

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

1300 E. Boynton St. • Hamilton • www.parkheightscoc.com

Thus Saith the Lord

EMOTIONOLATRY

By Jeff Sweeten

A friend of mine coined a term that sums up spiritual failure quite well: emotionolatry. Of course, one might think this freshly minted term would defy definition, but not so. The fascinating combination of "emotionalism" and "idolatry" actually describes perfectly the separation between God and many a sincere, but misguided, soul (Matthew 7:21-23). Placing mental, psychological excitement at the top of the totem pole and dismissing simple logic must have its draw as so many church-goers rely on it for their anything-goes religious authority. "But, I feel..." they say, and you can fill in the rest of the statement with whatever practice or doctrine you choose. So, by prioritizing emotion, many develop such a religiously "open mind" their brains fall out.

The draw on emotion to justify actions is not new by any measure. The bucket of everything that is sinful relies heavily on how one feels. Take Eve, for instance, and Satan's argument that the forbidden fruit was "good for food" (physically pleasurable), "pleasant to the eyes" (visually pleasurable) and "desirable to make one wise" (egotistically pleasurable). She chose to go with her feelings (Genesis 3:6, and look at the mess that got us into!).

The temptation to bow to what feels good did not end there. John was dealing with that very issue among God's children when he wrote:

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world." John 2:15-16

Did you notice that each of these three categories is motivated by personal desire? Lust and pride are the categories into which every sin finds traction; and, their foothold is feelings. I must feel good, I must feel good about what I see, I must feel good about me. Emotionolatry.

Jeremiah tried to explain how the children of Israel found themselves rejected by God, and he explained it this way: "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Making an idol out of whatever feels good makes an idiot out of a man. Placing feelings before God's Word is simply emotionolatry!

JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Class • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study • Contact the minister at 254-370-4130