

Copyright © 2019 Jonathan Craig Seals

All rights reserved. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has permission to reproduce and disseminate this document in any form by any means for purposes chosen by the Seminary, including, without limitation, preservation or instruction.

EMOTIONAL VIRTUES IN A FAITHFUL EXPOSITORY MINISTRY:  
UTILIZING ROBERT C. ROBERTS TO ARGUE FOR A MODEL OF  
EXPOSITORY PREACHING THAT FOSTERS THE MATURATION  
OF EMOTIONAL VIRTUES WITHIN A CONGREGATION

---

A Prospectus  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

---

by  
Jonathan Craig Seals  
August 2019

**APPROVAL SHEET**

EMOTIONAL VIRTUES IN A FAITHFUL EXPOSITORY MINISTRY:  
UTILIZING ROBERT C. ROBERTS TO ARGUE FOR A MODEL OF  
EXPOSITORY PREACHING THAT FOSTERS THE MATURATION  
OF EMOTIONAL VIRTUES WITHIN A CONGREGATION

Jonathan Craig Seals

Read and Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hershael W. York (Chair)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eric L. Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jonathan T. Pennington

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES .....	v
PREFACE .....	vi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
A Biblical Demand for Emotional Virtue.....	3
Transformation of the καρδία .....	6
Theological and Philosophical Reflection on Emotion ..	10
Thesis .....	22
Methodology .....	23
Background .....	24
Limits .....	25
Significance .....	26
2. ROBERTS AND CHRISTIAN EMOTIONAL VIRTUE .....	27
Competing Theories of Emotion .....	28
Roberts's Nuanced View of Emotions .....	34
Roberts's Twelve Facts about Emotions .....	51
Roberts On Christian Emotional Virtues .....	55
Conclusion .....	66
3. DIRECT METHODS FOR DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL VIRTUE .....	67
Wisdom as an Alternative to Principlization .....	68
Preaching Pericope by Pericope .....	81

Chapter	Page
Promote Mental Dexterity .....	84
Apply the Primary Christian Concern .....	87
Applying the PCC: Union with Christ .....	91
Conclusion .....	103
4. INDIRECT METHODS FOR DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL VIRTUES ..	104
Subjectivity and Christian Emotional Virtues .....	105
Permission Giving: Self Examination .....	110
Permission to Differentiate Sin and Suffering .....	115
Promote Empathy with the Characters in Scripture .....	122
Conclusion .....	136
5. CONCLUSION .....	138
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	153
ABSTRACT .....	172
VITA .....	174

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Gestalt Young Lady/Old Lady .....	30
2. Subjective passions and objective demands .....	89
3. Union with Christ is foundational to the divine demand .....	102

## PREFACE

When I began my theological studies over ten years ago, I had no idea I would one day walk away with a Ph.D. in Christian preaching. To be honest, that was the furthest thing from my mind. I wanted to get in, get done, and get to work. My passion was and remains the church and making disciples. However, in that time I discovered a love for preaching and teaching others to preach. I am so thankful for instructors like Dr. Calvin Pearson, Dr. Vern Charette, and Dr. Hershael York for investing in me as a student and as a pastor.

Almost six years ago, Park Hill Baptist Church in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, called me as a twenty-nine-year-old to serve as senior pastor. They welcomed my family and me and allowed me to continue my studies while serving. There is no doubt that they have put up with plenty of mistakes as I navigated the first few years of pastoral ministry as well as this program. Their grace and love are unmatched, and I am so grateful to be their pastor.

My wife, Kristi, has been by my side through this whole process. Her love and commitment to me through every up and down over the last eleven years is humbling. I love her with all my heart, and I pray that the Lord will continue to grow our love every more. Our children, Leyah (age 8) and Landon (age 3), have also been a source of great joy and laughter during this stressful season.

Also, I am also grateful for my father (Laughton) and mother (Sharon) who supported and encouraged me to continue my education. To the ministry staff at PHBC, who was a central part of my support system, I sincerely say, “thank you.” In addition, I want to thank the friends and colleagues who listened to me moan, cry, vent, and rejoice through this entire process. Also, I want to thank Betsy, Lisa, Andy, Adam, and Joseph

for helping with the writing process, whether it was editing a chapter or simply listening to me dribble on until a coherent thought was produced, my deepest thanks.

Finally, I pray that this dissertation will bring glory to Jesus Christ. I also pray that His kingdom will benefit in a small way from the thoughts and research found within. My heart is fuller today with Jesus than it was when I began; therefore,—if for no other reason—all of this was worth it. With Paul, I hope to say, “Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ” (Phil 3:8). Lord, may it be!

Craig Seals

Arkadelphia, Arkansas

May 2019



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of Christian spiritual maturity is a process of filling in gaps and building up areas of weakness. The process of maturity takes time, various tools, and spiritual disciplines. The sermon is one vital part of that process. However, there is one area of spiritual maturity that expository sermons often fail at adequately addressing.

In Galatians 5:22, Paul provides a list of Christian virtues referred to as the fruit of the Spirit. Included in the list are emotional virtues of joy and peace. Also, the other virtues all seem to have emotional elements. For example, self-control is about having control of one's actions and expressions of emotion. While patience is not an emotional virtue in the same way as joy or peace, it still issues from an emotional core. Patience is the denial and control of other emotions, such as anger or frustration, in light of negative situations. These emotional virtues are expressions of a heart that is rooted in the Holy Spirit and empowered by Christian love.

Emotional virtues are a particular set of virtues that are basic to the other kinds of virtues.<sup>1</sup> Thus, forms of virtues that would not be considered emotional (i.e., patience or perseverance) issue from an emotional core. Each virtue that a Christian exhibits will be fueled by an underlying emotional virtue. Without emotional virtues, the other virtues will not be fully attainable for the Christian.

As a Christian grows toward a life of spiritual virtue, four sets of virtues must be considered and developed: emotional virtues, behavioral virtues, virtues of will power,

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert C. Roberts, "Emotions among the Virtues of the Christian Life," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 20, no. 1 (1992): 37-68.

and attitudinal virtues.<sup>2</sup> According to Robert C. Roberts the latter three types are dependent on emotional virtues for their motivation and color. Roberts believes that the emotions supply “much of what is distinctively Christian in the grammar of these other virtues.” So, while the development of behavioral virtues (i.e., showing kindness), virtues of will power (i.e., courage), and attitudinal virtues (i.e., hope) will be part of Christian spiritual formation, the emotional virtues that undergird these virtues are critically important to developing them. If Roberts is correct and emotional virtues are critical for spiritual maturity, then it raises the question: how does an expositor, committed to biblical truth, preach sermons that cultivate emotional virtues (i.e., joy, peace, and contrition) in a local congregation?

Currently, a robust conversation concerning Christian emotional virtues is absent from the field of homiletics. Despite the New Testament placing such high regard on the development of the inner life of the Christian, much of the literature in the field does not address the topic directly; interaction with emotion is often reserved for discussions on rhetorical *pathos* or the *ethos* of the preacher. Others focus on emotion merely as a means to keep the attention of the hearer. Rarely, however, is a model argued that directly helps to cultivate these emotional virtues. In part, this may be the product of split ideas about how these virtues develop.

Often in the church, the process of emotional virtue development is divided down theological lines. Theologically conservative preachers tend to focus on the development of the mind (right thinking) and actions (right doing) because of a commitment to the Bible and a desire to follow Jesus with obedience. Often emotions are considered secondary issues and are merely the result of right thinking or, in a more Augustinian view, the result of faithful habits (right actions). Often conservatives assume right thinking will produce right emotions. However, the theologically liberal preacher

---

<sup>2</sup> Roberts, “Emotions among the Virtues,” 49.

will focus on the cultivation of community, social justice, and love with little or no attention given to orthodox doctrine. The emotions play a central role but tend to be rooted in subjective doctrine. Liberal preachers tend to place a greater regard on subjective experience than on objective theological truth.

Thus, biblical expositors may often feel they are confronted with a dilemma of either falling prey to subjectivity or ignoring the emotions directly and focusing on the formation of right ideas. Since ignoring orthodoxy is not an option for the faithful expositor, it would seem that he is left without another option than to preach objective truth and hope for emotional development.

However, this dissertation contends for a middle way that privileges the objective doctrine and narrative of Scripture while also intentionally invites the hearer into a greater experience of Christ with the result being the development of emotional virtues. However, before laying out the thesis, the next section will aim to establish the biblical warrant for the cultivation of emotional virtues.

### **A Biblical Demand for Emotional Virtue**

Jesus's teachings tend to focus on the disciples' emotional life, but Jesus also serves as a model for emotional maturity. The authors of the Gospels do not withhold Jesus's emotions from the reader. The authors felt no need to hide Jesus's emotional expressions, even negative and difficult emotions. In the Gospels of John and Luke, the authors provide two vivid examples of Jesus' emotional life; the first is found in John 11. Jesus arrived in Judea because Lazarus had died. He first meets Martha on the road and explains to her that he is "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). Jesus then meets Mary on his way to the tomb. When Jesus sees Mary weeping, along with those with her weeping, the text says that he was *ἐνεβριμήσατο* (deeply moved) and *ἐτάραξεν* (troubled) (John 11:33). John does not explain why Jesus is moved, but the context seems to suggest that he is grieved for his friends who have lost their brother, Lazarus. The text then says that Jesus weeps. For the biblical authors to emphasize the tears of Jesus is

important. Jesus identifies with the suffering of his friends and expresses his pain in their presence. The humanity and pain of Jesus is seen and felt by the reader.

Jesus then continues on to the tomb of Lazarus. Before raising Lazarus from the dead, John tells the reader that Jesus was once again ἐμβριμώμενος (deeply moved). The word is somewhat ambiguous because it can mean an “intense concern” or “indignation.”<sup>3</sup> Jesus may have been feeling grief over Lazarus’ death as well as indignation at death itself. The text is unclear, but what is clear is that Jesus was far from a Stoic messiah. He experienced emotional pain.

Another example of Jesus’s emotional life is in Luke 22, where Jesus is on the verge of being betrayed and arrested. He has gone with his disciples to the Garden of Olives and is there praying and waiting. The text says, “And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44).<sup>4</sup> His emotional upheaval is not displayed as a sign of weakness or lack of virtue but as a picture of great courage and trusting the Father despite great fear of what was to come. Despite his agony, Jesus continues to the cross and embraces his suffering. In these two examples, the gospel authors show Jesus wrestling with difficult emotions. As the model of a healthy emotional life, Jesus establishes the standard for how his followers should handle their emotions. Jesus had self-control of his emotional life as well as the peace that came from the Father. His emotions did not lead him, but he felt them and allowed them to speak into his experience as a human. However, unlike Jesus, fallen people need the transformation of their emotional life so that their emotions may become virtues and not vices.

---

<sup>3</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 293.

<sup>4</sup> All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version, unless otherwise stated.

In the Bible, the outward actions of God’s people are part of a greater whole that includes emotional motivations. In the Gospels, Jesus shows prodigious concern for the inner life of his disciples. For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, he repeatedly challenges their inner motives (see Matt 5:8, 21-26, 27-30, and 33-37). He encourages fasting but teaches followers to do so in secret, away from the public eye, transforming the physical act of fasting into an internal spiritual exercise. He warns against placing too great a concern on material things because they will all eventually vanish. He commends giving to the needy but avoiding sounding a trumpet and drawing attention to the gift, implying that correct religious actions are not synonymous with spiritual vitality.

Jesus enjoins an ethic directed by kingdom motives flowing from a virtuous heart. While right actions matter, a virtuous heart operating from proper emotional motivations seems to be of primary concern. Only in this fusion can his listeners avoid the hypocrisy that he so criticized in the Pharisees. They consistently revealed attitudes that were selfish even while the outward actions showed concern for others.

Commenting on Jesus’ criticism in Matthew 5 of the Pharisees, Jonathan Pennington states,

They are hypocrites because they are not unified in heart and action; they actually *do* the right things, but they are not the right kind of people because their hearts are wrong. . . . In behavior they are righteous but inwardly they are not; hence, they lack what God cares about—as Aristotle would agree, they lack virtue.<sup>5</sup>

While behavior and inner emotional motivations are connected, a pharisaical heart focuses on outward performance, instead developing an emotional life that reflects the kingdom. The Pharisees serve as a model of inconsistency between the inner life and outer life. Jesus, on the other hand, demonstrated perfect consistency. His heart reflected his actions, and his actions perfectly reflected his heart.

---

<sup>5</sup> Jonathan T. Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 79.

## Transformation of the καρδία

In order to become like Jesus, the follower of Jesus must be transformed in thoughts, feelings, and behavior. The biblical authors are interested in the transformation of the human καρδία so that it reflects God’s καρδία (usually translated as mind or heart). In Ezekiel 36:26, God says, “And I will give you a new  $\text{כֶּלֶב}$  [LXX καρδίαν], and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart ( $\text{כֶּלֶב}$ ) of stone from your flesh and give you a heart ( $\text{כֶּלֶב}$ ) of flesh.” Jesus again, this time in the Gospel of Mark, states the greatest commandment, “‘And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart [καρδία] and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31). God transforms the heart in order to love God and love others.

The Greek term καρδία represents the “inner life” of a person and includes the mind, the will, and the emotions. Context is important in determining the nuanced meaning within a given passage. In the New Testament, καρδία is sometimes used to refer to the intellect or the source of thoughts. Jesus states, “For from within, out of the καρδία of man, *come evil thoughts*, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery” (Mark 7:21). The καρδία produces thoughts and ideas. John 12:40 reads, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their καρδία, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their καρδία, and turn, and I would heal them.” The hardened καρδία of a person cannot understand the truth of the gospel. Luke 1:51 states, “He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their καρδίας.” It is clear from these many other passages that, in the LXX and the New Testament, thoughts and understanding flow from the καρδία.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> In the LXX: Deut 8:17; Deut 9:4; 1 Chron 29:18; Ps 13:1; Isa 6:10; Isa 47:8; Isa 65:16; Jer 3:16; Jer 51:21; Dan 1:8; Dan 2:29; Dan 7:28. In the New Testament, Matt 9:4; Matt 12:34; Matt 13:15b; Matt 24:48; Mark 7:21; Mark 11:23; Luke 1:51; Luke 2:19; Luke 2:35; Luke 2:51; Luke 9:47; Luke 24:25; Luke 24:38; John 12:40b; Acts 7:23; Acts 8:22; Acts 28:27b; Rom 1:21; Rom 10:6; 1 Cor 2:9; Heb 4:12; Rev 18:7.

In addition to the source of thought, καρδιά is also the source of the will. Paul states in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “Each one must give as he has decided in his καρδιά, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” The condition of the καρδιά determines appropriates of the gift. The will is dictated by how the καρδιά construes the situation. Luke 21:14 records Jesus saying, “Settle it therefore in your καρδίας [ESV translates as “minds”] not to meditate beforehand how to answer.” Also, in John 13:2, “During supper, when the devil had already put it into the καρδίαν of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him.” The inner self is not only responsible for the production and assimilation of ideas, but also with the motivation of the will and compulsion toward kingdom actions.

Finally, not only is καρδιά the source of the cognitive and volitional self but also the emotive self. In Acts 2:26, Peter states, “Therefore my καρδιά was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope.” Jesus, in John 16:6, states, “But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your καρδίαν.” Paul, in Philippians 1:7, shares his love for the Philippians and states, “It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my καρδιά, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.”

Based on the usage of the New Testament and in the LXX, καρδιά is the seat of the self, which includes the mind, the will, and the emotions. Jesus states in Matthew 15:18, “But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the καρδιά, and this defiles a person.” From the καρδιά external actions, words, and emotional expressions proceed. Furthermore, the various parts of the καρδιά seem to have extensive interaction. Elliot comments on interrelation with καρδιά:

Decisions are made in the heart. It is also a person’s inner self which is not readily known by others. In the New Testament God makes himself known in the heart. Bultman writes, “Like *nous*, ‘heart’ is a man’s self, and in most cases where it is used it performs the service of the personal pronoun. For the ‘heart’ is the subject that desires (Rom 10:1), lusts (Rom. 1:24), purposes (1 Cor. 4:5), decides (1 Cor 7:37; 8:16; Phil 1:7).” Behm concludes, “Thus the heart is supremely the one center

in man to which God turns, in which the religious life is rooted, which determines moral conduct.” The heart is the place where faith finds root in both mind and emotion.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus commands his followers to be pure in heart and not only focus on outward expressions of piety. Within the Sermon on the Mount Jesus directs his hearers’ attention from their outward actions to the motivations of their inward self (Matt 5:21-48). This section begins with Jesus exhorting his disciples: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matt 5:17). France notes,

In Matthew’s gospel the verb *plēroō*, “fulfill,” plays a prominent role, most notably in its ten occurrences in the formula-quotations where it denotes the coming into being of that to which Scripture pointed forward (whether by direct prediction or understood typologically).<sup>8</sup>

For Matthew, the fulfillment that Jesus is describing is not, according to France, “to be concerned either with Jesus’ actions in relation to the law or even his teaching about it.”<sup>9</sup> Instead, Jesus “fulfills” the teaching and sense of the law and the prophets. Again, France notes, “The Torah, then, is not God’s last word to his people, but is in a sense provisional, looking forward to a time of fulfillment through the Messiah.”<sup>10</sup> France’s gloss of this verse is particularly helpful: “Far from wanting to set aside the law and the prophets, it is my role to bring into being that to which they have pointed forward, to carry them on into a new era of fulfillment.”<sup>11</sup> From this moment forward, Jesus’ teaching serves as the authoritative application of both the law and the prophets.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Matthew A. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 131.

<sup>8</sup> R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 182.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



On one side of the exhortation is the call to understand and obey the law in light of Jesus' authoritative teaching. On the other side, Matthew 5:19-20 is a warning that outward acts of righteousness are no longer considered the pinnacle of right living. Instead, purity of heart (καρδία) will serve as the criteria for righteousness (Matt 5:48). Jesus is maneuvering past the teachings of the Pharisees and applying the principles of the law and prophets found in the OT in light of his work. In the following section, Jesus teaches on anger, lust, divorce, taking of oaths, revenge, and loving ones' enemies. All these sub-topics include a reference to the inner world of the disciple. Outward actions are essential but are judged based on the inward motivations of the heart. The expectation is that the disciple of Jesus will proceed toward Christlikeness by beginning to conform their desires and motivations to the desires and motivations of the kingdom. As this begins to happen, the emotional virtues of love, joy, peace, righteous anger, letting go of both unjust anger and a desire for revenge (evidenced in forgiveness) all become a part of the dispositions of the disciple.

Matthew 5 concludes with the command "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48). This exhortation from Jesus sets his teaching within the context of the effectual relationship that the disciple has with his or her heavenly Father. The command to "be perfect" (τέλειος), as mentioned previously, is best translated as "mature," "whole," or "complete." The follower of Jesus is called to grow toward maturity of their inner emotional life so that it reflects the inner life of Christ. This command is then immediately followed by a command to give to the needy (6:1-4). Jesus is concerned with right action, but he wants his disciples to understand that pure hearts and rightly directed desires and motivations are virtuous. Outward actions, performed from misdirected *loves*, do not reflect the kingdom ethic that he is unfolding. Greater emotional maturity will manifest in both greater love, and often greater sorrow as

one becomes more aware of the brokenness of the world.<sup>13</sup> As Roberts pointedly shares, “We act from duty only because we are not yet spiritually moral. The perfected saint feels few duties, but many joys and sorrows.”<sup>14</sup>

The disciple of Jesus will no doubt be concerned with emotional virtue but may be unclear on exactly what they are or how they are developed. Not surprisingly, two men that were committed to theological truth and spiritual development, Saint Augustine and Jonathan Edwards, both interact with the subjects of emotion and biblical faithfulness.

### **Theological and Philosophical Reflection on Emotion**

Great Christian thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas, Ignatius of Loyola, and Søren Kierkegaard have all considered about the role emotions in the spiritual maturity of the believer. An exercise in unpacking each of their understandings of emotion would be of great benefit but somewhat secondary to the goal of this dissertation. However, Saint Augustine and Jonathan Edwards contribute uniquely to modern understanding. Augustine rejected a purely Stoic view of emotion and sought to understand the emotional life as an expression of the beauty and love of God. For Edwards, the emotional life ought to be concerned with a God-directed vision of the world. The emotions (or affections) drive the will of the believer to act and to love. One’s vision of God becomes the source of spiritual action.

#### **Augustine**

For Augustine (354-430 AD), the significance of the emotional life is tied directly to the incarnation of Christ. Though God is infinite, his taking on flesh makes it

---

<sup>13</sup> See Luke 19:41-44 for an example of Jesus’ sorrow at the brokenness of Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 71.

possible that God can be both distant (the object of love) and near (the generator of love). For Augustine, one's ability to have self-love is rooted in an understanding and love for God in the Trinity. Augustine claimed only to want to know about two things: God and the soul.<sup>15</sup>

Augustine did not affirm the Stoic belief that emotions were to be relegated as secondary but instead understood them to be more central to life in Christ. One of his primary points of contention was against the Stoic idea of *constantia*, which argued that the emotions must be quieted and grief all but eliminated.<sup>16</sup> Augustine was responding to thinkers like Cicero who argued for *constantia* as a part of Stoic philosophy of virtue. He believed grief had no place in Stoic life because it was preceded by unnecessary attachment to the material world which had no logical grounding. Grief was a sign of a weak mind that had not arrived at *apathia* (an ability to be indifferent to affairs of life and focus on pure reason and the universe as a whole). Instead, the Stoic was to develop *constantia* or emotional constancy, which moved fear to caution, joy to satisfaction, and desire to resolve.<sup>17</sup> However, grief had no place in the virtuous life.

Upon the study of Scripture, Augustine determined that since Paul and Jesus both experienced grief, then it must have a decisive role in the life of faith. Of course, grief is not to be desired but still serves a decisive role in the emotional life. Grief, as an acceptable emotion, means virtuous living is not solely focused on reason and right-thinking but also accepting the loss of good things in life as a part of a life well lived. Augustine moves the virtues of life from the abstract notion of ideas and reason to the earth where loss and grief is prevalent. Wetzel states that, "Augustine's rehabilitation of

---

<sup>15</sup> James Wetzel, "Augustine," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford University Press, 2009), 349.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 352-55.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 355.

grief marks his profoundest break not only from the cognitive therapy of Stoicism but from all the various forms of philosophical self-help he associated with classical culture.”<sup>18</sup>

Augustine represents a stream of thought that values the whole-self, including the emotions exhibited by the self. The work of the believer is to come to know God and his soul in increasing measure. The believer must turn toward his delights and aversions to understand his motivations. The beauty of God and a desire for him motivate the will. Unlike the Stoic *logos* that grounds everything in logic, for Augustine, love, and beauty drive the desires.

### **Jonathan Edwards**

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758 AD) did not contend with Stoics, per se, but with Christians divided over the use of emotion in revival settings and times of worship during the Great Awakening (approx. 1730-1740). Edwards often offered a middle voice to two opposing sides. He argued for a balanced view of emotion that was neither a Stoic view, nor did he fully endorse a revivalists view either. Michael McClymond reflects on the culture and debate surrounding emotion and religion that emerged during Edwards’s day:

The eighteenth-century debates over the Great Awakening often set mind against heart. Opponents, like Charles Chauncy, argued that the revival preachers had merely stirred up “passions” and that true religion brought the self under the control of reason rather than emotion. Radical revivalists, like James Davenport, reveled in intense emotions and derogated the intellect. Indeed, a Connecticut judiciary charged Davenport, because of his erratic behavior, with being “disturbed in the rational faculties of his mind.” Edwards differed from both Chauncy and Davenport. His mediating position in the revival debates rested on a unitary conception of the human self as intellectual and affective. For antirevivalists, an idea was a measure of intellectual content divorced from emotion, feeling, and affection. For Edwards, by contrast, an idea was a unit of affective response as well as intellectual content. Say the word “fire,” and one person might be reminded of a delightful fireside encounter with a lover, while another might think of a catastrophic conflagration that destroyed a home and family. Even a simple idea like fire carries affective as- sociations.

