, and legally speaking the relationship is rock solid, we can sin a great deal and still He will be faithful even though we are faithless (2 Timothy 2:13).

But if we did so the transforming relationship of agape love would be in tatters. The Spirit-filled Christian has no desire to grieve Him, and so chooses not to sin, not because they "have to" in order to get into heaven, but because they want to in order to know Him more fully and because they want to be transformed by His love being poured out into their hearts through the Holy Spirit.

## Biblical EQ Session 10 – *Social Skills*

### Love Makes Us Like Jesus

As we love, we fulfill the Law (Romans 13:10), become imitators of God (Ephesians 5:1,2), and perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:43-48).

As we love Christ we attain to all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19).

We abide in God and He abides in us (1 John 4:16), and we become like Him (1 John 3:1-3) and share key aspects of His nature so the apostle can say “as He is, we are”. (1 John 4:17).

God intends us to be like Jesus, in every aspect and to be full of love. That is, we are to be spiritual, eternal, loving, wise and mature like Jesus is.

Our destiny is to bear his image (Romans 8:28-31) and we will be eternal, and immortal, and clothed in a spiritual body, (1 Corinthians 15: 42-54).

We will be so like Him that Jesus will not be ashamed to call us brethren (Hebrews 2:11-17).

God has done something magnificent in us by grace, and seated us in heavenly realms with himself that the succeeding ages may marvel (Ephesians 2:4-7).

### Restoring Love

1) Renew worship so it is absolutely Christ-centred. Teach on the life and ministry of Jesus.

2) Fix Christian’s minds on eternity and seek the presence of the Holy Spirit.

3) Give people a vision for real biblical love and get them thirsty for it.

4.) Build unity around Christ and according to the Scriptures.

5) Follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

6) Engage in real, helpful practical one-another ministry (see Gene Getz’s excellent book on the one another commands). Love one another in deed and truth, not just word and tongue.

7) Try and build an adventurous, faith-filled learning community as described earlier in the presentation on Learning Organizations.

### The Ministry Of Love

(Ephesians 4:11-16 NKJV) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, {13} till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; {14} that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, {15} but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ; {16} from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.