

Death of Life in the Emotions

Romans 5:17b

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Are you good at math? Or do you have a kind of mechanical aptitude? Do you like poetry or painting? Now if you have children, do you think they like poetry if you like it or that they'll be good at math if you're good at math? There is psychological evidence to suggest that it's really possible for you to transmit traits like that of your personality to your children. And you've probably seen it yourself. You can see some things in your own personality that you've got from your mom or your dad.

We talk at times about people having the same quick wit as their mother or we talk about them having their father's eyes. It's obvious that you can transmit to your children qualities of your mind and your emotions and your body. You can transmit it by heredity not just by environment. Now, do you lose your temper? Do you have trouble with pride? Do you have trouble with anger? If you have children, will you transmit those traits to them? The psychological evidence that we have suggests that you won't. You don't, by heredity, transmit moral traits or qualities.

It is true that you are influenced by the environment in which you're brought up. If you're a person that is always escapist about your responsibilities, then your children will grow up seeing you escaping again and again from your responsibilities and seeing you lapse into melancholia every time you have something that you should do. Of course, they will learn to take the same kind of attitude, but you see they learn it by environment and by example, not by heredity.

Now, brothers and sisters, it's those two kinds of transmissions that you and I have experienced from the first man in the world. The first man in the world, you remember, transmitted in those two ways something of himself to us and that's really what the verse that we're studying this morning says, maybe you'd look at it, Romans 5:17.

Romans 5:17: "If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man..." And that's really what it means, you see. The one man's trespass was that he refused to live off God's Holy Spirit. He refused to receive the uncreated life that God had to give him. He decided to go it alone and live it on his own. As a result of that, because he didn't receive the Holy Spirit into him, his mind and emotions and his body underwent deterioration. His mind became impaired and made mistakes, his emotions became unbalanced and his body became weakened.

Now brothers and sisters that, he passed on to you and me. Our bodies are not nearly the bodies that God made them in the very beginning. Our minds aren't the clear thinking machines that God made them at the beginning. Our emotions aren't the beautiful balanced things that God made at the beginning. So in a way, Adam has passed that on to us. And then you see that as he lived in the world independent of God, so we all learned from his example. We learned to live as if there's no Creator.

So that today, the great mass of people in the world live as if there is nobody taking care of the whole thing and as if everybody has to make his own way. That's really what that means, you see. Because of Adam refusing to receive the Holy Spirit into himself, he passed on to us his impaired mind, his unbalanced emotions and his weakened body. He created a pro-self world, a world that existed for itself, an anti-God world, a world that was filled with many evil spirits along with

anger and envy and jealousy. We entered into that environment. And it's in that sense that we have kind of original sin passed on to us.

It's not that we can't avoid being evil. It's not that because Adam was evil, we are evil. But it's because Adam refused the life of the Holy Spirit. It affected his personality and his body in certain ways and he passed those traits on to us. And that's our situation today. You remember the beauty of it is that we are all living in this kind of death life unnecessarily. We're all living this way unnecessarily. Because in fact, God put us all into Jesus in pre-creation eternity and he destroyed us all there. Actually we don't have to die today.

We're under the misapprehension that we do. We are under the misapprehension that God has kept his Holy Spirit from us and will not ever more give him to us. But actually that's wrong. God destroyed us all in his Son Jesus and so God is actually this morning willing to give us his Holy Spirit. Our situation today is not that we cannot get at the Holy Spirit. Our situation is that we have a choice this morning. You can either live receiving the Holy Spirit into you and allowing the Holy Spirit to influence your personality or you can refuse him and live in the midst of the death that Adam lived in. That's really our choice.

Each of us is deciding today whether we're living in the midst of death or in the midst of life. You remember two weeks ago, we looked at some of the effects of that death on our minds. This morning I'd like to look for a few minutes at the effect on our emotions. God's plan was this, that we receive the Holy Spirit of uncreated life into our spirits. That Holy Spirit contains his own genes.

It contains the joy of our Creator and the love of our Creator and the peace of our Creator. His will was that we should pass that through our wills, through our minds, through our emotions out to our bodies. The emotions would be the link for that life between our minds and our bodies. The emotions would be used to express that love and joy and peace to the whole world.

As the joy, love and peace that came from the Holy Spirit passed through our emotions, our emotions would automatically get satisfaction themselves. They would just enjoy it and that was God's plan. It's a bit the same kind of experience you have when you do a job that you're utterly taken up with. You probably have done that. Brothers, we have done a piece of carpentry or some electrical work or something on the automobile that has really given us satisfaction and our emotions are utterly satisfied. It's because we've really been utterly taken up with the job.