---

<sup>18</sup> Wetzel, “Augustine,” 355.

Edwards asserted that affections focused on ideas: “The heart cannot be set upon an object of which there is no idea in the understanding” (22:88). Religious affections required religious ideas. Yet the revival debates brought oversimplification. Many prorevivalists assumed that religion was all about affections and had nothing to do with intellect. “Old Lights” were proreason, antiemotion, and antirevival, while “New Lights” were antireason, proemotion, and prorevival. Few grasped the subtlety of Edwards's position.<sup>19</sup>

Edwards argued that the affections were different in nature from the feelings of emotions that may arise as a result of the “motion of the blood and animal spirits.”<sup>20</sup>

Animal passions were like being startled or a rush of blood to the head before a person becomes angry. Only those “emotions” that took religious objects were considered by Edwards to be genuine religious affections. He does not write much about affections that are non-religious. There may not be much different between a non-religious affection and a religious affection other than the object of the affection. He realized that emotion could not be a measure of truthfulness but went to show in great detail how one might determine genuine affections for God from the counterfeit.

Edwards argued that emotions are associated with the mind, but he opposes the Aristotelian argument that placed one in service to the other (usually the emotions in service to the mind). Instead, he believed the mind, the will, and the emotions to be a unity that was not able to be entirely separated from one another. The affections motivate and direct the mind and will toward or away from objects of either desire or displeasure. He states, “The exercises of this faculty are of two sorts; either those by which the soul is carried out towards the things that are in view, in approving of them, being pleased by them, and inclined to them; or those in which the soul opposes the things that are in view, in disapproving them, and in being displeased with them, averse from them, and rejecting them.”<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Michael J. McClymond, “Jonathan Edwards,” in Corrigan, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, 407.

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Edwards and John E. Smith, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 2:96.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

The affections involve beliefs but for Edwards, these beliefs were not abstract propositions but instead were present in the experience of the believer. He called the two ways of understanding the speculative and the sensible. The speculative understanding is objective, detached understanding, while sensible knowing is experienced sensually. Sensible knowing is personal and subject-oriented. For Edwards, faith is rooted in God's relationship to the earth, not in the abstract ideals of Heaven. Edwards blends the objective and the subjective. He recognizes that true religion is more than intellectual assent but involves a subjective awareness of divine beauty. He states, "...that kind of understanding or knowledge, which is the proper foundation of true religion, must be the knowledge of the loveliness of divine things."<sup>22</sup>

In Augustine and Edwards, one can see two theologians who are familiar with the biblical material and reject a Stoic notion of emotion. However, they do not embrace a sentimentalist or revivalist view either. Instead, Augustine and Edwards perceived the emotions as connected to the will and in some way aided by the theological propositions about God in Christ. Also, though emotions consist of propositional content, they are not mere propositions or judgments. Instead, emotions are also taken up in beauty and love for God and ultimately for others as well.

### **Søren Kierkegaard**

Another important voice in the development of emotional understanding in the Christian life is Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855 AD). Kierkegaard was an existentialist Christian philosopher who was concerned with the missional aspect of the faith. He wrote during a time when the Church was prevalent, but few seemed to live a godly life. He believed that preachers ought to help the hearers to internalize the message. In his

---

<sup>22</sup> Edwards and John E. Smith, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 271.

writing, he employed forms of indirect communication (parables and narratives) to attempt to speak to the heart and not just the mind.

He believed that the objective truth about God and the subjective knowing self were connected and that one could not honestly know God without also understanding one's self. He uses the metaphor of sobriety to refer to an awareness of one's true self: "To become sober is: to come to oneself in self-knowledge and before God as nothing before him, yet infinitely, unconditionally engaged."<sup>23</sup> He argues that coming to one's self means accepting the complexity and paradox of life through faith and letting go of a desire to master the world. The Christian can rest in the many unanswerable questions by trusting that God knows the answer and that he is in control. Because God is in control, the Christian can be honest with his or her frailty and weakness and as such does not need to answer everything perfectly but can psychologically rest in Christ.

Kierkegaard believed that the kind of sobriety the pagan world extolled was intoxication to the highest degree. The world seeks to have control and to eliminate anything unanswerable. Instead of seeking the "probable," coming to one's self means by faith, trusting God and allowing His truth to reveal a person's true self:

Familiarity with the probable,<sup>24</sup> and the more profound it is, does not in a more profound sense lead a person closer to himself but further and further away from his deeper self, brings him closer and closer to himself only in the sense of selfishness—this the purely human view calls becoming sober and Christianity calls intoxication.<sup>25</sup>

Kierkegaard argued that the self must be known *before God* or else it produces a loss of self. He does not mean the self is known chronologically prior to knowing God,

---

<sup>23</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourself: Kierkegaard's Writings*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (repr., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 21:104.

<sup>24</sup> Kierkegaard seems to be using the term "probable" to refer to the finite or that which is safe and can be seen apart from faith. He wants to draw a distinction the Christian who accepts the world as God describes on faith and the pagan who only looks at the probable and ignores the world of faith.

<sup>25</sup> Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourself*, 21:105.

but instead that knowledge of self must take place in the presence of God. He states,

If self-knowledge does not lead to knowing oneself before God—well, then there is something to what purely human self-observation says, namely, that this self-knowledge leads to a certain emptiness that produces dizziness. Only by being before God can one totally come to oneself in the transparency of soberness.<sup>26</sup>

“Soberness of self” means that one knows their self in light of God’s revelation and love. “Intoxication” is a belief in the lie that one can know himself apart from a relationship with God. Kierkegaard argues that self-knowledge is essential to spiritual growth, but self-knowledge must take place before God if it is to lead to the Christian understanding of self.

Kierkegaard also believed that those emotions that seem to not take an object at all, such as boredom, despair, and anxiety all have a significant role to play in the development of the Christian soul. Each of these emotions they the Christian to a deeper faith because they do not focus upon an object, and therefore, there is no action to perform except to rest in trust. The Christian is called to wait on the Lord and trust Him amid these objectless emotions.

Among Augustine, Edwards, and Kierkegaard, there is a rich reflection on the nature of emotion and the understanding of one’s motivations and drives. Augustine’s focus on the beauty of God and desire of the heart, Edwards’s commitment to the affections as the springs of motion and the God as the object of true religious affections, and Kierkegaard’s attention to the subjective nature of inner world of the believer all help the modern reader to understand the depth to which thinkers in the past have wrestled with the issues connected to emotion and spiritual maturity. The expositor would do well to reflect on any of these great thinkers in more detail. However, in order to find some synthesis of these ideas as well as the perspective that is engaged with recent discussions

---

<sup>26</sup> Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourselves*, 21:106



in virtue ethics and emotional philosophy, we now turn to a discussion of the writings of Robert C. Roberts.

### **Robert C. Roberts**

Roberts is an ethicist and philosopher who writes extensively on the interrelationship of emotion and ethics (especially the virtues).<sup>27</sup> Though some scholars may place Roberts in a neo-Stoic camp, his position is more nuanced than the Neo-Stoic and takes into account the serious concerns or desires of the self.<sup>28</sup> While Augustine, Edwards, and Kierkegaard all provide unique contributions, Roberts's argument benefits from modern science, physiology, psychology, philosophy, as well as the last several hundred years of theological reflection. Roberts is an important voice because he can interact broadly with the Stoic, Neo-Stoic, Sentimentalist, Religious, non-religious, as well as the Evangelical Christian. He also interacts with much of what Augustine, Edwards, and Kierkegaard taught and provides concrete ways of understanding each.

As the fields of psychology and ethics shifted to include a greater focus on emotion theory, the landscape emerged suitable for conversation between spirituality and

---

<sup>27</sup> He received his PhD from Yale in 1974. He taught at Wheaton College (1984-2000) and Baylor University (2001-present). He has also produced a wealth of literature on the subjects of emotion, virtue, and ethics. Robert C. Roberts, "Aristotle on Virtues and Emotions," *Philosophical Studies* 56, no. 3 (July 1989): 293-306; "The Transparency of Faith," *Reformed Journal* 29, no. 6 (June 1979): 10-13; "Carl Rogers and the Christian Virtues," *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 13, no. 4 (1985): 263-73; "The Fruits of the Spirit," *Reformed Journal* 37, no. 2 (February 1987): 9-13; "Psychotherapeutic Virtues and the Grammar of Faith," *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 15, no. 3 (September 1987): 191-204; "Emotions among the Virtues of the Christian Life," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 20, no. 1 (1992): 37-68; "Tempering the Spirit of Wrath: Anger and the Christian Life," *The Christian Century* 114, no. 19 (June 1997): 588-92; "Psychotherapy and Christian Ministry," *Word & World* 21, no. 1 (2001): 42-50; "The Idea of a Christian Psychology," *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 40, no. 1 (2012): 37-40; "What Is Wrong with Wicked Feelings?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1991): 13-24; "Feeling One's Emotions and Knowing Oneself," *Philosophical Studies* 77, nos. 2/3 (1995): 319-38; "Forgivingness," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1995): 289-306; "Existence, Emotion, and Virtue: Classical Themes in Kierkegaard," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard*, ed. Alastair Hannay and Gordon Daniel Marino (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 177-206; *Spiritual Emotions*.

<sup>28</sup> David Kangas, "Kierkegaard," in Corrigan, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, 385.

moral theory.<sup>29</sup> In the 1980s, Roberts articulated a definition of emotions as “concern-based construals.”<sup>30</sup> Roberts’s view is that emotions are both rooted in ideas as well as deep-seated desire or concerns. He contends that a construal is “a way of seeing the world or an impression of the way the world is.”<sup>31</sup> A construal can be inaccurate but is believed to be true by the subject. For example, a young child may construe that a hideous monster is lurking in the closet. Her perception of her imagined world will create in her fear and panic. The mythical nature of the threat does not affect the child until a parent can show that her perception is wrong. At that point, the child’s fear may be quieted. This sort of impression is subjective and can be altered by changing perception.

He argues that each emotion is influenced by how the subject *sees* the world. Changing the perception of the world can influence the emotional makeup of the subject. Because emotions are in part based on construals, they are rooted within the cognitive and are not non-cognitive passions. Thus, Roberts writes, “This flexibility of perception in the broader sense of construal makes it possible, sometimes, to obey a command to

---

<sup>29</sup> Roberts notes three “revolutions” that have taken place in the field of psychology and ethics. First, he notes “ethics has turned psychological.” This transition was a movement from action-rules thinking, which was focused on *oughtness*, to a virtue based system that is based on traits of character. Roberts states, “Virtues are traits of character, and traits of character are a subject for psychology. So ethics has taken a psychological turn, and philosophers now regularly engage in a discipline they call ‘moral psychology.’” Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 6. Second, Roberts notes that psychology has turned ethical. Psychology, as a discipline, came to understand itself more akin to the philosopher and ethicist than the scientist, as previously thought. He continues, “As psychologists got free from the positivist myth of value-free inquiry, they came to recognize more and more clearly that they practice a normative discipline—that they are, in a way, philosophers of life, philosophers of the person, and thus ethicists in something like the sense in which virtue-ethicists are ethicists.” Ibid. “The third revolution,” explains Roberts, “is that both psychology and ethics have turned emotional. . . . Several philosophers of emotion, including me, have been interested in emotion in large part because of its connection with ethics: it is a central topic in moral psychology.” Ibid., 7. The ethical angle of emotion studies has attracted the focus philosophers and ethicists. These fields transitioning to include emotion theory have opened the door for other fields to seek areas of integration. These fields of study have attempted to define and describe exactly *what an emotion is*. In chap. 2, I explore various definitions of emotion.

<sup>30</sup> Robert C. Roberts, “What an Emotion Is: A Sketch,” *The Philosophical Review* 97, no. 2 (1988): 183-209.

<sup>31</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 69ff.

feel an emotion.”<sup>32</sup> Emotions are not, in Roberts’ view, pure physiological responses that overtake a person. Instead, emotions are connected to objects, narratives, and thoughts. Emotions give color to the world. While emotions are shaped by cognitive perceptions, these perceptions may, at times, take place beneath the surface of consciousness. The source of the emotion is not always apparent to individuals experiencing the emotion, thus giving the impression that emotions are at times random and without a perceptible object.

Roberts also contends that emotions are *concern-based*. He explains,

As concern-based, [emotions] are affected by what the subject cares about, what is important to him or her; and many emotions tend to move their subjects to action in a way that is suggested by the concern that is basic to the emotion, along with the particular way of construing the situation that the emotion involves.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, each emotion has particular concerns that *energize* it. Without a concern, a particular construal of the world would lack significant emotional energy for action. It is the concern that gives the emotion its energy and significance. Without a concern for the object, the emotion would only consist of judgment (intellectual assent).<sup>34</sup>

The combinations of construals and concerns tend to incorporate a wide variety of factors for the development of emotions. According to Roberts,

Our concern-based construals, of ourselves, others, and our situations, are shaped by many different kinds of factors: By our beliefs and judgments, desires and attachments, habits of attention, bodily sensations, our behavior, actions, mental images, and the concepts available to us as well as, no doubt, the objective character of ourselves, others, and our situations.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 25.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 11. For more on Roberts view of how emotions lead to actions, see Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>34</sup> For more on this view of emotions as judgments, see Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>35</sup> Roberts, “What an Emotion Is,” 208.

Thus, an emotion, according to Roberts, is a concern that is grounded in the values of the individual and includes a construal of how the individual perceives and understands the world that gives rise to certain feelings and behaviors.

According to Roberts, the primary Christian concern is that believers seek the kingdom of heaven.<sup>36</sup> This seeking is demonstrated in the life of the believer by *hungering* and *thirsting* for righteousness. By *righteousness*, Roberts does not only mean “right living” but also community flourishing or more broadly human flourishing. This primary concern has implications for the whole system of Christian faith and is fittingly summarized by Jesus’ statement, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matt 22:37).

Roberts also makes a case that both concerns and construals are a subjective phenomenon. Thus, this dissertation raises the question, “How are concerns and construals developed within the life of a believer through the preaching of the text? How are they developed within the life of the congregation?” Congregational subjective integration of fundamental biblical concerns and construals serves as a defining problem this dissertation seeks to address.

Roberts recognizes the role of the Holy Spirit in the development of emotional virtues, but he does not venture that they are cultivated automatically. Instead, he agrees with Paul that these emotional virtues are in fact, the fruit of the Spirit that is cultivated as one walks in the Spirit. Roberts states,

We tend to make the fruits of the Spirit more mysterious than they need to be. We think of them as miracles, as though no logic governs their acquisition, as though no psychological laws are at work here: If God wants to, he will just miraculously bear these fruits in our spirit. . . . I believe that God does sometimes intervene miraculously to transform people. But if that were the only way God imprinted his character on us, it would seem that there’s nothing positive we can do to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit; the best we can do is to wait until God acts in our lives. There isn’t any *psychology* of the fruits of the Spirit. We know this can’t be correct. Much

---

<sup>36</sup> This idea is found implicitly in Roberts’ writing but this particular idea was given to me via a phone conversation with Roberts that took place on May 9, 2018.

can be done to cultivate Christian compassion, forbearance, gratitude, and hope in ourselves. Christianity has a long tradition of Christian education, spiritual guidance and nurture, methods of prayer and meditation, and common wisdom about the formative effect that, for example, feeding the hungry and advocating the cause of the oppressed have upon the personality of the one who does the feeding and advocating.<sup>37</sup>

The cultivation of emotional virtue is a process of character transformation.

Emotional virtues are an outflow of the transformation of the self not merely by-products of religious experience or knowledge. Roberts again states,

When we have the Christian virtues, we do not become just little “pictures” of God, or mere “products” of kingdom-conditioning. No, we become spirits. A Christian virtue, when it exists in a person, is a trait whose origin is intimately related to the person’s own *undertakings*. If you ask why a person is tenderhearted, and it turns out that the most appropriate story to tell is about a brain lesion, or the injection of a drug, or a certain genetic endowment, we can conclude that the tenderheartedness is not a virtue in the appropriate sense, not a spiritual trait. To explain tenderheartedness as a virtue, the story will have to make important reference to the individual’s undertaking tenderhearted acts, or at least acts which bring about the tenderheartedness. This is another reason why it cannot be the whole story about our acquiring the fruits of the Spirit to say that God just miraculously causes us to have them.<sup>38</sup>

According to Roberts, to develop Christian virtues, there are three ways that a believer can begin to develop emotional virtues. First, the Christian may begin to act virtuously.<sup>39</sup> By acting virtuous, the virtues one desires may begin to be developed. Also, the Christian must grow in the knowledge of Scripture and doctrine.<sup>40</sup> Finally, the follower of Christ will participate in the liturgy of the church, which in turn helps to direct the heart.<sup>41</sup> All these techniques undoubtedly shape virtue in the believer. If expositors apply the text, teach doctrine accurately, and direct the liturgy of the church in

---

<sup>37</sup> Roberts, “The Fruits of the Spirit,” 11.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 13. For a more detailed exploration of the idea of cultural virtue develop through the use of liturgy, see James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

a godly manner, one might assume that all that can be done to develop emotional virtues has been done.

Emotions on Roberts's model are the merger of serious concerns and construals of the world. Both concerns and construals are subjective though they may be based more or less on objective truth. An overemphasis on objective truth-telling that fails to help the disciple to internalize the material will result in abstract concerns and detached construals. By focusing on the subjective construals and concerns, an expository preacher can begin to change the emotional core of the disciple (this should be accompanied with other forms of discipleship and spiritual disciplines on the part of the disciple).

How do we preach expository sermons that develop subjective emotional virtues in the congregation and do so without losing an objective voice in the subjective malaise? This process will be like walking a tight rope. Lean too far to the right, and the focus will be so heavy on objective truth that the subjective experience will be lost. Lean too far to the left and the objective voice of Scripture will be silenced in favor of personal preference and self-help strategies. Instead, the preacher needs something to maintain his theological and pastoral balance, a balance pole. In this case, the balance pole is represented by two ideas: direct communication and indirect communication. The expository preacher will need to learn to do both in order to cultivate both the objective truth but also the subjective internalization of the hearer. The goal of this dissertation is to tease out the implications of Roberts's model and argue for techniques that may be incorporated by a preacher to assist in the develop of emotional virtue.

### **Thesis**

The thesis of this dissertation is that expository preachers should apply the writings of Robert C. Roberts to bridge the gap between objective truth and subject experience so that Christian emotional virtues can be cultivated to a greater degree through the sermon. Practically, the expositor will need to utilize both direct and indirect

forms of communication to satisfy the nuance of Roberts's definition of Christian emotional virtue.

### **Methodology**

This remainder of this dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter 2 will focus on establishing Roberts's argument and presenting a foundation for the cultivation of Christian emotional virtues. Though Roberts has written a significant corpus of work, the majority of the focus of this work is on Roberts's definition of emotion and how he understands the composition of emotional virtues and in particular *Christian* emotional virtues. The goal of chapter two is to provide a workable definition of emotion as "concern-based construal" and an understanding of Christian emotional virtues that are built upon Christian doctrine and narrative.

Chapter 3 will then turn to a discussion of the application of Roberts's argument for expositors. This chapter will focus on direct communication. While the most direct forms of communication are explanation and application, this chapter will assume these aspects of the sermon in order to focus upon other methods of direct communication that may help to cultivate the subjective concerns and construals of the hearer. In sidestepping explanation and application, the reader should not assume that these are not important. Instead, this chapter will assume the reader is familiar with such arguments and will instead focus on others. This chapter will focus on four tools that will help the preacher to use direct methods to cultivate emotional virtue: (1) read and preach the wisdom of the text as opposed to excessive principlization, (2) regularly preach in a *lectio continua* manner, (3) cultivate mental dexterity, and (4) apply the Primary Christian concern logically prior to the divine demands of the pericope, namely one's union with Christ.

Chapter 4 addresses indirect communication. The chapter does not endorse an all or nothing approach to indirect communication but instead argues for a balanced approach that uses indirect communication as a supplement to the ongoing faithful direct

communication of the text. This chapter will focus on three forms of indirect communication: permission for self-reflection, permission to separate sin and suffering, and promoting empathy with the Scripture's characters. Each of these three forms of indirect communicate and permission giving establish a subjective culture on which objective truth can be internalized and used to transform the καρδία and in so doing, produces greater emotional virtue.

### **Background**

My interest in this subject stems from a general curiosity about emotions and the role emotions play in the development of spiritual maturity. One particular book began to challenge some of my previous presuppositions about emotions: Pete Scazzero's *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*.<sup>42</sup> My wife and I were attending a ministerial retreat in Colorado when Scazzero's book was introduced to me. As I began to read, I was amazed that there was a world of emotional health that the church has recognized for centuries but is widely ignored in the particular stream of North American Evangelicalism that I had studied. So, I began a journey of trying to understand the role emotions played in my spiritual maturity.

A second book that began to shape my thinking in these areas was James Gillman's *Fidelity of Heart: An Ethic of Christian Virtue*.<sup>43</sup> This book challenged me to think of emotions as having certain universal qualities (i.e., everyone feels anger or sadness) that could bridge the gap between individual subjective experiences. Bridging the gap cannot be done perfectly, of course, but at least it can provide a step in that direction. The discussion of narrative emotions as both universal and subjective caused

---

<sup>42</sup> Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014).

<sup>43</sup> James E. Gilman, *Fidelity of Heart: An Ethic of Christian Virtue by James E. Gilman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).



me to wonder if these principles could be applied to simply reading Scripture on my own. If so, then was it possible to utilize some of this theory for expository preaching that can help bridge the gap between the universal and subjective?

Later, the writings of Kevin Vanhoozer began to impact my understanding of hermeneutics. It was not long after I became aware of Vanhoozer's work that Abe Kuruvilla's *Privilege the Text!* was published and began to be discussed more broadly.<sup>44</sup> Finally, Eric Johnson introduced me to the emotion theory of Robert C. Roberts. Roberts's work was the piece of the research puzzle that I was missing. Roberts provides a formidable foundation to construct a homiletical theory of the development of emotional virtues.

### **Limits**

The first limit to this research is that it does not address how sermons cultivate Christian emotional virtues in those who would be categorized as having personality disorders or where severe emotional issues exist. This dissertation is providing a baseline for future research that might explore how expositors can address deeper emotional issues through the sermon. However, I will assume a congregation made up of relatively well-adjusted believers. While this is in no way the reality of most (any?) congregation, I will assume it for the sake of argument and then invite future research that will explore the finer points of preaching in congregations where more significant disorder is present.

