



## Week of October 7, 2018: Introduction to Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

### Discussion Questions Set #1

**“Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).**

In sermon, we spoke about how this scripture helps us to see that Jesus experienced at least four types of growth during His time on earth: Christ grew in wisdom (intellectually), in stature (physically), in favour with God (spiritually) and in favour with man (socially or relationally).

1. Have you ever thought of Jesus growing in any of these ways? As you think of Jesus growing in each of these four ways, what thoughts come to mind?
2. Why is it important to understand that Jesus grew in these ways? How does the knowledge of Christ’s growth in these ways impact your understanding of your own growth and development?

*If you flip through the pages of the New Testament, you will encounter a Jesus who shed tears (Luke 19:41), was filled with joy (Luke 10:21), was grieved (Mark 14:34), was angry (Mark 3:5), was overcome by sadness (Matthew 26:37), felt compassion (Luke 7:13), felt sorrow (John 11:35), showed astonishment and wonder (Mark 6:6) and felt distress (Mark 3:5), but also a Jesus who reacted appropriately each and every time He experienced such emotion.*

3. Why is it important to realize that Jesus experienced these emotions?

### Discussion Questions Set #2

In sermon, we learned that there is another area of development that we sometimes gloss over, particularly within the church – emotional growth and development. We defined emotional maturity as the ability to experience and appropriately respond to our emotions. We also acknowledged that emotional growth doesn’t always happen as “naturally” as one might expect; often we need to be equipped to experience our emotions appropriately.

1. Have you ever considered the reality of emotional growth and/or maturity before?
2. Have you ever heard the “fake it ‘til you make it” or the “bury it deep inside” mantra in the church? Do you agree that we often gloss over this reality within the church? If so, why do you think this is the case? If not, how do you see the church addressing issues of emotional maturity?
3. What might happen if we do not progress toward emotional maturity appropriately as a follower of Jesus?
4. In sermon, I mentioned that detachment from one’s emotions can lead to ineffective engagement with reality, but so too can an over-awareness of one’s emotions. Have you ever seen/experienced either of these realities in your life?

READ: “Ignoring our emotions is turning our back on reality. Listening to our emotions ushers us into reality. And reality is where we meet God ... Emotions are the language of the soul. They are the cry that gives the heart a voice ... However, we often turn a deaf ear – through emotional denial, distortion, or disengagement. We strain out anything disturbing in order to gain tenuous control of our inner world. We are frightened and ashamed of what leaks into our consciousness. In neglecting our intense emotions, we are false to ourselves and lose a wonderful opportunity to know God. We forget that change comes through brutal honesty and vulnerability before God.” (The Cry of the Soul, pg. 24-25, Dan Allender and Tremper Longman III)

1. What does this quote tell us about emotional maturity?
2. Allender and Longman suggest that when we fail to experience intense emotions appropriately, we lose an opportunity to know God. Discuss. How do you see this at play in your own following of Jesus?



### Discussion Questions Set #3

"[Jesus] took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:37-38)

1. Did Jesus experience intensely negative emotion? Did Jesus bury these negative emotions deep inside and greet His friends with a toothy "I'm fine" grin? What did Jesus do with these overwhelming emotions?
2. Have you ever experienced overwhelming emotions that you did not know what to do with? Did you try turning them over to God? How did this help/hinder you in effectively handling such intense emotions?