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PRESENTS

Frankly Speaking Notes . . .

Published as time and opportunity permit, usually a few times a week.

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Ed Smithson, Editor

‘WHAT DO YOU FEEL?’

I have seen it dozens of times through the years. A TV reporter sticks a microphone in the face of someone and asks, “How do you feel about that.” In many instances it is immediately after a tragedy. Perhaps it is immediately after the loss of a loved one in a horrific accident or shooting. That is the question they ask. How do they think the person would feel? Certainly they would be in shock, devastated, overwhelmed or in total disbelief. Their thoughts, if they have any rational ones, would be almost if not altogether inexplicable.

I have a question. When did everything become a matter of “feeling” instead of thinking? There was a time when people were asked what they thought about something. Now it is what they “feel” about it.

EMOTION IS AS NATURAL AS BREATHING

It isn’t that folks done have emotions or feelings. I am sure it has always been so. Nowadays though, it seems to be that most are concerned about how something affects them emotionally.

Surely Eve must have “felt” badly when Cain killed Abel. People do feel sad when they suffer loss, especially if it is someone with whom they have been close.

Perhaps Hollywood is to blame for a lot of it. In stories told in movies, the action or reaction seemed to be based on emotion. They dealt with problems based on the way they felt, not on using their minds to solve them.

TO SUGGEST WE ARE UNCONTROLABLE IS LUDICROUS

One of the biggest deceptions ever perpetrated on this world is “I couldn’t help it.” What that says is, “I do not have control over the situation.” How false can that be? An old Matlock movie I watched the other day told the story of a married man having an illicit relationship with a woman not his wife. When the affair came to light, one of them said, “We didn’t intend for it to happen, it just did.” Do you know how basically stupid that sounds? We have no control of what happens to us, it just does?

Question! If someone interviewed Sir Edmond Hillary after he climbed Mt Everest, “how did you do it?” He answered, “Well, I really didn’t mean to climb it, it just happened.” You would think he was the greatest fraud in the world. Suppose someone asked Neil Armstrong how he landed on the moon, and he said, “Oh a bunch of us were just messing around with electronics and physics and I just found myself up there.” He would be laughed out of the room.

Our actions are based on our thoughts. “For as he **thinketh** within himself, **so is he:**” (Proverbs 23:7) Jesus said, “**For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings:**” (Matthew 15:19 Emphasis mine) It is our thoughts that determine our emotions and our actions. We think before we act. Sometimes people will say when caught in error, “I just didn’t think.” No so! Thinking comes before action.

So why is it that we are so concerned about the “feelings” of people. We say we don’t want to say or do anything that will hurt feelings. I wonder why Peter didn’t think of that on Pentecost when he told the Jews, “**ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay:**” (Acts 2:23) Wasn’t he afraid he would “hurt their feelings?” Perhaps he was more interested in saving their souls than he was concerned about “hurting their feelings.”

THE BIBLE SPEAKS PLAINLY ABOUT SIN

When Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he told them he had heard “**that there are contentions among you.**” (1 Corinthians 1:11) He also told them where the information came from “**the house of Chole.**” (Quite different from how we hear things today.) He also told them that one of them had taken up with “his father’s wife” and had to be dealt with. (1

Corinthians 5) Now I wonder why he didn't just keep quiet because he knew "feelings" were going to be hurt. It rather simple! He was more interested in the **souls** of men than he was in their feelings.

The word "feel" is only used six times in the American Standard Version of the Bible and in no case has it to do with emotions. Emotion is not a word used in the Bible at all. We see the effects of it. Weeping, crying, mourning, etc., but never the word itself. Wonder why that is?

One of the reasons for the high rate of attrition in modern day churches is because people have accepted false teaching (whose effect is always fleeting) through the shenanigans and high pressure of their preachers. Since there is no substance (solid truth) to their message, soon people become disheartened and disillusioned. There is simply nothing there to sustain them through the trials and tribulations of life and they leave. Some, thank God, are interested enough to study for themselves and remove themselves from such groups.

Feelings are no more dependable than a snowfall in southern California in August. The religion of Christ is a "thinking" religion. It is based upon "knowing" the Bible and what it says and having faith in the expressions and promises of the Lord and his writers. "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Smithson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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October 27, 2010