I will also limit my focus to non-traditional rhetorical devices within the sermon. This means that I will say very little regarding explanation, application, and illustration. This is a conscious choice. I assume that an expository preacher will utilize

---

<sup>44</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding: Performing the Drama of Doctrine* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014); Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Craig L. Blomberg, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*, anniversary ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

these traditional devices. I also realize they play a fundamental role in preaching a well-rounded sermon. The reader will no doubt see places where a meaningful discussion of any three of them would be fitting. However, for this work, I am not engaging in these areas, as it would not provide as much meaningful dialogue in different points that I wish to emphasize. While one will no doubt see how a nuanced view of any of these traditional techniques might be used in the process presented in this paper, my contention is that by stepping away from the traditional methods we might better see where we can improve. Then, when the traditional methods are reintroduced, what is created is a more nuanced and well-rounded sermon.

### **Significance**

The contribution of this work to the field of homiletics is to expand the discussion concerning the nature of emotional virtue. However, a by-product of this initial discussion emerged a secondary concern of subjective integration of objective content. By using Roberts's terminology of concerns and construals and the PCC, the expositor will be able to write sermons that directly affect both the congregation's perceptions and core desires. The originality is not necessarily in the development of a new way of preaching but is instead found in the integration of Roberts's work with the task of preaching.

This research seeks to contribute three advances to the field of expository preaching. First, the introduction of a more concrete view of emotions, as presented by Roberts, will aid those studying homiletics to be able to dialogue about the role of emotions in preaching in a more meaningful way. The second contribution is the introduction of emotional virtues as a focus of the application. The field of homiletics will be able to discuss further how these emotional virtues are developed and in what ways sermons can contribute to their development. Finally, this project sought to contribute to the dialogue in expository preaching circles concerning the role of subjective concerns and desires within the congregation.

## CHAPTER 2

### ROBERTS AND CHRISTIAN EMOTIONAL VIRTUE

Expositors first need to understand a philosophical definition of emotion and emotional virtues that can inform a discussion of how Christian emotional virtues (CEV) can be developed through the sermon. Emotions are complex phenomena; no one system or theory can fully explain their nature.<sup>1</sup> Any attempt to define emotion will need to be sensitive to the complexity of emotions as well as various views of the roles emotions play in life. Robert C. Roberts presents a cohesive and workable model of emotions that captures a central component. Roberts's work on emotional virtues provides a philosophical framework that may be adapted for use across disciplines. Other disciplines might choose to interact with the nature of emotions, but they require a good deal of dexterity is required given the range of streams that must be considered in order to articulate a comprehensive representation of emotion. While Roberts should not be the final word on the subject, he presents a salient view who can serve expositors by providing the philosophical foundation on which discussions of structure, application, pathos, and narrative might be developed concerning emotion.

The purpose of this chapter is to present Roberts's definition of emotion and describe the components of the Christian emotional virtue so that in latter chapters one can see how expositors will be able to apply Roberts's work. However, in order to show the distinctiveness of Roberts's view, first, a brief sketch of the historical debate concerning the nature and definition of emotion is presented.

---

<sup>1</sup> For various interpretations of emotion and how they relate to ethics, psychology, etc., see Kenneth T. Strongman *The Psychology of Emotion: From Everyday Life to Theory*, 5th ed. (Chichester, England: Wiley, 2003).

## Competing Theories of Emotion

The debate concerning the nature and definition of emotions has its roots in ancient Greece. In modern times, the related fields of philosophy and ethics have sparked renewed interest in the debate in the last thirty years. Philosophers wrestle with questions such as “what is an emotion?” and “how do emotions influence decisions?” One of the most important and most debated questions is whether emotions are non-cognitive or cognitive.<sup>2</sup>

Though this view is mostly settled among philosophers (leaning toward a cognitive view), some still hold to a non-cognitive approach. Matthew Elliot provides a helpful development summary of the two streams of thought. He traces each stream back to Plato’s non-cognitive theory of emotions and Aristotle’s cognitive theory of emotions.

Plato first argued for a *non-cognitive* view of emotions.<sup>3</sup> He believed emotions were not connected to rational thought but instead were something more akin to animal instincts. When a person was acting on his anger, he was acting from basic animal instinct and not within his rational self. He concluded that the emotions needed to be *appeased* not *changed*. Some late Stoics (distinct from the earlier Stoics who believed emotions to be cognitive) agreed with Plato and argued that since emotions are non-rational, the virtuous life consists of separating the rational self from the base animal emotions.<sup>4</sup> Elliot states that these late Stoics believed the “passions cannot be altered by changing beliefs. . . . These Stoics argued that they must be controlled by non-rational

---

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Elliot outlines the cognitive or non-cognitive debate concerning emotions. He traces the debate from Plato to modern day and addresses key figures and ideas. Matthew A. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 59.

<sup>3</sup> Plato believed that virtue and vice existed objectively outside of the individual, however. He believed that with “good upbringing and philosophy” one could be better able to accurately evaluate the world. See Robert C. Roberts, “Emotions and the Canons of Evaluation,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 561.

<sup>4</sup> Late Stoics adopted a more Platonic view of the emotions while the early Stoics tended to align more with Aristotle’s cognitive view. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 59.

methods. Passions are to be extirpated by reading poetry, listening to music, and using rhythm.”<sup>5</sup> A great division existed between the rational brain and the emotional animal passions.

Some more modern philosophers, most notably René Descartes, David Hume, Charles Darwin, and William James, have also endorsed a version of the non-cognitive view.<sup>6</sup> Robert B. Zajonc and Carroll Izard also currently advocate for this position.<sup>7</sup> Raja Bahlul summarizes this non-cognitive theory in the following way:

According to these ways of thinking, emotions are feelings that overtake us. Not only are they often contrary to reason and good judgment (love, jealousy, and hatred are often said to be ‘blind’), but they are also intractable—we feel them even though we know we should not. They often sweep over us with great force, and motivate (impel?) us to do that which we do not want to do. We are held powerless in their grip, a fact that is sometimes used to plead diminished responsibility for wrongdoing. We are also often said to be unable to ‘understand’ our feelings and those of other people.<sup>8</sup>

Aristotle, on the other hand, later argued that emotions were cognitive and connected in some way to thoughts. Elliot describes the difference: “While Plato thought of emotion as feeling with (*meta*) an appropriate thought . . . Aristotle thought that the cognition caused (*dia*) the emotion.”<sup>9</sup> In this way, emotions are in part within a person’s control because they are rooted within the cognitive realm. The early Stoics followed Aristotle. Modern neo-Stoic thinkers, such as Martha Nussbaum and Robert Solomon, also follow the Aristotelian line of reasoning.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 60.

<sup>6</sup> James adapted this non-cognitive view for psychology. See Strongman, *The Psychology of Emotion*, 13-15.

<sup>7</sup> Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 24ff.

<sup>8</sup> Raja Bahlul, “Emotion as Patheception,” *Philosophical Explorations* 18, no. 1 (March 2015): 105.

<sup>9</sup> Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 66.

<sup>10</sup> Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

A cognitive construct of emotion created space where emotions could be understood to possess moral qualities as opposed to the non-cognitivist which understood emotions as mere animal impulses and desires. Instead of appeasing one's passions, for Aristotle, emotions need to be controlled and experienced at the *right time* and *right place* as well as in the *right amount*. Aristotle believed that emotions could be virtuous if controlled:

By virtue I mean a virtue of character: for this is about feelings and actions, and these admit of excess, deficiency, and an intermediate condition. We can be afraid, for instance, or be confident, or have appetites, or get angry, or feel pity, and in general have pleasure or pain, both too much and too little, and in both ways not well. But having these feelings at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is the intermediate and best condition, and this proper to virtue.<sup>11</sup>

Emotional virtue, for Aristotle, was about finding the appropriate time, place, and force for the expression of emotion.

While Aristotle believed the emotions seemed to contain a moral component, the Stoics who followed Aristotle argued that, though the emotions were cognitive, they often prevented one from leading a virtuous life. These Stoics argued that reason alone could lead to a sufficiently virtuous and moral life, concluding that emotions were cognitive but did not contain the potential for virtue. Gill summarizes the Stoic position:

It is characteristic of ancient ethics, at least after Aristotle, to assume that happiness (eudaimonia) is the overall goal (telos) of a human life, though different theories offer different accounts of what constitutes happiness. The Stoics adopted what was seen as the "hard" position on this question, namely that virtue is both *necessary* and *sufficient* for happiness. This position was also expressed as the idea that virtue is the only good, or that, of the three types of good normally recognized in ancient thought, only psychological goods (virtues) were really good, and not goods of the body (health or beauty) or external goods (material possessions or social relations).<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle, "Nicomachean Ethics," in *Classics of Western Philosophy*, ed. Steven M. Cahn, 7th ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), 273.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Gill, "Cynicism and Stoicism," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*, ed. Roger Crisp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 99, emphasis added.

The Stoics reasoned that virtue was removed from the material world and since emotions arise from gains and losses in the material world, a distrust of the emotions developed. Emotions seemed to keep one attached to the material world and prevented the movement toward a more reasoned and virtuous state. This distrust was evident in the use of the term *apathia* to refer to the Stoic stance against the worldly emotions. On this view, the emotions are to be understood as connected to the material world and thus should be not trusted as reliable sources of knowledge; and if possible, they should be ignored in favor of reason. Roberts notes that Stoics are

notable for their blanket moral rejection of emotions from the morally perfected human being. . . . It (Stoic logic) is present in the feeling that emotions are in some kind of basic opposition to “reason,” and that to be morally perfected is to be tranquil, disinterested, objective, detached.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, on the Stoic view, the emotions are cognitive, but they distract one from living a moral life because they are always rooted in the constantly changing world of the material.

One current revival of the Stoic reasoning is found among the Neo-Stoic camp within moral philosophy. This view is prominent currently in the field of moral philosophy and was, in part, made accessible by Robert Solomon and Martha Nussbaum.<sup>14</sup> Proponents argue that emotions are cognitive (judgments to which the mind cognitively ascends) much in the same manner of the Stoic. However, they disagree that the *telos* of life is to achieve only virtue; there are certainly elements of Stoic reasoning in the argument. They are referred to as Neo-Stoic because like the Stoic, they understand emotion as cognitive, but they abandon the conclusion that the emotions should be set

---

<sup>13</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 25.

<sup>14</sup> Robert C. Solomon, “On Emotions as Judgments,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1988): 183-91. Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*; Martha Craven Nussbaum, “Narrative Emotions: Beckett’s Genealogy of Love,” *Ethics* 98, no. 2 (January 1988): 225-54; Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought*.

aside in favor of pure reason. So, the Neo-Stoic agrees with the Stoic concerning the nature of emotion but disagrees on the moral worth.

Nussbaum defines emotions as a judgment. She unpacks her thoughts in the following way:

In speaking this way, the project has used, and also argued for, a conception of the major human emotions according to which they are not simply blind surges of affect, stirrings or sensations that arise from our animal nature and are identified (and distinguished from one another) by their felt quality alone. Instead, they themselves have a cognitive content; they are intimately related to beliefs or judgments about the world in such a way that the removal of the relevant belief will remove not only the reason for the emotion but also the emotion itself. The belief is the necessary basis and “ground” of the emotion. It might even be said to be a constituent part of the emotion itself. Anger, for example, is defined by Aristotle, the first great proponent of this view, as a composite of painful feeling with the belief that I have been wronged. This implies (as seems correct) that if I discover that my belief is false—that the apparent wrong did not in fact take place—I will, discarding my false belief, cease to be angry. If some residual painful feeling does persist, it will not be considered anger any longer but, rather, as residual irrational irritation or excitation.<sup>15</sup>

On her view, emotions are not blind, which means that they have a focus and an object. She argues that emotions are intimately related to the beliefs and judgments one makes within the world. She maintains that “belief” is the ground of the emotion. By changing one’s belief, one should theoretically be able to change one’s emotional state. While there does seem to be a general sense of truth in this way of thinking, it seems that something is missing; namely that emotions do not seem to appear as entirely cognitive. There seems to be a sense in which emotions will appear to function in the opposite of what the subject knows to be true. While her argument provides reasonable grounds for understanding the cognitive side of emotion and the moral import of emotions, expositors may do well to view her argument as hopeful but incomplete. Her model is quite helpful but lacks needed nuance.

Another broad view of emotions is the sentimentalist view. Emotions, according to Stoicism, impede the virtuous life. On Sentimentalism, the emotions are

---

<sup>15</sup> Nussbaum, “Narrative Emotions,” 231.



central to evaluation because of the philosophical assumption that *good* and *bad* are determined within the individual and are judged in relation to pleasure and pain.<sup>16</sup> While Stoicism focuses on the separation of the intellect from the physical world, Sentimentalism wants to embrace the emotions as providing moral grounding for actions. The major proponents of this view can be seen in the philosophy of Hutcheson and Hume. While Sentimentalism mixes with a healthy dose of humanism, it does have some ties to the agapic nature of Christianity, most notably in the writing of Hutcheson.<sup>17</sup> Sentimentalism has historically arisen in opposition to two philosophies: Hobbesian egoism and Moral Rationalism.<sup>18</sup> Driver observes “the Sentimentalists challenged both views, arguing that there is more to what motivates human beings than simple self-interest and that reason alone is insufficient to motivate our actions, including our moral actions.”<sup>19</sup> Expositors may find aspects of the sentimentalist view appealing, namely, that emotions play an important role in moral functioning and they seem to understand that the emotions appear to be functioning in opposition at times to the cognitive world. A

---

<sup>16</sup> Michael Slotes summarizes sentimentalism:

Unlike Aristotelian and Platonic virtue ethics, sentimentalist virtue ethics bases morality in feeling rather than in reason/rationality. Historically, we find instances of such virtue ethics in eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century British moral sentimentalism, in Augustine’s agapic ethics, and in both Buddhism and Confucianism. (Michael Slote, “Sentimentalist Virtue Ethics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Virtue*, ed. Nancy E. Snow [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018], 343)

<sup>17</sup> Michael Slote, “Moral Sentimentalism and Moral Psychology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, ed. David Copp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 221. Slote states,

Hutcheson and Hume are probably its most clear-cut and typical representatives. Hutcheson, in particular, acknowledged the strong influence of the Christian ideal of agapic love on his view that universal benevolence is the morally best of human motives and that all of morality can be understood by reference to that motive. To that extent, the agapic side of Christian moral doctrine (and some of its Jewish antecedents) can be said to anticipate and exemplify a form of moral sentimentalism that contrasts rather starkly with the rationalism of ancient Greek (virtue) ethics, which saw all ethically valid choice as guided by reason and had little or no room for virtues like compassion, self-sacrifice, and (even) kindness. (Ibid., 222)

<sup>18</sup> Julia Driver, “Moral Sense and Sentimentalism,” in Crisp, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*, 358.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

mature morality does not flow from purely cognitive propositions alone but from the emotions as well. Slotes states,

There is, intuitively, something morally unattractive about the husband who has to consult morality (moral principles) and also about the hospital visitor who acts conscientiously rather than from friendly feeling (or love). This has force against the rationalist assumptions that there is no (or lesser) merit in acting from feeling and that it is never morally inappropriate to regulate one's actions by moral principles or considerations of conscience.<sup>20</sup>

Where this view seems to miss the mark is that too significant a burden is placed on the emotions as moral guides. Even though one might assert that the emotions play an important role in moral functioning and even can help direct the subject toward a right course of action, this view does not sufficiently emphasize the misalignment of human emotion that happened as a result of the fall. Emotions still have moral import, but it is not at all clear that emotions are pure states of morality that should determine the direction of a person's moral life.

### **Roberts's Nuanced View of Emotion**

Roberts interacts with these arguments and provides good reasons to at least question their overall validity. For the expositor, various aspects of the Stoic, Platonic, Sentimentalist, and Nussbaum's version of Neo-Stoic may be appealing, but Roberts's makes a compelling case that these fall short as models because they lack full explanatory power concerning the nature of emotions.

Regarding the Stoic claim, Roberts challenges it on several fronts but mainly about emotions' moral functioning.<sup>21</sup> He disagrees with the claim that the emotions have no moral relevance and points to three logical "backpedals" within Stoic logic that seems to suggest that even the Stoics themselves wrestled with this tension.

---

<sup>20</sup> Slote, "Moral Sentimentalism and Moral Psychology," 226.

<sup>21</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*, 26-29.

First, Roberts recognizes the Stoic concept of *first movements* as a backpedal from the initial position of separating from the emotions. The Stoics believed that the initial sensation of an emotion, such as a being startled or feeling a rush of adrenaline when something happens that could make one angry, is not an emotion. Instead, these initial sensations are called *first movements*. These initial feelings, according to the Stoic, are not emotions at all. Roberts then clarifies,

An emotion can follow such movements, but only if the subject assents to the impression that evokes the movement. For a true passion to occur, the subject must credit the first movement with rationality and truth, and consent to it with his will. He must voluntarily engage the first movement. Only then has the subject come into a passion and thus enslaved himself.

Roberts believes that such a backpedal is a weakness in the Stoic argument because they seem to too easily distinguish what is and is not an emotion based on their definition of emotion. So, if a feeling is not reasonably ascended to then it must not be an emotion; and as such, would fall into another category altogether.

The second backpedal acknowledges that some things are worthy of gladness. So, the Stoic position must backpedal once more to make room for these sorts of positive emotions, though admittedly they are not the same kinds of positive emotions that non-Stoics would experience. Stoics call these positive emotions *eupatheiai*, which means something like “good emotion.” To clarify, Roberts states,

For example, the objects of eupathetic joy are such things as the rational order of the universe and the deeds of the temperate persons, and eupathic joy is supposed to be a very stable state, not changing into its opposite. . . . For two reasons, worldly joys such as joy in the health and wellbeing of one’s children are not good: because the object is not truly good, and because such passions are prone to turn into disturbing passions like sadness and despair, in case one’s children become ill or die.<sup>22</sup>

The Stoic concludes that “the person who is subject to such joys and sorrows is spiritually a slave of the vicissitudes of life.”<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*, 27-28.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

Finally, the Stoic might argue for *preferred and dispreferred indifferents*.<sup>24</sup>

Here the Stoic wants to say that some situations, though they are neither good nor bad, are to be preferred or dispreferred. Roberts explains,

According to the Stoics, nothing is good except the rational order of the universe and the conformity of the mind to that order (that is, wisdom, virtue); and, conversely, nothing is bad except the unconformity of the mind to that order (vice). . . . The device consists in saying that while life and health, for example, are not strictly *good*, they are to be “preferred,” and while death and illness are not strictly *bad*, it is appropriate to “disprefer” them.”<sup>25</sup>

The use of indifferents allows for a certain amount of separation from the material world without totally ignoring matters such as health or material possession.<sup>26</sup> These backpedals represent tension in the Stoic argument. There seems to be a desire to focus morality only in the rational while at the same time acknowledging that there exists an emotional aspect that seems to be part of the good life.

The Christian, by contrast, is not left with this tension because the goal of the Christian life is not cognitive assent to the rationality of the universe. Instead, the Christian is called to a relationship with God in Christ. This relationship, by its nature, involves and even encourages a full array of emotion and expression. While the Stoic will argue that the emotions inhibit the moral life, the Christian can affirm that certain emotions and their expression are the foundation of moral life.

In addition to engaging with Stoicism, Roberts addresses Sentimentalism at length in his article “Emotions and the Canons of Evaluation.”<sup>27</sup> He argues that sentimentalism is circular in its reasoning because it speculates that moral content is

---

<sup>24</sup> “Indifferents” is a technical term used by the Stoics and which Roberts adopts. One might read “indifference” as a substitute. The idea is that while these situations may be dispreferred they are not in and of themselves to sought or avoided. The Stoic is supposed to be indiffernt to these situations.

<sup>25</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*, 28.

<sup>26</sup> Gill, “Cynicism and Stoicism,” 102.

<sup>27</sup> Roberts, “Emotions and the Canons of Evaluation,” 563.

found in the emotions themselves, but that the emotions seem to arise from morally appropriate actions. According to Roberts, the project of sentimentalism is without hope on the basis that “emotions that are rich enough in normative content to yield the kind of norms that sentimentalism intends to explain already presuppose the norms; and ones that do not contain the norms are too poor in normative content to yield norms.”<sup>28</sup> He goes on to state,

But the nature of sentimentalism as a moral theory will not allow us to make the transition from the emotions to morality so easily. Sentimentalism is an ambitious naturalistic explanatory project; it aims to explain moral evaluation from something other than moral evaluation, something more “natural”. The problem with deriving morality from the kind of emotions that we have been discussing so far is that they are already regulated with respect to moral concepts; the fact that we’ve been talking about an ideal of personal moral maturity as a base from which to appraise emotional appraisals vitiates the sentimentalist project by making the proposed explanation circular.<sup>29</sup>

However, if sentimentalism were to have a chance at being a logically valid project, he believes that it would benefit by adding a *cognitive construal* (I will take up Roberts’s view of construal in the following section) element to its view of emotion and morality. He states,

The construal view ascribes to emotions just the right kind of “cognitivity”—at the minimal end of the continuum, “propositional” content in an attenuated sense, but nevertheless in a sense that allows, in its defining propositions methodology, for greater analytical precision than the formal property methodology allows; and at the maximal end of the continuum, explicit propositional involvement in the structure of emotions.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, on Roberts’s view, the Sentimentalist lacks a strong enough cognitive dimension to explain the morality of emotions. At the same time, the Stoic view seems to

---

<sup>28</sup> Roberts, “Emotions and the Canons of Evaluation,” 344.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 568. Roberts here further clarifies the circular reasoning:

Emotions cannot contain judgments because, if they do, the sentimentalist explanation is circular; but they must be potential judgments or susceptible to evaluative judgments because, if they aren’t, the sentimentalist explanation (of morality in terms of emotions) is deprived of its essential characteristic, the derivation of norms from emotions.” (Ibid.)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 583.

fall short of the relational and human components of emotions and morality. Especially for the Christian, the lack of incarnational reality in the Stoic view should provide pause. The Christian eschatological worldview assumes that the natural world, though it is full of evil, is not by nature evil. Instead, the world will be re-born along with the physical bodies of the children of God. Physicality is not a necessary evil but is instead the joy of humanity when it is experienced in the right relationship with God.

Both views are deficient and in need of remedy. Roberts provides a mediating voice that embraces the relational and human aspect of emotional morality while at the same time is highly invested in the cognitive aspects.

Concerning Solomon and Nussbaum's argument of *emotion as judgment*, Roberts recognizes that judgments are part of emotion, but he believes the proposition that emotions *are* judgments (as he understands the term "judgments")<sup>31</sup> is vulnerable at several positions. For instance, the subject may not always ascend to the propositional content in the case of legitimate emotions. He cites examples of phobic reactions or emotional reactions when reading fiction. Both examples involve cases where the subject *knows* the fear (or other emotions in the case of the reader of fiction) is not rational, and the emotion persists.<sup>32</sup> The second objection is that the same judgment that is connected with the emotion is sometimes made without the presence of the emotion. For example, someone may judge they have been treated unfairly, yet for whatever reason not become angry; though in a similar situation in the past, they would have. Finally, he argues,

---

<sup>31</sup> Roberts lists six propositions that describe what a judgment is: (1) judgments involves assent; (2) judging that *p* requires a more direct presence to mind *p* than does believing that *p*; (3) judgments are sometimes perceptual; (4) judgments are not always perceptual; (5) judgments are always propositional; (6) judgments come in varying degrees of confidence. Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 84-85.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 83-84.

