

The QBC Daily Nugget September 3, 2010

“The Rules of the Lord are true and righteous. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold” (Psalm 19:9b-10a)

ESTHER 5:9 –And Haman went out that day joyful and glad of heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king’s gate, that he neither rose nor trembled before him, he was filled with wrath against Mordecai.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: CONTROLLED EMOTIONS. Okay. I admit Haman isn’t the role model for our lives. However, he is a good illustration of our lives. Based on today’s reference we might conclude that Haman was a “moody” person. Talk about a quick mood shift! One moment he is all happy on cloud nine and then, in no time flat, he’s in the pit consumed with wrath. This was not just some irritation. No, this was all-consuming and the raw, ugly emotion of wrath would include hatred, envy, vengeance, bitterness, a judgmental spirit, and extreme ill thoughts toward Mordecai. We know from the story all those were true as Haman sought the destruction of Mordecai and his people, the Jews.

Like everything in life, emotions are God’s gifts to us. They allow us to enjoy the beauty of creation with heartwarming wonder. They enable us to enter into intimate relationships with other human beings and our God. As much as we may look on the good side of our emotions, we must not lose sight when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, everything became completely corrupt to include our emotions. And without God’s Spirit helping us with our emotions, the Haman in each of us will come out. Oh, we won’t plot murder, but remember Jesus said that to be angry with a person equates to murder – “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment’” (**MATTHEW 5:21-22a**).

Emotions can be tricky in living the Christian life too. They collide with faith. How often have we neglected spiritual privileges and responsibilities because we just didn’t “feel” like it? I confess there are times come mid-afternoon on Sunday, I just don’t feel like going out and coming back to church. Mid-week prayer meeting? It happens there sometimes too! That doesn’t make me or you bad Christians if we sometimes experience “the I don’t feel like it” Christianity. It is part of the fight. However, if the “I don’t feel like it”, determines our obedience, then we are in spiritual trouble. Edward Payson said, “There is nothing in which young converts are more prone to err than in laying too much stress upon their feelings. If they have a comfortable half-hour in the morning, it atones for a multitude of sins in the course of the day. Christ says, ‘If you love me, keep my commandments.’ It would be well for us to pay more attention to our conduct, and prove the depth of our feeling by our obedience.” But what must not happen is what Payson identifies as error in young converts – relying too much upon their feelings. I would extend this great man of God’s statement to a larger crowd – all of us. We will never be free in this life of feelings or emotions seeking to be the compass guiding and evaluating our Christian lives. It is part of the battle to keep the true compass of faith and the Word of God guiding us and not the always unreliable and shifting emotions. And this isn’t easy . . . Paul wrote, “put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires” (**EPHESIANS 4:22**). The person we were before Christ saved us was ruled by passions or mostly by sinful emotions. Those are not removed at our conversion, but they can, under the Spirit’s control, become sanctified or controlled by Him.

As we seek to lovingly obey our Lord, let’s strive for controlled emotions. The Christian life is lived in obedience to commands and reliance upon promises, not the changing moods of our unstable emotions.

PRAYER: “Lord, help me bring my ever changing emotions under Your loving control.”

QUOTE: “All of the Christian’s life is to be lived under the control of God’s Spirit including our emotions.”