Or sisters, I think when you're doing something that utterly occupies you and satisfied you, your emotions are satisfied. They are not all frustrated and pent up. Now, that was God's plan that we would receive this love and joy and peace from our relationship with him through the Holy Spirit. Our emotions would then be used simply to express all that to the world.

Now when we refused to live off the Holy Spirit, we found that we had emotions on our hands that had no satisfaction. And dear ones, when we live in death, that's what we find ourselves. We find ourselves with emotions that aren't satisfying. And so men began to dedicate their whole lives to getting satisfaction for their emotions. They felt emptiness in the world. They felt an emptiness each day. They felt there was something not satisfying. They wanted to try to get that satisfaction from the only source they could -- from the world.

It's really terribly frustrating. However brilliant an ad man you are it is extremely difficult to

convince people that by buying a "Cutlass" [a type of car] that you can absolutely be flying high every moment of every day in your life. Or by buying a Mustang, [a type of car] you can solve once and for all, all your needs for emotional satisfaction or exhilaration. It is extremely difficult. But do you see, we're committed to that.

We're committed to trying to satisfy emotions that are terribly unsatisfied and frustrated. We really do lack the sense of excitement and exhilaration that God's Spirit would bring us, and you know that. You know there are days when you just wonder, "Oh, this is just blah. There's just nothing." You feel, "Oh, I want to do something. I want to do something to get excitement." Brothers and sisters, that's what we experience when we aren't receiving this supernatural life from God.

We find we have emotions on our hands that are just miserably unsatisfied and frustrated. The only thing we can do is try to get excitement and satisfaction from the world. And so we do it. You buy a faster car to see if you can go faster. But after you get past 80 and you're used to 80 miles an hour, it's no longer very satisfying.

So okay, we'll try to do it on skis. All right, then we'll try to do it on a snowmobile. Okay, then we'll try to do it on water skis. We go up and up and up until most of us come to the place where we can't find anything else to excite us enough. We find that we're then beginning to use people to satisfy our emotions and you know that.

So often you've used the girl friend or the boy friend, not to express love to them but to get exhilaration, to get excitement, to get satisfaction from them. So often you know that's why our jobs are frustrating because we're demanding from our jobs, a satisfaction and excitement that a job cannot give you. And so, many of us live in the midst of death. The death that Adam experienced has been passed on to us. We have emotions that just can't get enough excitement and that are continually frustrated.

You know that if you try to find the exhilaration that God's Spirit alone can give you, in sex there's a tremendous anti-climax, isn't there? If you try to find the sense of transcendentalism that only God's Spirit can give you, through drugs there's a tremendous anti-climax after you've tried it. So, many of us live our lives in the midst of anti-climax. We try to get satisfied with the emotions, but they won't go. That's one way in which our emotions become unbalanced.

At times we're trying to get elation for our emotions. At other times we're trying to get stability. At other times, we're depressed in our emotions. At other times we're utterly exhilarated so that we can't control them. Sometimes we're utterly insensitive to people. At other times we'd shake at a shadow. We find our emotions are going back and forward, trying to get the exhilaration that God's Spirit alone can give us and trying at the other end to get the peace that God's Spirit can give us. We find our emotions are unbalanced.

There's another way dear ones, in which our emotions are unbalanced. You can find it there in Genesis 3:8-10. "And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'" Now you can see in Adam, "I was afraid" -- and there's fear there. And, "I was naked and I hid myself" -- there's the stealth and the furtiveness.

Now dear ones, we entered into that kind of emotion too. Many of us are dominated by a self-doubt and by a fear that we will not be accepted. Many of us live our lives in that way. We wonder, "Will we be accepted?" And really our problem is we're not sure whether the Man behind the whole universe will accept us. We're in great doubt about whether we're fitting into any plan or not. We have a great problem with our own identity and why we're here.

And you know what we do. When we lack a sense of satisfaction and acceptance in our emotions from God, we try to gain it from other people. That's what most of us are involved in. We're trying to make up for the lack of acceptance with God (because our consciences are not clean towards him) by trying to get acceptance from everybody else. And so our emotions are all bound up with almost draining other people of love. You know we do that, don't we?

We're almost draining others of love. We want them to accept us and we want them to give us signs that they accept us. Isn't that the whole sensitivity group circle, the whole T-group trip? We're trying to tell each other that we accept each other and we're just draining energy and love from other people to try to satisfy these emotions that are demanding acceptance. And you know what happens then?