“Emotions are subject to voluntary control in a way that they would not be if they were mere judgments.”<sup>33</sup>

Those who argue for emotions as judgments argue for a tight correlation between propositions and emotional content. Roberts notes,

The presence of a propositional content in emotions is not the only source of the temptation to think they are a type of judgment. A construal is an emotion only if it has a certain degree of seriousness, and the seriousness of a construal is easily mistaken for the truth-asserting character of a judgment. A construal is serious when it is compelling; when it has the appearance of truth. If I am angry at my two-year-old for smearing catsup on her Sunday dress, then even though I hold a theory of moral development that rules out her being culpable for this heinous act, I construe the situation as one in which a responsible agent has culpably offended. She looks guilty to me. The construal has me in its grip even though I deny the corresponding judgment. By contrast, a construal can also be idling (unserious, lacking verisimilitude), as when one “entertains” one construal of a situation after another.<sup>34</sup>

Roberts recognizes that emotional responses often take place long before cognitive assent. He looks to the Christian faith for a prime example. A girl who hears the gospel for the first time may have feelings of joy and peace but still leave the situation not ready to cognitively admit that Jesus is Lord. However, the feeling of joy and peace may be part of the journey that helps her arrive at cognitive assent to the proposition of the gospel. The gospel has touched on a deep desire in her heart, but she is not yet prepared to make a judgment on the issue. Roberts notes that this kind of event is ordinary in human experience, and the judgment theory is unable to explain it adequately.<sup>35</sup>

Instead of only viewing emotion from one angle, Roberts offers a nuanced view that recognizes the cognitive elements of emotion but does not endorse the Stoic view of the amorality of emotions. Also, Roberts is at least in partial agreement with Nussbaum but understands her project to fail because it places too much weight within

---

<sup>33</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 84.

<sup>34</sup> Robert C. Roberts, “What an Emotion Is: A Sketch,” *The Philosophical Review* 97, no. 2 (1988): 201.

<sup>35</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 26.

the concept of judgment. In order to nuance a definition of emotion that has greater explanatory power, Roberts argues that emotions are *concern-based construals*.

### **Construal**

According to Roberts, a construal is a “way of seeing the world” or an “impression of the way the world is.”<sup>36</sup> As one perceives the world, many factors help to construct a construal of that world. Though a person may inaccurately perceive reality, the subject will believe his or her perception to be true.<sup>37</sup> For example, a young child may *perceive* a hideous monster is lurking under the bed. Her thoughts and anxieties may give rise to a perception of danger. Her perception of her imaginary world will generate within her greater fear and possibly panic. The mythical nature of the threat does not affect the child until a parent can reveal her *perception* as inaccurate. This may be accomplished through comforting the child, and possibly the parent crawling under the bed and revealing no monsters are present. At that point, the child’s fear may be quieted. Thus, the child changes her perception of the world from a fearful place where monsters may be lurking to a safe place where parents protect their children. As the perception changes, the emotion also changes.

On his model, Roberts asserts that an individual can shift his or her *perception* of a situation and in many cases, can adjust his or her emotional reaction to the situation related to it.<sup>38</sup> This concept is related to the Stoic view of cognitive emotions but does not endorse the “judgment” view.

Roberts argues that construals are subjective, though they can be greater or lesser regarding their representation of reality. The subjective nature of a perception is

---

<sup>36</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 69ff.

<sup>37</sup> This is not to ignore E6 from above. Note that he states that in “paradigm” cases.

<sup>38</sup> While emotions can certainly be shifted by changing the construal it is also important to note that some construals are far more difficult to shift than others.



illustrated by the gestalt image of an old lady/young lady (see figure 1). Roberts employs the image to demonstrate how construals can shift from one perception to another. As one views the image, either a young lady or an older woman initially appears. The viewer can then (possibly with the assistance of someone else) perceive the other image as well.

In the same way, changing one's perception of the world can influence the emotional makeup of the subject. On this view, emotions are in part based on construals; and thus, are based in the cognitive and are not merely non-cognitive passions. Roberts writes, "This flexibility of perception in the broader sense of construal makes it possible, sometimes, to obey a command to feel an emotion."<sup>39</sup>



Figure 1. Old lady/young lady

Does this mean that by simply choosing to *see* differently, a person can create any emotion at any time that he or she desires? While several options for construal may be available, Roberts does not believe that these options are without limit:

When you see the figure in the one way, and then shift to the other way of seeing it, the purely sensory data do not change; either way, your eyes register the same configuration of black splotches on a white background. But your way of taking or

---

<sup>39</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 25.

“seeing” those data makes all the difference in the way you *experience* the drawing.<sup>40</sup>

He further explains,

The fact that the figure can be seen (experienced) in the two very different ways, yet without change of sensory character, suggests that construal is subjective: The organization of the lines is not just in the lines, but is imposed, with the encouragement of the lines, by the viewing subject. . . . [However] the two construals (of the figure) are not *sheer* subjectivity; the viewer does not create the figure as she might if she were drawing it. Instead she discovers something that is there in the drawing. Yet it is not as though the old lady is the truth about the picture, while the young lady is not. Different as the construals are, neither is to be preferred to the other, absent some special conventional circumstance.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, construals of the world are subjective, but an individual does not have limitless options available for construing the world. A hard limit of *seeing* is imposed by the *shape, design, and organization* of the world.

A construal can be illustrated by utilizing a story from Scripture. In John 11, Jesus is said to weep at the tomb of Lazarus. Why does Jesus weep? One might *construe* this situation in several ways based on the textual evidence. One may make the case that Jesus is weeping over the sin of the world that has brought death upon humanity. One could argue that Jesus is expressing the emotion of sadness over the loss of his friend. Another may argue that Jesus is weeping at the unbelief (disgust? anger? sadness?) of those who stood looking on and so on. Thus, one might *perceive the world* that John is describing in this passage in several ways. However, one cannot merely see the world in any way imaginable. For example, it would be inapplicable to assume that the reason Jesus is weeping at the tomb is that he developed knee pain from trekking across the Judean countryside. This construal is inappropriate because the text limits the available construals to a particular set.

In the same way, when one construes the world *in a certain way*, that person is limited to the available propositions. Indeed one might choose to ignore facts or

---

<sup>40</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 25.

<sup>41</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 71.

information within a construal of the world, either intentionally or unintentionally. However, such a construal would result in a perception of the world that is *not in alignment with reality* and is thus flawed. Possibly a person could—and often will—base his view of the world on incomplete information. In such a case, though he or she would completely believe the construal, it would not be the case that the construal is true in reality.

### **Twelve Propositions Concerning Construals**

For greater clarity to his view of construals, Roberts provides twelve propositions:

(1) “Construals have an immediacy reminiscent of sense perception. They are impressions, ways things appear to the subject; they are experiences and not just judgments or thoughts or beliefs.”<sup>42</sup> Construals are not solely comprised of objective data in a scientific sense, but instead, are experienced and are taken up in the subjective desires of the subject. A person’s construal of the world may be in alignment with available data or may be based solely on experience that is not available to conscious judgment.

(2) “Though they are impressions, they are not, or not merely, sense impressions, that is, impressions of the sort produced by light hitting the retina, air variations exciting the ear drum, and so on.”<sup>43</sup> While construals are based on an impression of the world, they need not be solely perceived through the senses. Construals may well be formed through imagination.

(3) “They involve an “in terms of” relationship: one thing is perceived in terms of something else.”<sup>44</sup> Roberts recognizes that emotions do not take place in an

---

<sup>42</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 75.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

isolated vacuum but are understood as subjects relate to other objects.

(4) “They are subjective, that is, highly dependent on special qualifications of the subject; but some of them can be true or false.”<sup>45</sup> Even in accepting the correspondence theory of truth, one’s *perception* of reality is going to be highly subjective.

(5) “They admit of a focus on one or two of the elements, with the rest of the construct in the ‘background’ and the focus can be quite shifty, producing kaleidoscopic variations on a construal.”<sup>46</sup> Within the construal, one may only focus on one or two elements, and the rest is forced to the background. The focus of the construal will become the primary construal of the forthcoming emotion. Thus, if a man’s wife burns the toast, and he construes that she has done so out of neglect for his desire for non-burnt toast, he may become angry. However, if he learns that she was distracted from the toast because of an emergency with one of their children, he might be inclined to change his perception. Though, upon trying to eat the burnt toast, he is reminded of the offense and again construes that she was negligent with the toast and may return to his anger. In this instance, the construal of the event is impacted by the focus.

(6) “Opposed construals of something tend to exclude each other, but for an adept (sic) it is sometimes possible to engage two opposite construals at the same time.”<sup>47</sup> At first reading, it may appear that Roberts is arguing for a paradox; however, if one remembers that construals are subjective, it is possible to see how opposing construals may be perceived simultaneously. Roberts’s use of the old lady/young lady image makes this point. A person who is adept with the image will be able to flip back and forth in their mind between the two images.

---

<sup>45</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 76.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

(7) “They need not be states of consciousness.”<sup>48</sup> In Roberts’s view emotions are not pure physiological responses that overtake a person. Instead, emotions are connected to objects, narratives, and thoughts. Emotions give color to the world. Thus, emotions are shaped by cognitive perceptions. However, at times these perceptions take place beneath the surface of consciousness, and the source is not always apparent to the individual experiencing the emotion, thus giving the impression that emotions are at times random and without an object. Construals may take place beneath consciousness and will not be immediately recognized by the subject. The subject may or may not be aware of the accompanying emotion of the construal, depending on its scope and depth as well as the subject’s self-awareness.

(8) “They often, but not always, have an “emotional” character, and the difference between the kinds of cases made by the presence of concerns, personal interests, and attachments of the subject for (to) something in the construed situation.”<sup>49</sup> Only those concepts, thoughts, or perceptions that touch on a concern or desire will produce an emotion. While a person may perceive countless things and ideas only when those perceptions inhibit or add to a desire or concern will an emotion be produced.<sup>50</sup>

(9) “They come in degrees of depth of impression or impact of strikingness.”<sup>51</sup> Depending on the depth of the concern gathered up in the construal, the impact of that construal will take on various intensities.

(10) “They come in varieties of interplay of mental event types.”<sup>52</sup> Here Roberts means that construals are grasped by an “in terms of” relationship. He states,

---

<sup>48</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 76.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

“The “in terms of” relation can have as its terms any of the following: a sense perception, a thought, an image, a concept...Most of our experience, as most of our unconscious states of mind, are a hard-to-specify structure of percept, concept, image, and thought.”<sup>53</sup>

(11) “They are sometimes subject to voluntary control, and they sometimes are not.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, not all construals can be summoned at will. One will not always be able to voluntarily re-construe a situation. Other instances will be more easily re-construed. One possible reason is the degree of concern attached to this particular construal. The higher the degree of concern, the more difficult it will be to reshape the construal voluntarily. Here, the wise preacher will note that proclaiming biblical propositions does not immediately penetrate to the deepest concerns of the human heart. This is not to imply that the proposition is impotent but that often the proposition needs time to penetrate the concern. Instead, a long-term commitment to reshaping the concerns is needed while at the same time encouraging the adoption of the proposition or application.<sup>55</sup>

While a construal may be relatively simple, emotion is far more complex, and those construals that lead to emotions are by nature more complex. Roberts argues,

Emotions are of course far more complicated than the construals of these simple figures. Whether an emotion is in our repertoire with respect to a given situation is a function of the character of the situation in its relation to our system of beliefs, our emotional history, our system of cares and desires, our habits of attention, our skills at conceptualization and visualization, and who knows what else. In some situations one emotion may be so compelling that we are (without the help of a friend or therapist, at any rate) virtually helpless in the face of it. The therapist or friend, by suggesting and fostering other possibilities of construal, may be able to liberate us from it by contributing to our emotional repertoire.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 76-77

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>55</sup> Encouraging right action and right thinking before the emotional virtues begin to develop is important. The balance will be helping the congregation realize that the goal is not just *doing* or *thinking* but also *loving* rightly. A wise pastor must begin where the congregation is and at times that will mean beginning with practicing right behavior long before the heart is attuned to biblical emotional virtues.

<sup>56</sup> Roberts, “What an Emotion Is,” 193.

(12) “The language of construal or seeing-as is not native to the experience except in special cases where the experience is taken to be optional or not to bear on truth, or the speaker is denying, doubting, or analyzing the experience.”<sup>57</sup>

On Roberts’s view, construals are not merely the observation and integration of facts into the cognitive perception of the world. Any given construal of the world is far more complicated than a simplistic variant in a math equation; however, this does not mean that construals are entirely outside of one’s ability to shape, only that control of one’s construal may not be entirely possible, at least at first. While the construal of the world may be rooted in propositions, it cannot generate emotion based on propositions alone; this is the role of the subjective concerns of the individual.

## Concerns

Recall that Roberts’s definition of emotion is *concern-based* construal. In addition to a construal of the world, emotions are based on serious *concerns* held by the subject. A construal, apart from a concern, is not an emotion. This is one of the most striking differences between Nussbaum’s and Roberts’s arguments. When a concern is taken up in a construal of the world, an emotion is generated. Roberts notes,

The multitude and variety of synthetic crossings of precepts, images, thoughts, and concepts in human mental life are countless; only some of these, however, are emotions. My formula is that emotions are concern-based construals, that is, construals imbued, flavored, colored, drenched, suffused, laden, informed, or permeated with concern. To be angry is not just to see a person as having culpably offended; the construal must be based on a concern about some dimension of the offense, and possibly a concern about some dimension of the offender. . . . For this reason, concerns, cares, desires, loves, interests, attachments, and enthusiasms are dispositions to emotions; when we construe circumstances in terms that touch or impinge on our concerns, the construals are emotions.<sup>58</sup>

Emotions, then, are construals laden with concern. Any construal apart from a desire or concern will not result in an emotion. As mentioned, the “concern” aspect of

---

<sup>57</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 76.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-80.

the emotion is what primarily separates it from other definitions that argue for emotions *as* judgments.<sup>59</sup>

Roberts states that concerns “denote desires and aversions, and the attachments and interests from which many of our desires and aversions derive.”<sup>60</sup> Concerns are shaped and developed in a variety of ways:

Concerns can be biological (“instinctive,” “natural”) or learned, general or specific, ultimate or derivative, and dispositional or occurrent. The aversion to bodily damage and death is presumably biological and thus universal, as is a concern to be estimable; by contrast, the concerns to avoid cancer and to be esteemed for one’s philosophical works are learned and culture-relative.<sup>61</sup>

Concerns are developed in a multitude of ways, be it intentionally or unintentionally. Culture plays an essential role in the development of concerns, as well as a person’s family of origin. The church community, doctrine, and one’s relationship with Jesus will undoubtedly shape the concern of the Christian. Some concerns may be present with an individual through their entire life, as a concern for personal health, and some may only be present for a short time, such as a concern for a car—once the car is sold one would no longer have the same concern for it.<sup>62</sup>

Concerns are “taken up” in a construal of the world to form an emotion. The concern is one of the available inputs that function in the development of the emotion. Thus, “basic concerns become a ‘term’ of the construal, along with aspects of the situation as the emotions pictures it.”<sup>63</sup> When the construal of the world hits on a serious

---

<sup>59</sup> See Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought*.

<sup>60</sup> Roberts, “What an Emotion Is,” 202.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> In such cases where the car had sentimental value, such as it was a first car or was “dad’s car,” the concern may be for the car but more importantly it is concern to hold to the memories and relationships that the car represent.

<sup>63</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 145.



concern, the emotion is activated. The concern is thus part of the construal, but it is not the construal itself.

At times emotions may make particular concerns evident. Roberts argues that concerns may be dormant, but in the emotion they become active: “The concern is there in the form of the emotion.”<sup>64</sup> A person may be unaware of a concern they have until it is perceived, even subconsciously, that the concern is affected; and at which point they will experience an emotion related to that concern.

Concerns may have lesser or more significant influence over an emotion depending on the psychological depth of the concern. The deeper the concern, the more *color* the concern will provide to the construal of the situation. The realization that not all emotions are created equal is important for the formation of emotional virtues; those emotions with greatest intensity are often rooted in the most central concerns of the individual. Roberts argues,

The depth of an emotion is the depth of its ingress into the personality. Human emotions are paradigmatically based on or rooted in concerns. But concerns can be more or less masterful, that is, they can be more or less constitutive of the core of someone’s personality, or they can be derived from concerns that are in this way central to the person. Some concerns have shallow roots; they are in the personality all right, and emotions occasionally arise out of them, but relatively little about the person can be explained by reference to them.<sup>65</sup>

Are concerns themselves emotions? Roberts believes the reason some argue that concerns are emotions is that “some emotions contain or beget concerns—what I have called the consequent concern—and a theorist might think that this concern is the very center or essence of the emotion.”<sup>66</sup> Because the concern is at the core of the emotion, some may want to argue that the concern is itself the emotion. Furthermore, some may argue that “words that refer to emotions may also refer to concerns. The premier

---

<sup>64</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 144.

<sup>65</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*.

<sup>66</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 146.

examples are ‘love’ and ‘hate’ and ‘concern’ itself.”<sup>67</sup> Roberts dismisses this view by stating, “It does not follow from the fact that the same term can refer both to emotions and to concerns that emotions do not differ from concerns.”<sup>68</sup> At this point, the English language seems to be the limit of the discussion, not Roberts’s meaning of “concern.”

He argues that a concern is not an emotion but a part of the emotional makeup:

One reason might be that emotions involve concerns—for example, a fearful person has a concern to get out of this danger’s way. But this does not show that the concern is the fear, or any other emotion. And besides, it is not that concern by reference to which I explain fear, but the more general concern to avoid damage to oneself; it becomes the more specific desire to avoid this present perceived danger only in virtue of the construal of the situation.<sup>69</sup>

In this example, the fear is not the concern; instead, the concern is for one’s health, which ushers in fear when health is jeopardized. Roberts does note, however, that

it is of course true that one emotion can be based on a concern arising out of another emotion. Thus I can feel disappointed at my failure to get revenge against a person at whom I am angry. But my analysis of emotions in terms of concerns is not circular, because there are concerns which are not only not emotions, but not even ingredients in any emotion.<sup>70</sup>

Roberts provides a useful analogy to understanding the relationship between a concern and the emotion that issues from a desire. Emotions seem to have a “mind-to-world” direction while concerns or desires have a “world-to-mind” direction. An example at this point may help. If I know that there is a piece of strawberry pie in the kitchen and begin to desire the pie, I will only be satisfied in my desire if the pie is given to me, and I am then able to eat it (the outside world conforms to my mental state). However, what if at the moment my wife brings me a piece of the pie, my two-year-old knocks it from her hands and it spills to the ground? Now, my desire has been

---

<sup>67</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 146-47.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>69</sup> Roberts, “What an Emotion Is,” 203.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

thwarted—the outside world does not conform to my mental state. Thus, I perceive that I am angry. My anger is the emotion that issued from my desire being thwarted. The desire itself was not the emotion.<sup>71</sup>

Roberts notes that “emotions can succeed in fitting the world, or fail to fit it, in much the way that visual and auditory experiences can.”<sup>72</sup> My perception of the world and how it is affecting my concern is limited, and because of that can be inappropriate to the situation. In the above example, I was angry with my son for causing my pie to crash to the ground. However, what if he was running into the dining room to tell his mother there was a snake that had made its way into the house? Suddenly, my anger at him dissipates because I construe that it was not mere carelessness that caused him to spill my pie, but a threat. This illustration helps to show how emotions are contingent on subjective information. The construal of the situation does not directly reflect the content of what happened but also reflects on a sense of justice concerning the object.

### **Roberts’s Twelve Facts about Emotions**

Now that a definition of emotions as concern-based construals has been established, Roberts observes twelve propositions concerning emotions. He recognizes that emotions come in a large variety of shapes and degrees; however, they do have specific characteristics that seem to be universal. Reflecting on the common attributes of emotions, Roberts articulates twelve propositions (though admittedly there are more). Some of the propositions appear authentic based on “common knowledge,” while others

---

<sup>71</sup> As I will attempt to show when the appropriate concerns are in place, they will issue a variety of godly emotions. For example, if a lady in the congregation begins to have a greater concern for the poor she may feel joy at seeing their needs met or anger when they are neglected. Both are appropriate responses to this biblical concern.

<sup>72</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 147.

will require more philosophical reflection. In his writing, Roberts provides helpful examples and further clarification for each.<sup>73</sup>

(1) “Emotions are paradigmatically felt, but emotions may occur independently of the corresponding feeling, and the feeling of an emotion can be nonveridical, illusory.”<sup>74</sup> Humans have emotions even without being consciously aware that the emotion is present. Emotions are not required to be felt to be present.

(2) “Physiological changes often accompany emotions; sometimes, they are felt; the feeling of them is not the feeling of the emotion, though it is characteristically an aspect of the feeling.”<sup>75</sup> While it is often the case that certain emotions produce particular physical states (i.e., a person has sweaty palms when they become anxious), it is also possible that those same physical sensations are produced by something other than the emotion. Thus, while physical sensations often accompany particular emotion, they are not the feeling of the emotion itself but a part of feeling the emotion.

(3) “Paradigm cases of adult human emotions take ‘objects.’”<sup>76</sup> Emotions have an *in reference to* make-up. An emotion is usually understood in reference to something outside one’s self. Roberts uses the following example, “My anger is directed at George, *on account of* his remark. Emotions are like several other kinds of mental states in being ‘intentional’—that is, take some ‘object’ beyond themselves.”<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*. I encourage the reader to read these propositions slowly and consider their implications, especially as they may relate to rhetorical strategy, emotional motivation, and expression.

<sup>74</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 60.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

(4) “Emotional objects are typically situational or composite, with unequal and shifting focus on the various elements of the situational object.”<sup>78</sup> As one experiences an emotion, various propositions or aspects of the situation may come to the forefront and others descend like actors on a stage that step forward to share their lines and then move back up stage.

(5) “We could say that emotion type is determined by certain leading concepts that define it.”<sup>79</sup> Anger is felt when a subject experiences a perceived injustice. Sadness is felt when a subject perceives a loss of something valuable. Each emotion seems to have its grammar that describes how it relates to the object.

(6) “In the paradigm cases, the subject of an emotion believes the propositional content of his emotion, but in some cases of genuine emotion, the subject does not believe all of the content.”<sup>80</sup> A person may experience genuine emotion while not believing the propositions. A simple example involves emotions felt while reading a fiction novel. The reader knows that the propositions giving rise to certain emotions are not real, only fiction. However, the emotions created are real, even if the reader knows he does not believe that events in the novel are based in reality.

(7) “It is possible to have emotions without being able to articulate (all of) their content; some of the content may be nonpropositional.”<sup>81</sup> Roberts states,

For example, the kind of ecstatic joy or awe that one may experience while sitting on the shore of a deserted mountain lake at sunset or listening to one of the Brandenburg Concerti seems not even to *have* a “story.” Perhaps even the most articulate and articulable emotions typically have some nonpropositional content.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 62.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

(8) “Many types of emotion are motivational in the sense that they involve a desire to perform character types of action, but not all emotions are motivational in this sense.”<sup>83</sup> Anger may motivate a person to slam a door, curse, or scream. Fear can motivate a person to hide or fight back. However, some emotions, such as sadness, do not seem to have a motivational sense on Roberts’s model.<sup>84</sup>

(9) “The subject of an emotion is sometimes able to exercise voluntary control over it, and sometimes unable to do so.”<sup>85</sup> Roberts offers the following clarification:

We sometimes speak of “hanging on” to our anger, or giving in to anger that we feel coming on, or letting ourselves be carried away. We also speak of giving up our anger (say, in an act of forgiveness) or not allowing ourselves to get angry. We often speak as though we have some control over our emotions, at least part of the time—that we can sometimes choose whether to go into an emotional state, or whether to remain there. But we also sometimes speak as though the emotion has control of us, partial or even complete. We are sometimes paralyzed by fear, possessed by anger.<sup>86</sup>

(10) “Emotions come in degrees of intensity.”<sup>87</sup> One may have feelings of anger from mild annoyance to full-blown rage. All would be expressions of anger but would be empowered by the level to which the primary concern was affected.

