

# Small Group Study

## Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

## Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

## Discussion

### Emotional Freedom: The Mind/Heart Connection



## Discussion Questions

Many of us have been bound up by false beliefs that often teach us to deny, suppress, and control emotion. We find something different in the Bible though: a radical freedom to *fully* express our emotions. Read the following scriptures.

### Genesis 45:1-15

*1 Joseph could stand it no longer. There were many people in the room, and he said to his attendants, "Out, all of you!" So he was alone with his brothers when he told them who he was. 2 Then he broke down and wept. He wept so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh's palace.*

*3 "I am Joseph!" he said to his brothers. "Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were speechless! They were stunned to realize that Joseph was standing there in front of them. 4 "Please, come closer," he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt. 5 But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. 6 This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 7 God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. 8 So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.*

*9 "Now hurry back to my father and tell him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all the land of Egypt. So come down to me immediately!' 10 You can live in the region of Goshen, where you can be near me with all your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and everything you own. 11 I will take care of you there, for there are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you, your household, and all your animals will starve."*

*12 Then Joseph added, "Look! You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that I really am Joseph! 13 Go tell my father of my honored position here in Egypt. Describe for him everything you have seen, and then bring my father here quickly." 14 Weeping*

## Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

- 1.** What is one thing that you think you could competently teach someone else?
- 2.** What is one experience you've had that you would *love* to share with someone else?
- 3.** What is one exciting thing that happened to you this past week?

*with joy, he embraced Benjamin, and Benjamin did the same. 15 Then Joseph kissed each of his brothers and wept over them, and after that they began talking freely with him.*

### **John 11:30-44**

*30 Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. 31 When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there. 32 When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died."*

*33 When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. 34 "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Then Jesus wept. 36 The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" 37 But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"*

*38 Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. 39 "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible."*

*40 Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" 41 So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. 42 You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." 43 Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"*

### **Esther 4:1**

*1 When Mordecai learned about all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on burlap and ashes, and went out into the city, crying with a loud and bitter wail.*

1. We were not meant to live with our feelings boxed up. Our emotions can't be ignored if we are to live fully alive in God.

How have you been taught in the past to hide, belittle, or manage your emotions?

2. To be effective at growing our emotional life, we have to own the feelings we have right now. Real growth requires real honesty. *What do you really feel?*

3. What is the last thing you got really excited about? Why did it pump you up? Did you share your joy with anybody?

4. Have you faced a big-time trial in which you tried to be strong and stuff down what you were really feeling? Explain this situation. What were your reasons for not expressing what you felt?

5. How does your response to the previous question line up with some of the full emotional expression we see in the Bible? In retrospect, would you handle things differently now?

6. One thing we learned in the sermon this past weekend is that emotion and reason were created in us to live together instead of either vying for the top position.

Are you more likely to make reason king or make emotion king in your life? Is there a reason you lean in that direction?

7. Have a couple people in the group describe a specific situation where they handled their emotions as if reason or emotion were king.

8. What feelings do you tend to downplay, belittle, or ignore? What passionate, “uncontrollable” feelings do you blame for your wrong actions or shortcomings?

9. Are you sharing your deep feelings with a close friend or spouse, or do you cover up what is in your heart? Why?

10. If you were fully emotionally released, how would you start to communicate more openly with those that are close to you? Can you give an example?

God bless,

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