You see other people who are gaining more acceptance than you are. And so, another emotion comes up inside you: envy and jealousy. You're jealous of them because they're gaining more acceptance in the public eye than you are. It's great I suppose to have movie stars but really it's part of the expression of a sinful world. So many of us when we see the movie star with his two or three cars or we see him with his big house or with all his fame and his respect that people are giving him, it really just produces in us an envy and a jealousy that is restless and makes us dissatisfied.

Now in that way too you see we've entered into unbalance in our emotions. Our emotions are unbalanced because we're often trying to use them to give ourselves a sense of acceptance. So brothers and sisters, most of us live lives full of opposite kind of emotions. Our emotions are almost apart from us.

Many of us feel, "These are things that we cannot control." At one time they're elated, at one time they're depressed. At one time they're happy and one time they're sad. At one time we're outgoing to our friends and another time we're all closed in on ourselves in introspective gaze. Our emotions are up and down in all kinds of ways.

At times we're filled with envy, at times with anger that we cannot control. At times we're filled with strain and nervousness. All these things eventually bring hypertension to the body. We find really that we're people who are almost being whipped along by our emotions. Now, brothers and sisters, those are some of the things we mean when we say that we have entered into the unbalanced emotions that Adam experienced through lack of the Holy Spirit.

Now dear ones, that all changes completely when you at last choose life in Jesus. It really does. When you at last believe that God destroyed you in Jesus and that he no longer hates you or no longer is demanding anything from you, there comes into your own conscience, into your mind and spirit, a great sense of acceptance.

There is a great peace that comes into your mind and your emotions. At last, instead of doubting acceptance, instead of wondering if everybody else accepts you, instead of running these kind of popularity contests in your mind with other people, suddenly you come to the place where you have a

quiet assurance that the Father in the back of the universe, loves you with all his heart, thinks the world of you, accepts you fully as his child, as his son, as his daughter and watches you every moment of the day. There comes a great sense of peace into your emotions.

Then God begins to give you his Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit begins to fill you with outgoing love for other people. He gives a joy and a peace that suddenly makes you independent of faster cars and makes you independent of a vacation. So often we say, "I just have to have a vacation. I am falling apart." Brothers and sisters, I say this in love to us all, we should be able to live without vacations. I know that sounds mad but do you see, that's the Father's will.

We shouldn't come to Christmas and say, "I'm worn out. I just can't wait till I get home", or "I can't wait to the summer time till we get a vacation." It's the Father's will that we should live continually in peace and in serenity with him. We are continually receiving strength in our emotions from him. Now brothers and sisters, it is possible to enter into that kind of thing. Jesus expressed it there, it's in John 14:27.

John 14:27; "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." Now brothers and sisters what happens when you really accept that you've been destroyed in Jesus and that your Creator accepts you because of that? That peace becomes a reality. You can't produce that peace by meditating on those words. All you get is a psychological and emotional lift. That peace is actually given to you miraculously by the Holy Spirit. It brings a serenity and a quietness inside.

The exhilaration that we so often demand from things like motorbikes, snowmobiles, boats and fast cars, that peace is meant to come to us from the mind-expanding transcendental experience of being in touch with the Creator of the universe. And that begins to be a reality when you accept that position in Jesus. Paul talked about it in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 and it's just one of the experiences that he had but it gives you some sense of it. He's talking about a personal experience that he had in a personal relationship with the Maker of the universe.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4; "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter."

Now loved ones, do you see that in a sexual experience and a drug experience and in a faster motorbike, we're looking for a substitute for that kind of exhilaration. It's madness and you never get it.

It always bursts as a bubble in your hand. You have the experience and the anti-climax. The only way to come into that is to enter into it by an experience with God in Jesus. Then it becomes possible to experience that exhilaration in the way you are meant to experience it. And your emotions become satisfied. At last you cease to be a parasite. You sisters, you know the way you drain your poor roommate. "You never pay any attention to me. Why don't you pay attention to me?"

Or brothers, we drain our brothers by competing with them in rivalry to try to prove that we're better than they are. Husbands and wives, we drain each other. We demand love from that wife. She won't give us attention. We demand love from that husband; he won't give us attention. But then it carries on as we drain our fathers and mothers, or we drain our sons and our daughters. Now that

isn't the Father's will.

The Father's will is that we should come into absolute balance in our emotions through a full experience of relationship with him. And that's part of the way life comes to us. That's why Paul says there is life to be experienced.

Romans 5:17; "If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." It is really possible to reign above unbalanced emotions. It's really possible to enter into a world of real balance, real peace and real joy. That's what God wants for us.

So will you see that all the effects of death can be reversed? But it's all conditional on you and me entering into Jesus and accepting that God has destroyed us in Jesus and received the new life that He rose to give us.