(11) “Expression of an emotion in behavior and action sometimes causes an emotion to subside, but sometimes expression intensifies and/or prolongs the emotion.”<sup>88</sup>

(12) “Emotions, like actions, are subject to moral praise and blame.”<sup>89</sup> The moral makeup of emotions is the subject of his book *Emotions in the Moral Life*,<sup>90</sup> where

---

<sup>83</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 63

<sup>84</sup> However, one might also argue that healthy sadness actually motivates a person to retreat from others to deal with loss.

<sup>85</sup> Roberts, *Emotions*, 63.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 64.

he makes the case that emotions can be virtuous and that Christians ought to seek to cultivate such virtues.

Roberts admits that these twelve propositions do not represent all facts about emotions, but these are a strong sampling of some of the more prominent propositions.

To conclude the discussion of Roberts and emotion, here is Roberts's summary of his definition:

To say that emotions are concern-based construals is to say that they are states in which the subject grasps, with a kind of perceptual immediacy, a significance of his or her situation. Emotions are interpretive in a broad and loose sense: two subjects with equally acute powers of sense perception and intellection may see the same situation in very different ways, experiencing widely different emotions in response to it. As interpretive perceptions, emotions can be right or wrong about the situation, true or false of it. And they are motivational. As concern-based construals, they are affected by what the subject cares about, what is important to him or her; and many emotions tend to move their subjects to action in a way that is suggested by the concern that is basic to the emotion, along with the particular way of construing the situation that the emotion involves.<sup>91</sup>

At this point, the expositor may begin thinking about how Roberts's view of emotion can contribute to the process of developing emotional virtue through the sermon. However, before moving to the sermon and its development, it is essential to have a grasp of the make-up of Christian emotional virtue. The following section will detail those parts while also showing how concerns and construals impact the structure of emotional virtues.

### **Roberts's On Christian Emotional Virtue**

Before turning to a discussion of the composition of Christian emotional virtues, a distinction between emotions and emotional virtues, in general, should be addressed. As Roberts argues, an emotion can be a virtue, but certainly, not all emotions are virtues. Those types of emotions that may be considered virtuous (i.e., joy) are not

---

<sup>90</sup> Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life*.

<sup>91</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 11.

virtuous in certain situations. For example, a person may be joyful at unjust suffering or peace when anger is the appropriate response. Emotional virtues are not merely emotions, but emotions felt and expressed at the right time and place based on the context and cultural situation. Each community determines what constitutes a right time and place based on internal beliefs and ideals. For Christians, the theology and ethic of Scripture determine the appropriate expression, time, and place in which emotions are considered virtues or not. While one might believe joy to be a virtue, in Christian context, feeling joy upon hearing that someone was murdered would not be considered a virtue but would point to some distortion of the heart.

Unlike emotional virtues, emotions “are episodic states.”<sup>92</sup> Thus, “they come and go, lasting sometimes just for a second or two and sometimes for more extended periods. They are not themselves traits of character.”<sup>93</sup> Emotions are not inherently moral. Emotions can only be judged morally in relation to their context, motivation, and the action that follows. The feeling of sadness, anger, joy, or happiness does not describe a virtue or a vice. Only when emotions are felt at appropriate or inappropriate times, situations, and amounts can they be judged as either virtues or vices.

The difference between an emotion and emotional virtue has to do with one’s ability to draw upon the virtuous emotion under challenging times. Unlike episodic emotions, emotional virtues are characterized by endurance and the ability to feel the emotion when it is appropriate based on the particular worldview one adopts. Drawing from Romans 5:1-5, Roberts illustrates this idea:

Real spiritual hope is not a matter of feeling hopeful now and then, when circumstances are looking up, even if the thought that goes with that hope is that we are due to share the glory of God. It is not real, spiritual hope if, for example, you feel it only in church, with the help of the vaulted ceiling, the unctuous preaching of Easter, and the resounding chords of “Christ the Lord is Risen Today.” The hope

---

<sup>92</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 19.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*



needs to be a character trait, and a character trait has to be characterized by “endurance” (hypomonē: steadfastness)—by ability to feel the emotion even in situations that don’t seem very propitious for it.<sup>94</sup>

Emotional virtues are present at times when it seems most unlikely that they would be. For example, a persecuted Christian may feel authentic joy as he construes himself as suffering alongside Christ and as he reflects on his concern for the Christ and his kingdom. He may experience genuine love for his persecutor despite pain and suffering. Although he certainly will feel anger, fear, and deep sorrow, his overall disposition is one consisting of intense joy in Christ in the face of suffering. The emotional virtue is not the only emotion felt. However, the emotional virtue is summoned when needed and able to support the weight of other episodic emotions. As the Christian meditates on Christ, prays, and expresses his own struggle honestly before the Lord, he can draw on the joy that is in the Lord.

A similar biblical example is found in Acts 5, where the emotional virtue of joy is evident in the apostles. The Pharisees called a council to discuss the ongoing preaching concerning Jesus of Nazareth led by the apostles (v. 18). The apostles are arrested. The angel of the Lord aided the escape of the apostles so that they could go and preach the gospel in the Temple. Then, the Pharisees bring the apostles in to be questioned and judged. The apostles are beaten and ordered to “not to speak in the name of Jesus” and let them go (v. 40). However, despite the incredible pressure and fear most others might have experienced, the apostles leave the scene rejoicing: “Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name” (v. 41). How was their joy possible? A spiritual reality unleashed in their life became for them an even greater desire than even the desire for their safety and health. So, at the very moment when discouragement and fear could have settled in, they can rejoice because they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus’ name. Therefore, the

---

<sup>94</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 19.

virtuous emotion of joy is summoned at a time when fear and discouragement may have been present but was overshadowed. The apostles rejoiced because they were able to reconstrue the situation in light of the eschatological reality they were experiencing in Christ and because of their concern for the kingdom.

### **Distinctively Christian Emotional Virtue**

Christian virtues are those attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions considered congruous with Christian flourishing. Christian emotional virtues are those emotions that issue from proper biblical concerns and construals that are felt, and if needed, expressed at the proper time, place, and quantity.

Christian emotional virtues are needed for ongoing spiritual growth. Roberts notes that a person who is considered “emotional” or immature “is weak not because he has emotions, but because he has such poor ones, or such a limited repertoire. The concerns his emotions go back to are themselves momentary, primitive, immature, badly ordered.”<sup>95</sup> The Christian who has developed emotional virtue will have a far greater repertoire of emotional expression and will not be limited to momentary expression but, instead, will be guided by godly dispositions.

Whether an emotion is classified as virtue or vice is determined by a specific local community. The community may be as isolated as a single tribe or as broad as the Roman Empire. For example, in the first century, the Roman Empire looked down on “humility” as a virtue and understood it as a sign of weakness, while the Christian community embraced it. Each community, through its own sets of concerns and construals, either elevates or rejects certain emotions as virtues or vices. These virtues are not universally embraced as virtuous. So instead of looking at emotional virtues from

---

<sup>95</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 16.

a broad perspective, one must focus on the specific community that most preachers will address; namely, the Christian community.

This raises the question of how certain emotions are determined virtuous within the Christian community. What makes emotional virtues particularly Christian is their connection to Christian doctrine and Christian concerns so that “distinctively Christian joy is joy in the Lord, gratitude is gratitude to God for his grace in Jesus Christ, hope is hope for the kingdom of God promised in the gospel, and so forth.”<sup>96</sup> It is not enough for a Christian to have joy; but for it to be Christian joy, it must be joy that is found in Christ and is informed by Christian doctrine. Christian doctrine and the Christian narrative determine Christian emotional virtues.

What about someone who demonstrates the same kind of emotion but does not share Christian beliefs—are they demonstrating the Christian emotional virtue? To put it concretely, what makes love shown to an ailing patient by a Buddhist nurse different from the love shown by a Christian nurse? Assuming that the quality of care is the same, is there a difference in the kind of love being shown? Is it right to say that love shown by a Christian is Christian love and love shown by a Buddhist is another form of love, namely, Buddhist love? Roberts believes that “the very same behavior of binding wounds, dispensing medicine, providing a comfortable place to lie, might be practiced by anyone.”<sup>97</sup>

However, an emotional virtue that is performed/felt by a Christian must proceed from biblical doctrine and narrative and Christian concern for it to be considered a true Christian emotional virtue. Roberts makes a distinction between virtuous Christian acts from non-Christian virtuous acts, though they can take the same form. The difference lies in the foundation of the virtue. He states,

---

<sup>96</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 29.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

The distinctiveness of Christian teaching and the concepts in which that teaching is couched determine the distinctiveness of everything else in Christianity—the art and architecture, the music and the institutions . . . the activities and actions that Christians perform.<sup>98</sup>

For a Christian to respond to life *Christianly*, it is not enough to have the right action, understanding, or even emotion; he must also conceive of himself *within the Christian narrative*. He will perceive the Christian story and concepts as pertaining to himself subjectively.

So, the Christian will learn to construe rightly as they are exposed to Christian doctrine and the gospel meta-narrative that subjectively invites disciples to take their place in the story. Here biblical teaching on the doctrine of faith that helps the congregation to see rightly will help to shape the virtues of the congregation.

### **A Primary Christian Concern (PCC)**

Each emotional virtue will be formed from a particular Christian concern and understood within a subjective construal of the world.<sup>99</sup> Since emotions are concern-based construals, to cultivate Christian emotional virtues, one will need to cultivate and inculcate Christian concerns. For Roberts, the foundational Christian concern is the desire for God along with a hungering and thirsting for righteousness: “Christian emotions will be ones that are based on a Christian passion — hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the yearning for eternal happiness, the longing for fellowship with God, the desire of the kingdom.”<sup>100</sup> This concern for God and his righteousness will be the basis of all Christian emotional virtues. Even the most virtuous of emotions not based in the primary Christian concern will not be considered Christian emotional virtues.

---

<sup>98</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 29.

<sup>99</sup> A great strength of Roberts’s arguments is that he continually refocuses abstract logic in practical examples of particular emotions. He does not leave the theory outside the realm of reality but shows how the theory manifests. The preacher who desires to cultivate emotional virtues will benefit from understanding the logic of emotions and how Roberts understands their composition.

<sup>100</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 31.

## Desire for God

The gospel message is directed at the most basic of human desires and reveals how each is fulfilled in Christ. Roberts notes that, in the Christian tradition, humanity needs “infinite forms of security, love, and meaning.”<sup>101</sup> Attempts to meet these foundational human needs simply through finite and psychological means are insufficient on the Christian model. The human soul cries out for a divine infinite person to trust, to love and be loved by, and to find one’s purpose. This desire for the infinite is met in God through Christ.

Thus, beneath all Christian emotional virtue is a desire for a more profound relationship with God in Christ. Where the desire for God wanes, the Christian emotional virtues will also dissipate. The psalmist reflects this desire in Psalm 42:1-2, “As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.” The prophet Isaiah reflects this same idea: “In the path of your judgments, O Lord, we wait for you; your name and remembrance are the desire of our soul. My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you” (Isa 26:8-9). Not only does the mature Christian desire God, but he will affirm that he desires nothing on earth more than God: “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you” (Ps 73:25). Thus, one way to describe the progression of the Christian life is for God to become increasingly one’s central focus and desire.

The need for an infinite God may be inherent in humanity, but in no way does that diminish God’s role in the process. Upon reflecting on this, Roberts believes that “the Christian psychologist can give doctrinally orthodox and biblically rich readings of the human desire for God and for its frequent failure to be well developed or conscious.”<sup>102</sup> To develop Christian emotional virtues, one must focus on adequately

---

<sup>101</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 37.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

developing a desire for God. The preacher can assume that the congregation carries a desire for God, either in the simple form of an unbeliever or in a more complex revealed form of the Christian. The desire for God's kingdom also issues from basic human desires: peace, safety, and love. However, the Christian is particularly situated to enjoy these benefits and as such, has a particular kind of desire for God's kingdom.

### **Desire for God's Righteous Kingdom**

The desire for God and his kingdom are not truly two separate desires but are two sides of the same coin. One side is desiring God for himself and the other is desiring God for what he is doing in the world and through believers. As believers desire the kingdom of God to be on earth as it is in Heaven, they are asking God to make his presence known more and more on the earth.

In Jesus's teaching in the Gospel of Matthew, one finds that the kingdom is drawn from the writings of Isaiah. Glen H. Stassen observes that Jesus's teaching about the kingdom is laden with references and quotes from Isaiah:

Every time Jesus proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God, he used words that came from the Aramaic translation of the prophet Isaiah. Aramaic scholars . . . see this most clearly, but the indebtedness to Isaiah is evident even in English translations. Jesus' beatitudes are a paraphrase of Isaiah 61, Jesus' first sermon in Luke 4:18-21 is based on Isaiah, and he quoted Isaiah far more than any other book of the Bible.<sup>103</sup>

According to Stassen, the kingdom, understood in light of Isaiah, includes at least seven themes: deliverance, justice, peace, presence of God, joy, healing, and return from exile.<sup>104</sup> "And throughout Isaiah, these seven characteristics of the reign of God

---

<sup>103</sup> Glen Harold Stassen, "Kingdom Of God," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 561. Stassen notes that the following passages from Isaiah are used by Jesus when prophesying about the kingdom of God: 9:1-7; 11:1-16; 24:14-25:12; 26:1-21; 31:1-32:20; 33:1-24; 35:1-10; 40:1-11; 42:1-44:8; 49:1-26; 51:1-53:12; and chaps. 54, 56, and 60-62. *Ibid.*, 562.

<sup>104</sup> Stassen, "Kingdom Of God," 561.

come because of God's compassion (Isa. 13:18; 14:1; 27:11; 30:18; 49:10, 13, 15; 54:7, 8, 10; 55:7; 60:10; 63:7, 15)."<sup>105</sup> The love and mercy of God bring the kingdom.

Disciples of Jesus are to desire these ideals and seek to bring them about in this life and to anticipate their ultimate fulfillment when Christ returns. In Matthew 13, Jesus illustrates the desire for the kingdom in the parable of the treasure buried in the field. In the parable, Jesus describes a man who found a treasure buried in a field that he did not own. He sells everything he has and buys the field. He then unearths the treasure to his great joy.

Jesus's purpose is to emphasize that a desire for the kingdom should accompany a desire for God in the life of the Christian. The desire for the kingdom is evidenced by a willingness to let go of secondary worldly desires and lay hold of the costlier desire; namely, God himself and the kingdom of righteousness that he brings. Paul puts it this way in Philippians 3:8, "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ." This fundamental Christian concern of Christ and his kingdom is at the center of Christian emotional virtues.

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus states, "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." According to Pennington, Jesus is not stating "generalized, universal, human wisdom," but is placing his ministry and teaching "into the context of the Jewish expectation of its eschatological consummation, its coming from heaven to earth."<sup>106</sup> Jesus' kingdom is localized in the people of God and works out from his people to the rest of the world. The outworking of the kingdom into

---

<sup>105</sup> Stassen, "Kingdom Of God," 562.

<sup>106</sup> Jonathan T. Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 101.

the world will take on several forms and will involve not only the life of the believer but also a holistic vision for the world into which Christians are to participate. N. T. Wright, who has described the kingdom in great detail,<sup>107</sup> explains how believers can live out their new reality as members of the kingdom:

The fundamental habits of this new, strange, upside-down “royalty” are therefore becoming clear—and they are the very things which Jesus and Paul were urging. They are the virtues, hard initially but second nature after long practice, which generate communities in whose life the lordship of Jesus is apparent, a life which by its very nature doesn’t stay as a hidden property which those communities but of necessity spills out into the world around as people see human life lived in a radically different, and often compellingly attractive, way. Here, again, the life of Christian virtue is a team sport.<sup>108</sup>

The church lives out this desire in community with God and with brothers and sisters in Christ. In a relationship with God and with one another, the church can *spill* the kingdom out into the rest of the world. Jesus teaches his disciples to pray for this very thing in Matthew 6:10. Therefore, the concern for the kingdom is not just a personal concern but is also a communal concern of the whole church and even for the whole world as it is taken up in Christ. Each person is called to hunger and thirst for righteousness, but each person is also understood to be in community where each is challenged and encouraged to grow in their concern and righteousness.

This kingdom concern will issue in several more specific concerns that the Christian is called to adopt progressively. The Christian will use wisdom to face trials and injustice in life, which is often not rooted in propositional law but flows from kingdom concerns (see Matt 5:20). The Christian must use wisdom because localized righteousness is rarely objective and most often is a process of learning to put on Christ and acting out the primary concern.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> For examples of his reasoning on the issue, see N. T. Wright, *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York: HarperOne, 2012); and Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus’s Crucifixion* (New York: HarperOne, 2018).

<sup>108</sup> Wright, *After You Believe*, 230.

<sup>109</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Putting on Christ: Spiritual Formation and the Drama of Discipleship,”



As Christians grow in maturity, the PCC becomes more centralized in their heart. The primary concern will move increasingly toward the center of the cognitive, emotional, and volitional world for the Christian.

The primary concern is like the hub of a wagon wheel: the central hub is the primary concern, and the spokes represent secondary concerns. However, the reality of the Christian's spiritual life is that worldly desires often occupy the central place of the heart (Jas 3:13-18). While believers may cognitively acknowledge Christ as the center of their desire, their emotions and actions will reflect the dark reality of their interior world. Thus, though the PCC may be present, it may not be indeed "primary" to the individual. James describes the competing desires that exist in the heart:

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.* Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (Jas 1:13-15)

This basic sinful desire is at odds with the kingdom desire.

If applying Jesus's illustration of a mustard seed to describe the primary Christian concern of the kingdom of God, then one can see this at work. Though the concern for the kingdom seems small, it can grow to have an enormous impact. At conversion, the PCC is implanted into the heart of the new disciple. The seed of concern is small at first, but as it grows, it will take an even more central and controlling role in the heart. False concerns in the Christian may be revealed as idols of the heart. The Christian is called to destroy the idols (1 John 5:21). Jesus has already claimed the land of the heart for his own (1 Cor 6:20), now the Spirit begins to tear down idols that exist within. As each idol falls, the PCC grows and becomes more central and has a more significant controlling influence.

---

*Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 147-71.

Thus, as the two sides of the PCC are inculcated into the life of the disciple, he or she will begin to reflect more the heart of God; and along with construing rightly, they will develop emotional virtues. A desire for God himself and a desire for God's good work to be brought about reflect the nature of the PCC.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter attempted to articulate a view of emotions as concern-based construals and to outline the composition of Christian emotional virtues (CEV). Roberts argues that emotions are made up of both a primary concern and a subjective construal. While a perception may take place beneath consciousness, the subject's emotions will be a reflection of a subjective concern held within the inner world. The Christian who is growing in love for Jesus will experience a greater sense of concern for Christ and his kingdom, but will often find that secondary desires also produce emotional reactions when the subject construes an object as affecting it. The Christian will thus want to focus on developing Christian emotions or more accurately emotions that are triggered for Christian reasons and situations. Thus, Roberts's argues that Christian emotional virtues are the result of biblical concerns and construals. The biblical concerns are a desire for God and his kingdom. These two ideas will mesh together, but the basic idea is that the believer will desire God and the vocation given to each believer as they follow Jesus.

Sermons that fail to take into account 1) the subjective nature of emotional virtue, 2) the emotional ignorance of many within the congregation regarding their desires and emotions, and 3) the degree to which a desire for God and his kingdom must be cultivated will not adequately develop CEVs. Thus, the next two chapters will present practical ways by which the expositor can address these issues in the cultivation of CEVs.

### CHAPTER 3

#### DIRECT METHODS FOR DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL VIRTUE

Roberts's work on Christian emotional virtue unfolds an essential idea that expositors ought to consider. The motivations that drive a person's will are not primal and animal like, but they are also not based in pure logic. The motivations and emotions that drive the will are produced from a complex system of concerns and perceptions both of which are subjectively understood. The expositor must keep the subjective dynamic in mind when thinking about the structure of the sermon and the tools used to help the congregation to arrive at the end of the sermon. Both direct and indirect modes of communication are necessary for a balanced approach. Direct preaching will provide information, content, and application. In order to understand how to construe the world and the form of Christian concerns, the expositor must speak directly about God, sin, the gospel, and the many points of faith and obedience given in Scripture. Indirect preaching will challenge the congregation through subversive means and engage their inner-self more prominently within the sermon. The hearer is taken on a journey of exploration whereby they experience the text and the concerns that are latent within it. Both direct and indirect preaching have a role to play in the development of CEV.

This chapter will articulate four tools that help the expositor to preach in a directive manner in order to cultivate CEV: (1) read and preach the wisdom of the text as opposed to excessive principlization, (2) preach regularly in a *lectio continua* manner, (3) cultivate mental dexterity, and (4) apply the PCC logically prior to the demands of the pericope. This chapter assumes that expositors ought and do, for the most part, teach the meaning of the text and apply the text to a local congregation. While teaching and

applying the text are foundational to expository sermons, for the sake of Instead of focusing on explanation and application, this chapter will focus on tools that may be added to these fundamental aspects of expository preaching.

Roberts states that “Emotions can be shaped, or determined in their internal nature, by the concepts and narrative of grace. The emotions that are normative for Christian spirituality are theological, teaching-based.”<sup>1</sup> CEV are not developed within a vacuum of doctrine but must be inculcated into the life of the individual. The preacher is required by his commitment to the authority of Scripture to preach the Word of God and by his belief in the inspiration of the text to deliver the meaning as intended by the original author. These propositions, however, should not discourage the expositor from reflecting on how to communicate the truth of God’s word best so that it is subjectively internalized, resulting in a change of concerns and construals on the part of the hearer. The first step must be to limit the expository search for abstract propositions and instead read the text for wisdom that is meant to transform mind, will, and emotion. Avoiding propositional excess, the expositor can focus on what the text is *doing* and not just what it is *saying*.

### **Wisdom as an Alternative to Principlization**

In order to adequately shape both concerns and construals of the hearers, the preacher ought to reduce the amount of principlization and in turn, preach the text as wisdom for transformation. The preacher will not abandon the central idea of the text, but must consciously refrain from making the sermon lecture on a principle of theology. The text ought not to be merely understood, but it should also be experienced practically while acknowledging that God is holy other and set apart. The text is about God and redemption, but it is a human book that is written for complicated humanity that has been

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 9.

broken by sin. Principlization that ignores the wisdom component of the text ignores the human component while focusing on abstract theological concepts.

### **Avoid Excessive Abstract Principlization**

Principlization is the default hermeneutic for some exegetes (FZ, Kaiser) and in some cases is appropriate. However, an overemphasis will result in a lack of subjective integration because abstraction by nature will separate the idea progressively from the concrete. This may not be a problem if the expositor is solely concerned with teaching the principles of the Scriptures and affecting the congregation's knowledge, but if the goal of the sermon is a whole-self transformation of the hearer, then abstraction must be replaced with a concrete expression of faith. Vanhoozer contends, "Biblical authority is a matter not only of revealed information (i.e., propositions) but also of larger-scale patterns of information processing (i.e., poetics). As the supreme norm for Christian wisdom, Scripture has sapiential authority."<sup>2</sup>

There should be a role for a limited or "soft" principlization in the exegetical process.<sup>3</sup> Though, attempting to narrow the intention of the biblical author to a single principle is more complicated than it might seem.<sup>4</sup> In order to bridge the gap between modern Christians and the ancient author, the exegete faces the dilemma of abstraction. To meet the cultural demands of the text, the preacher must abstract the meaning to fit the modern culture. Principlization is often the default position for achieving the abstraction necessary. However, not every exegete is convinced that principlization best serves the function of Scripture. Vanhoozer speculates,

---

<sup>2</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Love's Wisdom: The Authority of Scripture's Form and Content for Faith's Understanding and Theological Judgment," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 5, no. 3 (September 2011): 251.

<sup>3</sup> David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*, ed. John S. Feinberg (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 97.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 91-98.

Are principles really more timeless than practices? Jesus’ practices (which John Yoder refers to as the “politics” of Jesus) embody the Christian way, truth, and life—something that cannot merely be reduced to a set of abstract principles. Indeed, from one perspective, the abstract principles are but the shadow of the substance, the weaker brother of the concrete life of the incarnate Son of God.<sup>5</sup>

While abstract propositions serve an essential role in the life of faith, they must be supplemented with the concrete. Vanhoozer continues,

Yes, the Bible was written for a particular culture, yet it has permanent (transcultural) value and authority precisely as a concrete instance of how to embody the mind of Christ in a particular situation. We need to focus not on abstract principles alone but on concrete (canonical) universals.<sup>6</sup>

“Concrete universals” are truths applied to and lived out in day-to-day life.

When the text and application are overly abstract, instead of spiritual formation, the sermon focuses on information and behavioral modification. While the congregation may learn new ideas or even new ways to live, they are not necessarily growing in maturity or emotional virtues because the concern of the author and the construal of the world latent in the text is ignored in favor of theological propositions. Again Vanhoozer,

In my dramatic model, the goal is not to obtain a set of timeless principles but to grow in wisdom by considering particular instances of truth, love, and wisdom in act. *Again, I do see a modest role for something like principlizing, but the primary thing is to form and transform biblical interpreters through their apprenticeship to the particular habits of prophetic and apostolic judgment intrinsic to and embodied in the biblical texts.*<sup>7</sup>

As the expositor points to particular biblical instances of “truth, love, and wisdom,” the concerns and construals become more evident within the text.

---

<sup>5</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “A Response to Walter C. Kaiser Jr.,” in *Four Views on Moving beyond the Bible to Theology*, ed. Gary T. Meadors (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 60-61.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 61

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-62.

Principlization or propositions ought not be dismissed altogether, but instead should be viewed as incomplete when presented as the only contribution of the text to the hearers. Abe Kuruvilla allows a soft form of principlization to organize the sermon but not as an isolated principle that can be separated from the text. He states,

For practical purposes, to aid the preacher in sermon preparation, a convenient statement of the theology of the pericope may be useful, as long as the interpreter remembers that such a verbal summary...simply serves as a workable précis of the pragmatics of the text for the preacher during sermon preparation.<sup>8</sup>

Subjective integration of concerns and construals is not accomplished in abstract principles but the crucible of concrete experiences. The disciple is invited into relationship and apprenticeship that goes far beyond propositional knowledge. While propositions may provide content that someone does believe and even develop concern over, the proposition is not the activating ingredient. The relationship between the subject and the object is far more critical. Disciples are called to view the world as God's creation and to understand each person as made in the image of God, these are propositions but only in relationship with God and with others do these propositions exert their real force. Vanhoozer summarizes, "In short, the task is not to transform the Bible (i.e., into timeless principles) so that it can enter our world, but to transform ourselves (i.e., our habits of vision) so that we can enter into the world implied by the Bible."<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, instead of timeless abstract principles, the expositor is invited to present to the congregation the concrete examples of life in Christ and invite the reader to sit under the wisdom of the text by bringing their whole-self to be transformed. One way of reading the text is presented by Jeff Dryden and invites the reader of the Bible to read the bible as wisdom. A wisdom reading discourages the reader from approaching the text seeking propositions alone but instead invites him or her to seek the wisdom of the text for

---

<sup>8</sup> Abraham Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text! A Theological Hermeneutic for Preaching*, new ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2013), 117.

<sup>9</sup> Vanhoozer, "A Response to Walter C. Kaiser Jr.," 62.

loving-union with God, self, and others. Theological principles and propositions are a part of that relationship, no doubt, in the same way, that the proposition that “my wife and I have been married for ten years” gives information about our relationship. The proposition that “my wife and I have been married for ten years” is true and expresses something important about our relationship, but it is *not* our relationship. In the same way, a wisdom reading is not primarily concerned with acquiring facts scientifically or abstractly but instead expects that the information revealed in Scripture will lead to more excellent relationship and more in-depth understanding of God, self, and others.

### **Preach Concrete Wisdom**

The reason such a move is necessary is that the development of biblical construals and concerns invites more than the ascent to propositions beliefs (cf. emotions as judgments) but also requires theological wisdom; that is wisdom that is grounded in Scripture and the person of Christ. CEV are not demonstrated in a vacuum but must be understood within a context of biblical wisdom. For example, knowing when to be angry or rejoice is as much a part of wisdom as is obtaining the right concerns. One can have a right concern and the right construal and lack wisdom to express a CEV rightly. For example, a person may have a concern for a friend who just was given a significant promotion at work, but on the same day was given news that her father had passed away. Having an emotion of joy and sympathy are meaningless in this case if the person does not have the wisdom to know what love looks like in that situation.

Wisdom has an experiential element that concerned with concrete living. The preacher will need to view the biblical text as a source of wisdom and not merely propositions if he is to develop congregations that live wisely and cultivate the kind emotional virtues called for in Scripture.



In Jeff Dryden's *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom: Recovering the Formative Agency of Scripture*, Dryden presents a perspective concerning Scripture as wisdom.<sup>10</sup> Dryden defines wisdom as "a practical knowledge lived out in concrete agency shaped by desire" (19). Wisdom is rooted in knowledge, but it is a knowledge that is lived out and non-abstract. Finally, wisdom is shaped by desire or concern. Dryden seems to disqualify the Stoic from being able to achieve this sort of wisdom, but his reflection does seem to be more in line with Scripture's vision of wisdom which is found in Christ (1 Cor 1:30; 2:7-16). Dryden does not interact with Roberts in his book, but their ideas are integrable and show promise for developing a broader conversation on the topic of hermeneutics and emotion.

As the book title suggests, Dryden argues that the Bible has a formational *telos*. Each passage in the Bible, argues Dryden, is meant to transform and shape the mind, will, and/or emotions (read concern-based construals) (xx-xxi):

Wisdom texts such as the Bible<sup>11</sup> seek to inform and shape us in all three areas: actions, reasons, and motivations. While 'ethics' in the Bible is often associated with commands and prohibitions (e.g., the Ten Commandments), the Bible also contextualizes commands in ways that make them intelligible and desirable. (xxi)

Transformation takes place as the wisdom of Scripture is inculcated. Dryden writes, "When the Bible reorients our pictures of God, self, and world, it gives us a means to

---

<sup>10</sup> Jeff de Waal Dryden, *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom: Recovering the Formative Agency of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018). All parenthetical page numbering within this chapter is from this work.

<sup>11</sup> Dryden actually argues that all of Scripture is a form of wisdom literature, though he distinguishes clearly what he means. Dryden claims, "Every genre of Scripture is a sub-form of wisdom literature" (98). He argues that every genre is given for instruction in wise living and transformation (20). Every genre within the Bible houses a particular kind of wisdom to be unlocked and lived out in the life of the reader/hearer. For example, Dryden argues that the Gospels, in particular, are a form of wisdom literature designed for spiritual formation (101). Even the more didactic portions of the Gospels function as Wisdom literature and must not be limited to only providing information for theological study. Dryden argues that "didactic portions of the Gospels demonstrate wisdom intentions in informing and reshaping right actions, right reasons, and right motivations" (106). The wisdom found in Scripture may be either implicit or explicit, but the goal is the same: develop the soul of the reader and community to flourish in the kingdom of God. Wisdom literature as a genre is explicit in its claim and is shaped using literary devices that reveal its intention (246).

value what is truly worthy of our devotions and, conversely, shows what things are less worthy or altogether worthless” (xxi). Note that Dryden’s use of the term “worth” seems to reflect Roberts’ concept of “concerns.” The Bible, as wisdom, is concerned with the fundamental reordering of *both concerns* and *construals* with the goal of human flourishing and maturity. Each reading from Scripture will touch on an aspect of the selfhood of the congregation (mind, will, and emotion). Biblical wisdom is the growth of the mind, will, and emotions toward Christlikeness, which leads to a fully human life.

In order to transform complicated subjective concerns and construals, the expositor must help the congregation to approach the text with a different set of questions than is commonly espoused. The person who approaches the text for wisdom will ask, “which [goods] should I esteem as most valuable?” (xxi). In other words, what things are most important to my life? This is not a question of post-modern invitation that asks, which things do I believe are most important to my life, but instead asks, which things does God say are best for my life. Scripture then reorders the concerns of the reader by highlighting what is in Christ and tearing down idols that exist in the heart. In this way, the Christian is freer to serve Christ from his mind, will, and emotions. In turn, the emotional virtues, such as peace, humility, and joy, are available to the Christian because idols that once demanded allegiance no longer have a stronghold.

To understand the nature of a “wisdom reading,” one needs to compare it alongside both modern and post-modern methods of reading the Scriptures. These three ways of reading the Bible (modern, post-modern, and wisdom) begin with vastly different sets of questions that influence their reasoning, approach, and expectations. All three can influence emotional development, but a wisdom reading has the most substantial potential for whole-self development.

**A modern reading.** Dryden illustrates the modernistic reading with an image of a scientist in a white lab coat (4). He states, “This image of empiricism embodies the virtues of objective observation and the submission of theories to evidentiary proofs” (4-

5). The scientist stands off away from the object, observing, and critiquing: “The subject is in no way defined by its relation to the object; rather, the subject observes, interprets, and (from a distance) defines what of value is to be found in the object” (5). There exists a “strong tendency in modern thought and practice for knowing to become an act of mastery and overcoming, which also gave rise to technologically driven hopes for social reform” (5).

Modern readings of the Bible tend to prize objective fact-finding questions.

Dryden states,

What has [modern thinking] meant for our reading of the Bible? Primarily, it has meant that the Bible is not something that determines our existence, but instead we as “sovereign subject” determine the boundaries of its meaning and significance. The Bible is an object to be studied and subdued to fit within our understanding. . . . The normative image for the modern exegete is the prospector, who sifts through the silt of the text for nuggets of god. This prospecting stance equally describes “historical-critical” approaches as well as their (more conservative) “grammatical-historical” cousins. Whenever we read the Bible to extract nuggets, we are reading in modern mode, relating to the text as “sovereign subjects.” (5)

Dryden notes that biblical exegetes, as sovereign subjects, often come to the text with three modes of reading: theological, historical, and ethical (6). He acknowledges the value of such modes of reading but contends that these forms of reading are developed from a modern mindset that does not reflect the genre of Scripture.

In addition, Dryden notes that the application of the biblical text requires an additional step in a modern reading. The text itself must first be mined for its theological, historical, and ethical nugget, and then the nugget can be applied to the reader:

[Application] is in no way tied by necessity to a reading of the text, nor is it demanded by the nature of the text. In fact, if we are committed to a modern approach, application is a violation of a “neutral” methodology because it creates a disturbance in the relationship between the text, as an inert object, and the reader, as an disinterested observer. (7)

**Postmodern reading.** As modern readings reluctantly give way to postmodern readings, readers begin to ask different questions of the text. The reader takes off the white lab coat and instead sees the text as something that must be understood within his or her unique situation and space. In postmodernism, Dryden notes, the realization

emerges that “the subject is not a neutral suprahuman observer but what Kierkegaard called an ‘existing person,’ a finite human person with desires, intentions, perspectives, and prejudices that shape their understanding” (7-8). The reader is not an objective observer but now is seen as a person with desires and feelings about the text:

“Postmodernism recognizes that all knowing is conditioned by, and to some degree determined by, our history, gender, race, and nationality” (8). The postmodern stance is that knowledge is an interpretation, not objective reality:

In this context all systems of thought come under suspicion as ideological constructs that serve to advance personal and political power. Also, because knowledge is shaped by sociological factors (such as race or gender), it becomes particular to a social class, formative for its own self-identity. Each social group has its own interpretation of reality that reinforces that group’s cohesion and furthers its agendas. (8)

Dryden then notes how postmodern readings have influenced biblical interpretation:

The Biblical authors, in interpreting ideas and events, promote ideological structures that create a privileged space for the faithful. So the Bible itself projects interpretive schemes on reality which legitimate the social structures and political agendas of Israel and the NT church. So, in this context, the Bible’s ideological construals need to be exposed (e.g., socio-rhetorical criticism) and perhaps refashioned into something more palatable (e.g., feminist criticism). (9)

Postmodern readings of the text place a great emphasis on the background and development of the individual as well as the community they are a part of. There exists value for spiritual formation in this sort of reading, but it can lead to devaluing the authority of the Bible because of the mistrust the postmodern mind has on claims to authority.

**Wisdom reading.** According to Dryden, both modern and postmodern readings fail to provide an accurate epistemology to approach the biblical text (this is especially true for preaching that develops emotional virtues) because both place too great an emphasis on the reader as a “sovereign subject” standing over and above the Bible. The modern reader attempts to isolate the objective nugget of truth while the postmodern

reader believes that the authority of Scripture is subjective and found in community. In contrast, Dryden contends that what is needed is a hermeneutic that places the reader “under the biblical text” (9-21).

The reader who attempts to read the Scriptures for wisdom will submit himself to the text, recognizing, with the postmodern reader, that tradition has indeed impacted his understanding. However, he will look beyond tradition, accepting what is of value, and then submit to the biblical authority and its transformative power as the special revelation from God.

The wisdom reader recognizes that the Bible is meant for human flourishing and transformation (see Ps 1). The sort of flourishing found in Scripture is Christocentric and is concerned with the kingdom. Instead of focusing on self-actualization, the biblical ideal is conformity to Christ (2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:13; and Col 3:9-10), namely his actions, desires, and thoughts. Describing the Christocentric nature of the biblical view of human flourishing, Pennington writes,

Human flourishing is only available through communion with the Father God through his revealed Son, Jesus, as we are empowered by the Holy Spirit. This flourishing is only experienced through faithful, heart-deep, whole-person discipleship, following Jesus’s teachings and life, which situate the disciple into God’s community or kingdom. This flourishing will only be experienced fully in the eschaton, when God finally establishes his reign upon the earth. As followers of Jesus journey through their lives, they will experience suffering in this world, which in God’s providence is in fact a means to true flourishing even now. (14-15)

A Christ-centered view of flourishing is the backdrop of a wisdom hermeneutic because it places all the demands of Scripture within a relationship with Christ. Scripture as a voice from the outside stands over its readers and offers wisdom for life that is found in the concrete expression of Jesus’s life (as the promised Messiah of Israel), death, burial, and resurrection. Scripture provides generals and particulars for a life of flourishing. Dryden explains,

The Bible, as a wisdom book, is written to communicate a vision of the world that not only names and values particulars but that contextualizes concrete moral actions

and sustains moral integrity. In reading we expect to find a vision that reorients our lives, in how we see the world and how we live in it, in what we believe and what we love. To read for wisdom is to be attentive to how the Bible, as a voice from outside our idolatrous construals of reality, challenges and retunes our understanding and desires, and to open ourselves to that process consciously. (20-21)

If one interprets Dryden in light of Roberts here, it seems that he is arguing for the submission of internal concerns and construals to the transforming power of the Word. Instead of standing over the text demanding the text answer personal questions, the reader who comes to the text for wisdom places himself under the text in order to become more mature/whole/complete (Matt 5:48). This is not the same thing as elevating objective propositions above the reader. In this scenario, the reader must submit or humble himself or herself to the authority of the text. Instead of lofty propositions, the text provides real-world theology that has the authority and connection to the reader to lead to real change. Here is a subjective theology that is rooted in objective truth.

The reader sits under the text seeking not only answers but also the right questions: a total recalibration of mind, will, and emotions. The questions change from questions of understanding to questions of purpose and meaning: “What should I pursue to experience fulfillment, and how should I pursue it? What is worth giving my life to, and what will I get in return? What realities determine what I should value in life?” (20). According to both Aristotle and Augustine, what is needed then in order to obtain the right path to answer these questions and arrive at happiness/contentment/joy (εὐδαιμονία) is wisdom (20). Dryden recognizes the posture of wisdom is to allow “what I seek after as most valuable in the pursuit of happiness” to be reshaped by the text (20). Unknowingly, on this point, Dryden points beyond biblical construals to biblical concerns.<sup>12</sup> The subject

---

<sup>12</sup> Dryden’s work is influenced by the writing of Nussbaum, who argues emotions are judgments and does not include a category of concern (21).

asks questions of the text that is outside of himself in order to understand himself and God.

The pursuit of happiness culminates, for the Christian, in the primary Christian concern of desire for God and his kingdom. Thus, each flawed desire is subject to transformation, not just the beliefs about those concerns. Both concerns and construals are brought to the text and exposed, altered, and solidified. Dryden writes, “The text will work in some way to recalibrate my understanding and loves, how I look at myself, God, and the world, and what I seek after as most valuable in the pursuit of happiness, as defined by some returned criteria” (20). The reader who approaches the text searching for wisdom is expecting transformation, change, and re-direction. The reader must be open to this reorientation for the Scripture to have its full effect. In addition, the reader will need to be committed to a new direction.

To review, Dryden states, “Hermeneutical understating in the context of wisdom entails holistic comportment, which brings the whole person, in all their historical conditionality, with all their concepts, values, and affections, into the space created by the text” (21). The whole self of the reader is seated under the text. The preacher who approaches the text must sit under the text, which means that the preacher will need to be open to a realignment of his thoughts, actions, and deepest concerns:

Wisdom eschews any claim to a self-sustaining field of reference but instead assumes a fiduciary transformational stance, expecting a reorientation of those same concepts values, and affections in a dialectic engagement with the text. This means that the whole person, in all their faculties, is involved in this dialectic movement toward understanding. (21)

### **Christian Emotional Virtues and Wisdom**

The development of emotional virtue begins with attending to the correct concerns and adopting the proper construals. To read for wisdom, emotions must be involved in the process. The expositor will also need to realize that emotions should be utilized in the hermeneutical process. Though emotions can be misleading, that does not

entail that they should be removed from the process of discovering meaning in the text.

Dryden explains

The emotions, for example, as expressions of desire, play a hermeneutically productive role in their receptivity to the rhetorical dynamics of the text. Likewise, they also enter into the process of reorientation by coming into direct contact with the world of the text and the desires that it endorses. Of course, desires, like other elements of preunderstanding, can hijack hermeneutical inquiry, but the answer to this problem is not to deny their necessary role in the hermeneutical process. This would entail a flight from reality in failing to recognize all the elements that constitute our historical conditionality in approaching the text, because our desires are what bring us to the text in the first place. (21)

Emotions can be finicky and unreliable. Their content and moral import is often veiled and fails to give a full narrative. The person who is personally attuned to their own heart (mind, will, and emotions) will begin to recognize these movements and understand them. This person will come to the biblical text with their whole self, anticipating that emotions will be wild and unpredictable but willing to engage them to develop stronger concerns and construals.

However, because Western academics, especially in more conservative circles, have been skeptical of emotions because of their unreliability, they have been widely rejected from the process of spiritual formation. If emotions are employed, they are seen as a means to an end, namely exciting the individual to respond to truth. Though, if the preacher understands the emotions as consisting of concerns and construals of the world, then the mystical nature of the emotions is lowered slightly, and they can serve as a tool for understanding and maturing.

To review, in order to develop CEV, the expositor will need to limit the amount of principlization done within the sermon and focus on inculcating wisdom through the text. Inculcating wisdom is achieved by submitting to the authority of the text and bringing the mind, will, and emotions for reflection and transformation. In order to radically transform concerns of the heart, the congregation must be given more than abstract principles that can touch only the mind but must also be given directives in behavior but also the emotional core of the Scriptures.



If an expositor does feel the need to rely primarily on principalization for the structure of the sermon, then in order to compensate he will need to work at the cultivation of illustrations and stories that help to ground the abstract in the concrete. The negative side of such preaching is that it makes the text seem abstract and the preacher, through his use of story, is the one who makes it approachable. However, when the Bible is studied as wisdom, it is the Bible that is concrete (though it presents many abstract ideas) and the preacher is left with the task of presenting it.

### **Preaching Pericope by Pericope**

As Roberts argues, in order to develop CEV, the Christian needs to have access to biblical construals and concepts. Often, however, the congregation is either biblically illiterate or the preacher will focus on particular themes and passages such that the growth of the congregation is limited. Regularly preaching pericope by pericope in a *lectio continua* manner is the preferred method for developing emotional virtues because the congregation is exposed more adequately to the various biblical construals that are demonstrated in Scripture.

These construals are not just beliefs or judgments but are more like perceptions. In order to develop CEVs, the preacher will need to help the congregation to experience each construal within the biblical text. The exploration and experience of each text help the congregation not merely to know beliefs about the text but also experience the construals themselves. Thus, in order to craft a sermon that develops emotional virtue, the preacher will need to preach pericope by pericope through the whole counsel of God's Word.

The word *pericope* is often only associated with narrative units within the Gospels, but Abe Kuruvilla uses it more loosely to refer to a segment of thought in the biblical text for preaching purposes:

“Pericope” refers to a portion of the biblical text that is of manageable size for homiletical and liturgical use in an ecclesial setting. Though traditionally applied to

segments of the Gospels, the term in this work will indicate a slice of text in any genre, as it is customarily utilized in Christian worship for preaching—in other words, a preaching text.<sup>13</sup>

This usage seems fitting, and for the sake of argument will serve as a working definition. According to Kuruvilla, the pericope serves as the teachable “sense-unit” that helps to identify the sermonic focus.<sup>14</sup> The pericope is isolated for preaching and serves as a unit of thought that gives shape to the sermon by a literary and rhetorical framework. The structure of the text determines the preachable units based on literary cues. So, the work of the preacher is to identify the literary and rhetorical markers that set off individual pericopes from the larger story that they are telling.

Kuruvilla argues that each pericope is a building block for spiritual maturity/formation<sup>15</sup> because each contains a snapshot or slice of the biblical ideal that hearers are invited to embody. He notes, “Sermon by sermon, pericope by pericope, the various aspects of Christian life, individual and corporate, are effectively brought into alignment with the will of God.”<sup>16</sup> Both the individual believer and the corporate congregation are slowly aligned to the biblical expectation of Christlikeness and maturity. The congregation is invited on a journey of transformation that will take them through pericope after pericope, and over time, as the Word of God engages the hearers, they are slowly transformed more into the image of Christ (2 Cor 3:18).

Kuruvilla also states that the theology of the pericope “represent[s] a segment of the plenary canonical world in front of the biblical text.”<sup>17</sup> Kuruvilla borrows the

---

<sup>13</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 91.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Abraham Kuruvilla, “‘How Do You Read?’ A Hermeneutic for Preaching.” In *Leitourgia: Christian Service, Collected Essays: A Festschrift for Joykutty M. George*, edited by Andrew B. Spurgeon,

concept of the “world in front of the text” from Paul Ricoeur.<sup>18</sup> “The world in front of the text” is the literary and rhetorical world created by the author that is inhabited by the ideal reader. The author creates a world that is separate from the world in which he, the author, resides. Thus, the reader is not asked to inhabit the world of the author but instead is asked to inhabit the world created *in front of the text*. In this way, the meaning of the text is extended to all times and places. Unlike studies that focus solely on the world behind the text (i.e., historical criticism) the focus on the world in front of the text (i.e., pragmatics) seeks to reveal the literary and rhetorical intention of the author. Kuruvilla’s model utilizes both literary and pragmatic cues for the interpretation of the world in front of the text:

The interpretation of the world in front of the text, though constructed upon the semantics of the text (lexical, grammatical, and syntactical elements), is also, in part, a non-semantic operation, properly belonging to the domain of pragmatics—the analysis of what texts (or speakers/authors) do with what they say.<sup>19</sup> Kuruvilla notes that this approach allows the reader to see the world in starkly different ways, “rather than being simply *presented* by the text, life is *represented* as something” and moves the reader to respond by complying with the demands of that world.<sup>20</sup> More simply, the theology of the pericope promotes transformation by inviting the reader to step into the world of the text: “Life change is not a one-time phenomenon, and neither is it accomplished instantaneously; it involves a lifetime of progressive, gradual, incremental reorientation and realignment to the demands of the world in front of the text.”<sup>21</sup>

---

51–70. Bangalore, India: Primalogue, 2015, 57.

<sup>18</sup> Kuruvilla, “How Do You Read?,” 39. Paul Ricoeur, “Naming God,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 34, no. 4 (1979): 217.

<sup>19</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

By preaching pericope by pericope the expositor is able to help the congregation experience the biblical text and in concrete ways begin to see the world outside of the biblical text in a biblical context. By preaching the whole counsel of God's Word, the congregation is not stunted by only feeding on topics that are passions of the preacher but instead can construe rightly in any situation they face. The more the congregation experiences the wisdom of the text and more text they experience, the more they will be able to construe with accuracy the world. While this is only one half of the CEV, it is necessary. The next step is to help the congregation by showing how multiple construals can be held faithfully at the same time.

### **Promote Mental Dexterity**

Recall that Roberts' argues that a person may construe a given situation in two different ways and as such produce different emotion types based on the same event (C6 above). A subject can have various emotions about the same event, depending on how the subject construes the situation. Christians are capable, in theory, of simultaneously holding two competing perceptions in their mind at the same time. By training the congregation to see two (sometimes competing) perceptions in their mind at the same time they will be better equipped to avoid black and white thinking and also to appreciate the nuance of the biblical material. Thus, the expositor can aid the congregation to see multiple construals at the same time that appear to be in contradiction or at least hide one another. To develop CEV mental dexterity is a critical tool because without the ability to see a situation in light of the biblical construal the believer will be motivated solely by the construal of the world influenced by the flesh.

The preacher should also realize that not every construal is open to a person. Redirecting one's perception is not the same as ignoring hard truths or what one would call wearing rose-colored glasses. The preacher is tasked with helping the congregation to perceive reality, which includes spiritual reality. However, the congregation should not be encouraged to perceive the world as always positive or always negative. Either

extreme betrays one's natural perceptions. Instead, the preacher is limited to the available perceptions presented by the text and the reality the congregation is experiencing.

For example, Paul commands the Thessalonians to mourn but not as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13). Paul here permits the congregation to mourn, feel sadness and express it but demands that while they experience the loss, they also understand that loss within the redemptive work of the Lord. Another example would be Jesus' command to love one's enemy (Matthew 5:44). While holding to the construal of loss and at the same time, the construal of redemptive hope, the believer can both grieve and hope relatively speaking.

This sort of mental dexterity is accomplished by exposing the congregation to a text, in the same way, one may perceive the image of the old lady/young lady. Then the preacher can draw attention to the apparent paradox. The preacher may even ask, "what do you see when you observe this text?" The congregation will naturally observe one way of reading the text. Then the preacher can guide the mind to understand another way of viewing the same text. This move gives the congregation permission to see the text in two construals. Then the preacher can show how the two views, though different, are not logically contradictory. Note that this sort of preaching is not encouraging subjectivism. Instead, the preacher is pointing to apparent paradoxes in the text and essentially guiding the congregation to hold both construals in their mind at the same time. This activity helps the congregation to feel more comfortable with the ambiguity of construals that seem to be at odds within the text.

For example, it is possible to grieve and be hopeful simultaneously. This idea is not logically invalid. For it to be logically invalid, a person would need to affirm that the Bible instructs believers to grieve and not grieve or to be hopeful and not-hopeful.

Instead, the preacher helps the congregation to understand the qualifiers that are a part of these seemingly paradoxical texts.<sup>22</sup>

The preacher can also model mental dexterity by providing personal or illustrative examples of a person that is placed in a situation where he must perceive two construals that seem to have the same sets of circumstances. For example, a murderer is certainly a sinner who must be brought to justice. A Christian may have contempt in his heart from the injustice that was committed, but as a Christian, they can also view the murderer as an image-bearer of God and one who has suffered much in this life. In this way, the Christian may feel both anger and sympathy for the murderer. Both feelings would be considered appropriate as long as they are informed by Christian doctrine and wisdom.

If it is the case that both construals are correct, then the preacher must affirm that both emotions are morally appropriate and give permission to the congregation to express both views, even if holding both construals in ones' mind at the same time is difficult. While the preacher may want to prioritize one construal over another (for example hope in the Lord' redemptive plan over grieving the loss of a loved one) that does not mean that the construals are more accurate or less accurate. Instead, the preacher can help the congregation to see the value of both and how to utilize both construals appropriately in their daily life. The congregation will always want to prioritize the spiritual reality while at the same time affirming and even embracing the reality rooted in earthly living.

---

<sup>22</sup> As an example, for a Reformed congregation, the expositor will help the congregation to hold in their mind the sovereignty of God and mankind's responsibility before God. The expositor who can help the congregation to see multiple construals from the same text will help the hearers to draw on the appropriate construal for the given time and place.

## Apply the Primary Christian Concern

In order to help direct the congregation toward subjective integration of biblical concerns, the preacher will want to utilize Roberts' concept of the Primary Christian Concern (PCC) as a pivot of application. A pivot is used to lift a heavy object with a lever. The PCC is used as an aid to help lift the demand of the text to the congregation. Without the metaphorical pivot, the application will be far too heavy to lift. This section illustrates this concept by observing upon Kuruvilla's concept of the divine demand and then integrating it with Roberts' concept of the PCC.

Kuruvilla helps the expositor to think about how the text is applied across the canon. He reflects on the general assumptions of various hermeneutical streams and offers a solution to the problem of applying the biblical text. I am not arguing here that Kuruvilla's model is necessary for the development of CEV; I offer it here as an example of how the PCC can be integrated.

In *Privilege the Text!*, Kuruvilla traces four theological interpretations concerning the Christians' responsibility for keeping the Old Testament Law (Lutheran, Reformed, Dispensational, and the New Perspective on Paul).<sup>23</sup> He notes, "All generally hold to the inapplicability of the Mosaic law in the current age, excepting the 'moral' aspects of the OT law."<sup>24</sup> However, he suggests that such sermonic attempts to apply the Old Testament using these interpretations are unattainable, contending that each pericope in the OT contains theological demands that are to be kept by the disciple of Christ, not as an entry into a relationship but in response to God's covenant love. He states that all OT law continues to operate in a "theological sense."<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Kuruvilla includes a lengthy discussion on all four modes of handling the Law. I found his analysis quite helpful in understanding the differences between the various streams as well a summary of the overall trajectory of biblical scholarship. Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 153-62.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

Thus, each demand within the pericope has a theological focus that ought to be adopted by the follower of Christ, which Kuruvilla refers to as the “divine demand.” Each pericope, no matter the genre, presents a demand on the hearer that needs to be heeded. He states, “The divine demand is not restricted to the biblical genre of law; a divine demand is implicitly borne by every pericope.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, each pericope will contain demands that are presented within the world in front of the text that must be applied to the members of the congregation. The divine demand directs the hearer toward Christlikeness. He states, “In brief, the plenary text of Scripture projects an image of Christ, with each pericope portraying a facet of this image: what it means to be like Christ.”

The divine demand consists of precepts, priorities, and/or practices that need to be adopted by the biblical reader. Kuruvilla defines precepts as *what things happen* in the world in front of the text, priorities reveal *what things matter* in the world in front of the text, and the practices demonstrate *how things run* in the world in front of the text.<sup>27</sup> So, each believer is called to conform his or her life to the demand(s) presented by the author in the world in front of the text.

The demands that issue from the biblical pericope serve as virtues to be embodied by the believer. Whether the text demands new practices, priorities, or precepts, the believer is called into conformity. These virtues will be virtues of habit, virtues of will, and also virtues of emotion. The following section unpacks how emotional virtues are evidenced in the text.

Does Kuruvilla’s model help to produce emotional virtues? Within the divine demand, “priorities” reveal what things matter in the world in front of the text, which reflects a judgment of the various aspects of the world. On Nussbaum’s model, emotions

---

<sup>26</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 194.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.



are judgments (evaluations of worth), so one might argue that Kuruvilla includes emotion (as judgments) as a part of the pericopal theology. If this is the case, then it may be assumed that emotional virtues are a part of the divine demand.

However, if the definition of emotion shifts from Nussbaum’s model to Roberts’, an alternative or expansion to Kuruvilla’s divine demand is necessary if the demand of God includes the mind, will, and emotions. To develop subjective concern and construals within the divine demand, the model should be broadened to include the PCC.<sup>28</sup>

Within each pericope, the preacher will uncover concrete examples of the PCC that can be brought to light as a part of the world in front of the text. The congregation may know what to do, how to do it, and even how to prioritize it, but without proper motivation that issues from subjective concerns the congregation will not fully live out the divine demand. The passion of the text is the motivating “why” that undergirds the demand. The “why” in the case of Christian virtues is always a love for God and his kingdom; the PCC described by Roberts. Figure 2 illustrates that the virtues demanded by the text precede from the passion or primary concern of the text.

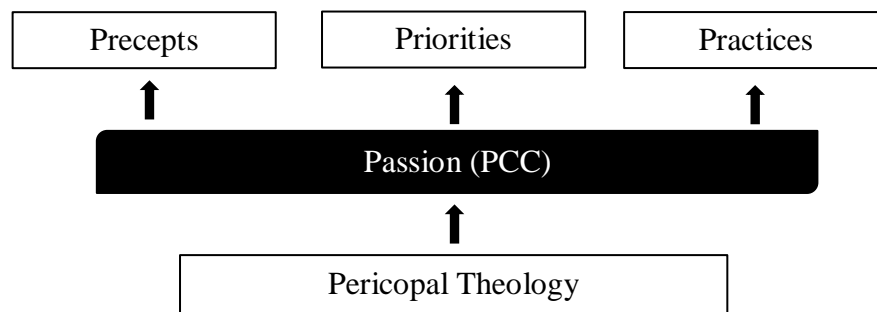


Figure 2. Subjective passions and objective demands

The PCC is developed within each pericope and is connected to the narrative of the whole of Scripture. As hearers uncover the story that connects God and his people,

---

<sup>28</sup> In an effort to maintain Kuruvilla’s alliteration, I chose “passion.”

and they find their place in that story, they are motivated to live out the divine demand.

Recall that Roberts argues,

Each of the Christian emotions is a construal of the subject's situation—both his immediate situation and the larger context of the world in which he finds himself—in these terms, based on the subject's concern for life and righteousness, for the kingdom of God, for his own happiness and the happiness of the world.<sup>29</sup>

The subjective integration of the divine demand for the congregation is critical for the spiritual maturity of the congregation. By touching on the PCC, the preacher will be able to draw the hearer into the subjective appropriation of the objective reality that is in Christ communicated in the divine demand.

The PCC drives the emotional virtues of the Christian. In each pericope, the reader/hearer is asked to adopt the construal of the world based on God's perspective. These ideas and commands are objective realities imposed upon the agency of the reader/hearer. This objective reality is not to be questioned but assimilated. For assimilation to happen fully, the subjective concern of the individual needs to be engaged and even challenged so that the objective commands and truths inherent in the text can become subjective. For the divine demand to be assimilated, the congregation needs to understand how the precepts, priorities, and practices issue from the passion inherent in biblical faith (the PCC). The PCC within the pericope becomes the central motivation for the living out of the divine demand.

*Significance* is a technical term used by Hirsch and Kuruvilla to refer to a second-level application that issues from the pericope. The concept of *significance* is essential for the development of emotional virtues. The movement toward virtue is a process that will require many steps of faith. The exemplification may describe the virtue to be embodied, but it will not always describe in detail the process to arrive at the goal. The preacher, committed to spiritual maturity, will seek to move the congregation step-

---

<sup>29</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 30.

by-step and pericope-by-pericope toward alignment to the biblical ideal. As the pastor identifies areas of emotional vice, he can begin to focus the application of the text, where appropriate, on the faulty concerns. In utilizing the significance, the preacher can bring the congregation closer to the intended goal presented in the exemplification.

For example, the exemplification of Matthew 5:21-26 may call the hearer to control his anger and seek reconciliation with those whom he has wronged and those who have wronged him. However, the preacher may also encourage the congregation to reflect on the motivation for their anger. While the text does not explicitly demand reflection in small groups, such an exhortation is part of the significance of the passage because it is theologically and logically connected to the exemplification concerning anger. The congregation will be challenged to look beyond the outward expression of their heart to the inward motivations.

When the preacher is evaluating what application to draw out of the text, he will have the option to focus on the passion of the pericope. He will then ask the question, “how can this passage be used to cultivate the PCC in the congregation?” In this way, the application process aids in cultivating subjective biblical concerns.

### **Application of the PCC: Union with Christ**

To further illustrate how the PCC can be applied, this section will focus on the doctrine of union with Christ as the origination of application in the sermon. Roberts asserts that “Paradigm cases of adult human emotions take ‘objects.’”<sup>30</sup> In order for CEV to be developed, the Christian must take a Christian object as the source of the emotion. While one may take less personal and abstract objects as primary such as “getting to Heaven” or more worthy but secondary objects such as “seeing ones’ relatives who have already passed away, the object will have significant influence over the kind of emotional virtue that is developed.

---

<sup>30</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 30.

A greater desire for God is cultivated as one spends time in the presence of Christ and his Word. In relational proximity, the disciple of Jesus learns to love Christ more. Passages such as John 15:1-5 highlight the vital role that relationship between God and each disciple has on spiritual maturity and godliness. To develop emotional virtues, not only must the mind engage proper doctrine, but the emotions must also connect in a personal way with God. The desire for a relationship with God is fulfilled in Christ and is most evident in the doctrine referred to as union with Christ.

Union with Christ has received a resurgence of academic and theological intrigue in recent years,<sup>31</sup> and a full theological and historical discussion would include far more than could be covered in this chapter. Instead, this section takes up the doctrine of union with Christ as it relates to emotionally and relationally connecting with Christ to develop biblical concerns.

The doctrine of union with Christ can encapsulate every aspect of life in Christ from justification, sanctification, and resurrection. Every part of the Christian life is lived in relationship with Christ. Letham argues that the doctrine of union with Christ interprets every part of the biblical narrative.<sup>32</sup> He argues that “Because man was created in the image of God, he was made for communion with God, to rule God’s creation on his behalf. This is clear from Genesis 1, where the man and his wife were given dominion over the earth, over all that God had created.”<sup>33</sup> As “image-bearers,” humanity at least means that they serve as God’s agents in the world to image his good care over the earth.

---

<sup>31</sup> For example, see Robert Letham, *Union with Christ: In Scripture, History, and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2011); J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011); Rankin Wilbourne, *Union with Christ: The Way to Know and Enjoy God* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2016); Michael J. Thate, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Constantine R. Campbell, “In Christ,” in *Paul: Explorations in Paul’s Theology of Union and Participation* (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018).

<sup>32</sup> Letham, *Union with Christ*, 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

Not only is the relationship with God central to the creation narrative of Genesis 1-2, but it is also evidenced throughout the Bible as the undercurrent of divine intention. Union with Christ points to the relationship between God and his creation. Billings describes union with Christ as the unifying image that runs through all of New Testament:

Union with Christ is a central New Testament description of Christian identity, the life of salvation in Christ. It entails the giving of a new identity such that in Christ, forgiveness, and new life are received through the Spirit. Union with Christ involves abiding in Christ the Vine. It means that through the Spirit, sinners are adopted into the household of God as co-heirs with Christ. It means that God's Spirit is poured out to make the life and teaching of Jesus real to us. It implicates our worship, our vocation in the world, and our witness as the church. Union with Christ is theological shorthand for the gospel itself—a key image that pulls together numerous motifs in the biblical witness.<sup>34</sup> Scripture is moving toward a *telos* of unifying creation with its Creator and then directing creation to fulfill its God-given role.

Paul says that the whole of Scripture has been pointing to one overwhelming ministry that could not be revealed until Christ came. In Colossians 1:27, Paul states, “To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” The mystery that Paul is referring to is the union between Christ and his church. The gospel message, its mystery, is that God is seeking union with his people and has provided the means for that union in Christ. Paul had a robust view of union with Christ and understood the Christian union with Christ as extending into every aspect of life. The phrase “in Christ” appears in the Pauline corpus some eight-four times. Each occurrence points to an aspect of how a relationship with Christ makes a difference in the life of the believer. Paul's Christ-

---

<sup>34</sup> Billings, *Union with Christ*, 1.

centered thinking is not abstract theology but is revealed by the nature of Christ's union with the church to be concrete and applicable. Paul is well aware of how Christ's atoning work (Eph 1:3-14).

Historically, union with Christ consists of two connected but distinct parts: the imputation of righteousness and the transformation of the individual. Imputation has to do with justification and the righteousness awarded to the Christian based on Christ's work and righteousness. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers through no work of their own, only faith in Christ. The transformation of the believer in Christ is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to bring about Christlikeness in the believer.

Letham laments, "Today not much is said about union with Christ from the pulpit, and until recently, little was written about it."<sup>35</sup> However, union with Christ seems to have been left behind in the pulpit. One reason for the lack of discussion of union with Christ may be that the two classic distinctions of imputation and transformation were separated in an effort to hold to on to salvation by faith alone. Drawing on the research of William B. Evans, Letham, states,

Jonathan Edwards and Charles Hodge, two great stalwarts of the American Reformed tradition, were particularly responsible, he claims, for a division between two aspects of union with Christ that Calvin had held together: the external element of imputation and the transformative element of the work of the Holy Spirit. A tension developed between the desire to maintain the utter graciousness of our salvation, achieved by Christ, applied by the Spirit, received by us—seen particularly in justification only by faith—and, on the other hand, the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father to indwell us and change us into his image. These two elements were detached and considered in isolation.<sup>36</sup>

The sermon should undoubtedly highlight the imputed elements of life in Christ, especially as they are affirmed in the pericope. In addition, the sermon should also focus on the transformational elements of union with Christ. In other words, union with Christ defines the standing of the believer but also how he is becoming more like Christ.

---

<sup>35</sup> Letham, *Union with Christ*, 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

Relationship to Christ is fundamental to life in Christ. One cannot claim to serve Christ apart from a relationship with him (1 Cor 15:58).

In relationship with Christ, the Christian is invited to grow in greater levels of maturity. As transformation takes place, the believer will face specific fundamental questions about himself. Rankin Wilbourne's *Union with Christ* outlines four of these fundamental questions that the doctrine of union with Christ addresses in the life of the believer: Who am I? Where am I headed? Why am I here? How will I get there?<sup>37</sup> These four questions touch on fundamental human concerns, not just Christian concerns. As such, they can serve as *concern-magnets* that will alert the preacher to concerns in the text. The Christians' union with Christ helps to answer these fundamental questions by helping the believer to understand his relationship to Christ and his standing in Christ.

While studying the pericope, the reader should stay alert to how these four questions are answered in the biblical text. The reader will need to pay special attention to the intention of the author and not merely insert answers where none are offered. However, if a relationship with God in Christ is the trajectory of Scripture, and union with Christ is how believers participate in the relationship, then it will not be difficult to see the relational cues in the text when they are present.

Here again, the preacher needs to be aware of drifting too far into objective or subjective teaching. By framing the theology of the pericope within the greater need of the hearer, the sermon runs the risk of being hearer focused and does little to help the hearer be freed from the sinful blindness that accompanies self-focused living. The popular idea that Jesus is *for* me, while accurate, can often lead to distorted doctrine and thinking because, while Jesus is for every person, Jesus is not an object that lives to serve the individual. To use a grammatical metaphor, Jesus is the subject, his work is the verb, and his followers are the direct objects. Far too often, the sermon that is focused on

---

<sup>37</sup> Wilbourne, *Union with Christ*, 133-210.

needs places the hearer as the subject. This kind of preaching leads to an imbalance that focuses on theological truth or felt needs. Preaching that invites the hearer to abide in Christ in whatever the pericope teaches is best suited to bridge the gap between theology and needs because the hearer recognizes that his most basic needs are met in Christ and relationship with God. Jesus is the subject, but he is aware and able to help in all the needs of his followers.

To develop biblical concerns that result in emotional virtues, the congregation must be firmly rooted in their relationship with Jesus. While construal preaching will shape ideas about Jesus, preaching that shape concerns and construals—and thus transform emotions—must focus on the relationship between Christ and his people as well. The relationship is key to this kind of preaching because of the connection that concerns have to core relationships. Not every sermon needs to return to the theme of union with Christ as the primary idea.

Just as a person’s subconscious has control over many conscious states of affairs; always in the background, the subconscious colors the conscious world and when necessary, thrusts thoughts, ideas, and emotions into the conscious realm for further reflection and influence. Metaphorically speaking, a sermon can also have a subconscious or a latent idea that is present in the background but does not always move to the foreground.<sup>38</sup> This idea does not need to be actively present in every sermon, but it will be in the background providing color to each message.

While the latent idea may not be recognizable as a part of the sermon by the hearer, it is always in the background shaping and forming how the structure is delivered

---

<sup>38</sup> I use the term “subconscious” as a metaphor to describe the relationship between the active and passive elements of the sermon. The active elements will be tools such as explanation, application, illustration, or argumentation. The passive elements are in the background and provide flavor or color to these elements. The passive elements are not the “focus” of the sermon in one sense but in another sense they are the only focus. This metaphor does not need to be confused with the idea of “soap box” preaching where the preacher returns to the same ideas sermon after sermon. Instead, it is better to understand this metaphor as the background of every sermon, though each sermon will involve its own pericopal theology.



and received. The idea does not dictate the content but may direct the feel and direction the sermon takes as a result of it. For purposes here, the idea is the concept of Union with Christ. This theological idea is latent with both concern for God and his kingdom, as both Christ himself, and all the blessings that flow from Christ are connected to this doctrine. Thus, every demand presented must first pass through the lens of a relationship with Christ. The preacher will use wisdom in Christ to decide how if at all, the relational aspects of union with Christ need to be affirmed before declaring the demand.

The reason for such a latent idea in the sermon is that the preacher is attempting to help the congregation to be directed by their relationship with Christ without even being actively aware of the presence of the ideas, feelings, and motivations. They are led from the virtue of being in Christ as a response to their relationship with him. Instead of merely knowing what to do, the members act as a response to their being in Christ. If the PCC is a desire for God and his kingdom, then it makes sense that the primary means of access to God, union with Christ, should be a prominent piece of preaching that develops emotional virtues.

Also, utilizing union with Christ in the sermon helps to reduce unnecessary anxiety that comes with serving a holy God and provides a means of accessing the grace found in Christ. Part of the necessary framing of the sermon to help the hearer to hear God's Word involves helping the congregation move between the larger picture of the kingdom and the narrower picture of the individual pericope and the specific divine demand that issues from it. This movement keeps the sermon from being too narrow (ignoring canonical context) or too broad (overly topical). The hearer is invited into the text and to see himself or herself as a part of the broader story in Christ. If observed, this movement might resemble someone taking deep breaths. As the sermon is delivered and the divine demand is exposed to the congregation, there is a collective breath-holding. Pressure begins to build. The expectation weighs heavy on the congregation and will make them uncomfortable because of the weight of the demand. Just before it becomes

unbearable, the preacher broadens the scope to include the story of grace that calls each person into a personal union with Christ. The congregation exhales. Relief! The congregation is not relieved of the burden of the divine demand but of the burden of carrying the load alone and in their own strength (Matt 11:29-30). This breathing in and breathing out is continual. The church can learn to see their walk with Christ as a way of breathing. Union with Christ gives the church permission to exhale.

A preacher will always come to the text with a unifying principle that guides the interpretation of the passage. Kuruvilla's "mode of biblical interpretation"<sup>39</sup> is referred to as "Christiconic."<sup>40</sup> In the Christiconic interpretation, each pericope builds one on another to construct this new world that believers are to inhabit spiritually. Then, each pericope represented in the world in front of the text points to a portion or aspect of Christlikeness. Each text represents a part of who Christ is. Thus each text can be said to be Christiconic or pointing to an aspect of Christ's character. Kuruvilla argues that this interpretation is not intended for the NT alone but extends to the OT as well:

In such an interpretation of the text, the image of Christ portrayed in Scripture is not exhausted by the Gospel, or even by the entire NT. Rather, we need the complete canon to picture the character of Christ—the One, the only One, who fully met divine demand; it is through the entire corpus of six books that we learn what I means to be Christlike, through every pericope in both Testaments. Each pericope depicts a facet of Christlikeness, even the ones that deal particular characters in Scripture.<sup>41</sup>

Kuruvilla notes that the theology of each pericope is tied to covenant and aids the hearer in living in light of the covenant and relationship with God: "The theological

---

<sup>39</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 30.

<sup>40</sup> Space will not allow for a defense of Kuruvilla's claim over against other forms of interpretation like theocentric, redemptive-historic, or Law-Gospel. As a primer for this discussion as it relates to homiletics see Scott M. Gibson and Matthew D. Kim, eds., *Homiletics and Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018). For a Christocentric discussion, which dovetails with the Redemptive-Historical view, see Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 265.

function of pericopes is the facilitation of covenant renewal, the restoration of God's people to a right relationship with him."<sup>42</sup> Each pericope serves to restore relationship, and, just like any relationship, there will be times when the thoughts, will, or emotions of one person need to be adapted to the other. As the believer relates to God, the believer is invited to adopt the "divine demand" of each pericope.

Each pericope houses divine demands that the disciple must subsequently "put on" like new clothes. Disciples must learn to wear each aspect of Christ. Kuruvilla refers to this unifying aspect of each pericope as *Christiconic*, which means that each pericope contributes to the overall vision of Christ for the believer.

Dryden recognizes that union with Christ, practically John 15, plays a crucial role in understanding the relationship between disciple and works. Jesus, recorded in John 15:1-17, offers a fruitful companion for the preacher who wants to cultivate union with Christ within the listeners through the sermon. The primary focus of the metaphor is that disciples will only bear fruit (whole-self devotion to God) as they are connected to Jesus in an abiding relationship. Jesus declares himself to be the vine and his followers as branches from that vine. The Father is the vinedresser who prunes the branches so that they might bear more fruit or Christlikeness. Fruit-bearing is the result of abiding with Christ. Dryden states,

The priority of relational abiding gives a context for obedient fruit-bearing. The disciple of Jesus cannot begin at the place of fruit-bearing as a means of abiding. In placing abiding first, Jesus gives the life-giving relational union of mutual abiding as the context through which the disciples make sense of their actions. It also gives motivations that derive from the gift and the promise of the communion that Jesus has established and continues to sustain.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 96.

<sup>43</sup> Dryden, *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom*, 83.

Sermons that seek only to impact the will may attempt to offer practical techniques for living but will not offer the connection to the primary concern. Even if the primary concern of righteousness is alluded to, if it is not couched within the framework of relationship with God, his loving grace, and the empowerment of the Spirit, the weight of the command may become a burden.

Emotions are concern-based construals issued from basic concerns that often include a highly relational component. Roberts argues, “Paradigm cases of adult human emotions take ‘objects.’”<sup>44</sup> Jesus is the “object” of Christian emotions. Within the Christian framework, the virtues are often relational (joy in Christ, love for others, contrition before God, etc.) and are most often regarding the treatment and care for others as well love and fear of the Lord (Matt 22:37). Christian concerns are focused on people and rooted in Christ. The person who does right but ignores the person does not keep the law but is instead like a “whitewashed tomb” (Matt 23:27). In addition to God’s command to love others, the example of a relationship that exists within the Trinity points to a maturity model. The maturing believer is continually growing toward a more significant relationship with God and others. So, biblical maturity takes place in a relationship and for relationship.

Since biblical concerns are primarily focused on relationships,<sup>45</sup> it makes sense that relationships primarily develop concerns. For example, a child will adopt the concerns of his parents without question because of the relationship he has with them. Nussbaum notes, “A child does not learn its society’s conception of love, or of anger, by sitting in an ethics class. It learns them long before any classes, in complex interactions with parents

---

<sup>44</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 61.

<sup>45</sup> Relationships are not by any means the only objects that concern an individual. However, on the Christian model, often relationships are the overriding concern that inform all other concerns.

and society.”<sup>46</sup> A student may adopt the beliefs of a peer not based on pure rational exploration but his affinity for his friend. As people age, they begin to reason more about their fundamental beliefs but the introduction of a new belief or a reassessment of a long-held belief will often be spurred by a trusted person sharing new information. The emphasis for growth is in the relationship first, and second on the content of the new information.

The doctrine of union with Christ helps believers to experience their relationship with Christ and to settle into their place within that relationship. Paul describes the congregation’s union with Christ in various metaphors: a bridge and groom, a body, a temple, etc. This knowledge of the relational and theological connection with Christ aids in providing the relational safety to question old concerns and take up new ones. The Bible affirms more than a mere relationship but a mystical connection between Christ and his people that cannot be fully understood apart from metaphor and faith. Letham recognizes that this connection with God is fundamentally deeper than a mere human relationship:

The result is that we have more than fellowship with Christ. Fellowship takes place between separate persons by means of presence, recognition, conversation, shared interests, and the like. Adam had fellowship with God before the fall. Redemption has not restored us to the condition of Adam. The incarnation has happened; the Son of God is forever human. The outpouring and indwelling of the Spirit has occurred and endures; the Spirit of God has taken up permanent residence in and with those who love Christ, and in so doing the Holy Trinity now lives in us. It goes beyond communion. It entails union. It is more than participation.<sup>47</sup>

Recall that as the pericopal theology is applied, the preacher will want to keep in mind that “relationship precedes responsibility.”<sup>48</sup> Kuruvilla states,

---

<sup>46</sup> Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 293.

<sup>47</sup> Letham, *Union with Christ*, 126.

<sup>48</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 189.

In sum, the law continues to operate, with the caveat that it be interpreted theologically, in light of the immense contextual shift that has occurred between the writing of the law and its modern-day reading. In so interpreting law for application, the people of God learn about the *world in front of the legal text* that depicts God and his relationship with his creation, and how they can inhabit that world—i.e., abide by divine demand. The underpinning of this operation is the powerful truth that a relationship with God precede responsibility: it is *because* his people are related to him in the first place that God makes demands that they are responsible to fulfill.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, according to Kuruvilla, the warrant for the divine demand is the union relationship with Christ. This correlates with the concept of “passion” presented in the previous section. So, one might say that union with Christ is the foundation of all of the divine demand. This idea is represented by figure 3.

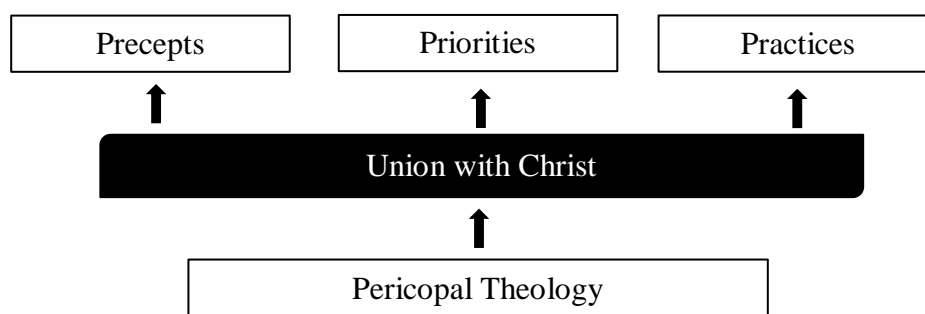


Figure 3. Union with Christ is foundational to the divine demand

The Christiconic interpretation flows from a union with Christ as theological center. Thus, the sermon—with all of the demands and expectations that it places upon the congregation—must begin with the relational connection to Christ. However, this commitment does not result in the inclusion of a theoretical or theological discussion of union with Christ within every sermon. Some pericopes will call for a description of the non-concrete aspects of union with Christ, but the sermon must allow the text to dictate the direction of the sermon. No theological system or principle ought to govern the content of the sermon—that is the role of the pericope. Instead, union with Christ will be part of the background of the sermon and pericope, shaping its color and tone. Union

---

<sup>49</sup> Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!*, 189.

with Christ shapes and forms but it need not be the main focal point of the message. Instead, union with Christ becomes part of the concrete foundation of each pericope.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has made the case for four tools that aid the expositor in cultivating subjective concerns and construals through the sermon. The expositor was first encouraged to read the text as wisdom and to intentionally avoid over principalization as this makes the sermon more abstract and less likely to be internalized. Second, the expositor was encouraged to preach pericope by pericope as the general mark of his expository ministry. This sort of preaching will present many biblical construals and reinforce the PCC as the congregation is exposed to all the pericopes of Scripture over time. Third, the expository was encouraged to help the congregation to cultivate mental dexterity. The purpose of this task is to help the congregation experience a given construal in two different ways. Not every construal can be viewed in this way, but many can. Finally, the expositor was challenged to apply the PCC as well as the divine demand found in each pericope. It was argued that the doctrine of union with Christ, where it is not used abstractly, can serve as that core application that undergirds any other application. All four of these tools provide equip the expositor to challenge the congregation better and to do so in a way that cultivates the CEV. The next chapter will address in-direct means of challenging the core concerns of the heart and means by which each concern may be transformed to reflect the PCC better.

## CHAPTER 4

### INDIRECT TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL VIRTUE

The expositor who wants to access the heart of his congregation must present the truth of Scripture and the Gospel while at the same time helping his hearers to internalize or make subjective the objective truth of Scripture. While direct communication has value for the expositor, failure to utilize indirect communication will limit access to the congregation's deeper concerns of the emotional life. The expositor will need to use specific indirect methods to help the hearer to internalize the message and help produce biblical concerns and construals.

The previous chapter focused on how the preacher might use direct methods to develop CEV. The purpose of this chapter is to articulate indirect methods that aid the congregation in subjectively reflecting and integrating divine concerns and construals. The purpose is not creating subjective theology in the sense that there is no objective truth attached to it. Instead, the goal is to internalize that which is objective and make personal that which may be abstract and distant.

Indirect methods are not meant to produce a tangible result but instead are designed to aid the hearer in reflecting more deeply upon his sin, suffering, and adoption in Christ. In reflecting more deeply on the subjective connection to one's union with Christ, the hearer will begin to internalize biblical construals. Indirect methods involve some sort of poetic elements or self-reflection, this chapter will focus on three: permission for self-reflection, permission to separate sin and suffering, and promoting empathy with the Scripture's characters. Though other forms such as reading poetry,



hymns, guided prayers, and parables may all be used as means of indirect communication.

The result of preaching that combines direct elements (explain/apply, reading with wisdom, promote mental dexterity, apply the PCC, etc.) and indirect elements is that the sermon addresses the mind, will, and core concerns. However, not every sermon will need to contain all the various methods. However, neglecting a holistic expository ministry, the congregation is asked to learn and obey but is not challenged to explore their inner motives and desires that fuel their behavior before God. Instead, the expositor must see himself as a cultivator of right desires and passions as much as right thoughts and actions. Roberts states that “A passion is a concern that can give a person’s life a center, can integrate and focus the personality and give a person ‘character’.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the preacher is promoting a corporate character that will be absorbed by the individuals within the congregation.

### **Subjectivity and Christian Emotional Virtues**

While this section could be placed at several points within this dissertation, it has been placed here because of connection between indirect communication and the subjective internalization of concerns and construals. Before outlining those methods in greater detail, some reflection on the nature of subjective emotional virtues is in order.

The Christian narrative is expressed as an objective reality that encompasses the whole of the physical/spiritual world and stretches throughout time to include an eschatological reality that is uncovered in Christ. However, for all of the objective reality that Scripture describes, the Christian narrative is also a subjective narrative that invites disciples into an abiding relationship with Jesus. Christianity is subjective, not in the idea that its concepts are validated based on personal opinion, but that the objective truths of

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 17.

Scripture must be internalized for faith to take root. As the Christian grows in objective truth and subjective experience guided by Scripture, he or she will be able to construe the world more rightly in line with the reality that is in Christ. In addition to construing the world rightly, he or she will begin to perceive his or her reality as existing within Christ.

The role of objective doctrine and biblical theology cannot be overstated in the development of emotional virtues. Roberts points out that:

The proposal that emotions are concern-based construals has been tailored expressly with this narrative and conceptual feature of the more spiritual emotions in mind. On this account, all of the distinctively Christian emotions incorporate elements of basic Christian doctrine, such as that God is the source of every perfect gift, that Christ died for our sins, that we are hopeless sinners apart from God's grace, that God has chosen us for eternal life in his kingdom, that every human sufferer is one to whom God offers his compassion, and so forth.<sup>2</sup>

One of the primary roles of the preacher will be to present the truth of Scripture so that the congregation can construe rightly the world they live in (which includes the spiritual reality). Every segment (pericope) of Christian theology has a role to play in the development of emotional virtues. The fully mature believer will be able to construe the world rightly in any situation. In order to do so, the fully mature believer will need a Scripture-soaked mind that is both agile and imaginative (see Jas 5:7-12).

In addition to objective reality, emotional virtues will issue from a subjective narrative. Roberts notes:

Each of the Christian emotions is a construal of the subject's situation—both his immediate situation and the larger context of the world in which he finds himself—in these terms, based on the subject's concern for life and righteousness, for the kingdom of God, for his own happiness and the happiness of the world.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, Christian emotional virtues do not emerge from doctrine/propositions alone but also from the subjective experience of the Christian. For example, the emotional virtues of love and humility are highly relational and involve the subject, understanding

---

<sup>2</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

himself as well as others. Developing an emotional virtue such as compassion means that the subject realizes both the objective reality (saved by grace) and his own subjective role (one called to show compassion to another). Roberts states, “The distinctiveness of Christian compassion lies in how the Christian *conceives* himself, the sufferer, the suffering, and the larger universe in which he acts.”<sup>4</sup> Judgments that are separated from personal concerns or subjective experience of the Christian narrative fail to produce the kind of emotional virtues depicted in Christian teaching. For transformation to take place in the life of a Christian, the Christian narrative must impact the subjective experience.

This subjective experience is possible because the Christian narrative makes the gospel concrete and tangible. Gilman notes, “Narrative’s strategy is one of concretion, then, rather than abstraction; its responsibility is to plot the specifically temporal, local, and contingent character of human experience and to mediate meaning for those whose lives are shaped by that plot’s narrative.”<sup>5</sup> Ascent to the doctrines of Christianity is essential but until a person understands his narrative within the meta-narrative found in Scripture, his Christian life will not be a concrete expression of faith but instead may only reflect abstract objective principles and never from the mind to the emotions. While objective noetic living may produce short-term effects, it fails to produce spiritual maturity because spiritual maturity is a combination of mind, will, and emotions.

Developing emotional virtues involves perceiving one’s self within the story and understanding (experiencing?) how the gospel story impacts one’s self. This sort of self-awareness is vital because, without it, Christianity remains an abstraction and lacks the personal element that is vital for a relationship with Christ.

---

<sup>4</sup> Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> James E. Gilman, *Fidelity of Heart: An Ethic of Christian Virtue* by James E. Gilman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 29.

The development of emotional virtues is possible only as an individual grows in awareness of himself and particularly his emotional life.<sup>6</sup> Roberts affirms that:

A more positive reason for articulating a Christian psychology is that a Christian self-understanding is the matrix of the work of the Holy Spirit and of sanctification. It is by *understanding* ourselves as created in the image of God, as divided selves called to faith, hope, and love, as hungering and thirsting for the righteousness of God, as anxious and desperate apart from God's grace, as forgiven ones who are called to forgive, and *understanding* accurately the concepts involved in all this understanding, that one comes to have the wisdom and character of a Christian.<sup>7</sup>

John Calvin recognized the importance of self-knowledge on the path to spiritual maturity as one reflects on God: "But though the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves are bound together by a mutual tie, due arrangement requires that we treat of the former in the first place, and then descend to the latter."<sup>8</sup> . Roberts roots the idea of knowledge of self in the doctrine of the *imago Dei*:

The Christian tradition . . . does not seek the annihilation of the self but instead recognizes that the self is made in the *imago dei*. The self is created by God as unique and loved by him. Thus, a vital aspect of spiritual formation will be the recovery of the true self that lies many times hidden under layers of social expectations, beliefs inherited from the family of origin, and so on. Part of the recovery of the true self is uncovering of the emotions that have been neglected or ignored. While these emotions are not always true in their content, they always aid the subject of the emotion in better understanding the subconscious processes.<sup>9</sup>

Growing awareness of the deeper parts of the subconscious allows the Christian to address deep-seated issues that exist below the level of awareness.

---

<sup>6</sup> I am not asserting that this is the only means by which a person can develop virtues, but if Roberts' assumption that all virtues are an expression of emotional virtues is valid, then one will need to give special attention to the development of these emotional virtues logically prior to the development of other virtues.

<sup>7</sup> Robert C. Roberts, "The Idea of a Christian Psychology," *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 40, no. 1 (2012): 40.

<sup>8</sup> John Calvin and Henry Beveridge, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), 1:50.

<sup>9</sup> Robert C. Roberts, "Feeling One's Emotions and Knowing Oneself," *Philosophical Studies* 77, nos. 2/3 (1995): 331.

Kierkegaard also argued that knowledge of self is tied directly to a relationship with God. He uses the metaphor of sobriety to refer to an awareness of one's true self: "To become sober is: to come to oneself in self-knowledge and before God as nothing before him, yet infinitely, unconditionally engaged."<sup>10</sup> He argues that coming to one's self means accepting the complexity and paradox of life through faith and letting go of a desire to master the world. The Christian can rest in the many unanswerable questions by trusting that God knows the answer and that he is in control. Because God is in control, the Christian can be honest with his or her frailty and weakness and as such does not need to answer everything perfectly but can psychologically rest in Christ.

Kierkegaard believed that the kind of sobriety the pagan world extolled was intoxication to the highest degree. The world seeks control and to eliminate anything unanswerable. Instead of seeking the "probable," coming to one's self means by faith, trusting God and allowing His truth to reveal a person's true self:

Familiarity with the probable,<sup>11</sup> and the more profound it is, does not in a more profound sense lead a person closer to himself but further and further away from his deeper self, brings him closer and closer to himself only in the sense of selfishness—this the purely human view calls becoming sober and Christianity calls intoxication.<sup>12</sup>

Kierkegaard argued that the self must be known *before God* or else it produces a loss of self. He does not mean the self is known prior to knowing God, but instead that knowledge of self must take place in front of or in the presence of God. He states,

If self-knowledge does not lead to knowing oneself before God—well, then there is something to what purely human self-observation says, namely, that this self-knowledge leads to a certain emptiness that produces dizziness. Only by being before God can one totally come to oneself in the transparency of soberness.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourselves: Kierkegaard's Writings*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (repr., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 21:104.

<sup>11</sup> Kierkegaard seems to be using the term "probable" to refer to the finite or that which is safe and can be seen apart from faith. He wants to draw a distinction the Christian who accepts the world as God describes on faith and the pagan who only looks at the probable and ignores the world of faith.

<sup>12</sup> Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourselves*, 21:105.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 21:106

“Soberness of self” means that one knows their self in light of God’s revelation and love. “Intoxication” is a belief in the lie that one can know himself apart from relationship with God. Kierkegaard argues that self-knowledge is essential to spiritual growth but self-knowledge must take place before God if it is to lead to the Christian understanding of self.

Therefore, before God, the development of Christian emotional virtue requires openness and commitment to the inner life, which in large part will include the emotions. In Roberts’ model is a formula for understanding and even altering the movement of the emotions. Thus, as a believer becomes aware of emotions of vice, he can then begin to ask important questions related to why he feels the way he does about the given situation. The goal of such questioning is to understand two things: (1) what is the subjective construal of the world that is leading to the emotions (false beliefs)? (2) What is the subjective concern that this situation is touching upon (false idols of the heart)? The Christian is then invited to begin the process of reshaping these construals and concerns before the Lord.<sup>14</sup>

The remainder of this chapter will present three methods for aiding the congregation to internalize the truth of the sermon by indirect communication. The first method is to provide the congregation with permission to self-evaluate.

### **Permission Giving: Self-Examination**

The expositor can promote the subjective development of emotional virtue in the congregation through giving permission and at times, guiding the congregation to reflect on both their inner world. Expositors must extend permission because for many in the congregation, the concept of inward awareness seems foreign, new age, or is simply

---

<sup>14</sup> The method for reshaping the emotions most argued for in evangelical circles seems to be a CBT model. However, other emotion-focused models do exist and have plenty of good research to support their use. The sermon will by nature function more in line with CBT techniques because one of the main focuses of the sermon is to inform and impact belief. However, the inclusion of a subjective element will also provide a means for the individual hearer to begin to process emotions through the sermon as well.

terrifying. The preacher can establish a culture of inward reflection by continually giving verbal and non-verbal permission and modeling an inward stance toward the spiritual life. While the expositor will want to be aware of excessive inward focus, the reality is that for many, there is very little attention given to the inward areas of sin and suffering.

Both sin and suffering can result in misaligned concerns and construals. In cases where deep emotional wounds that have been repressed the sermon can provide permission for individuals to face the inner struggle. By setting the culture as one of reflection of sin and suffering the congregation will begin to find the freedom to wrestle with their sin and suffering.

Kierkegaard understood that emotions often distort and confuse how individuals see the world. This idea may be held by many modern preachers, but the decision is often to cut the emotions out of the process altogether. As was covered in chapters 2 and 3, removing emotions is not possible because emotions are not just fleeting feelings but are tied to strongly held beliefs and desires. The pastor-shepherd's task is to awaken the hearer to the reality that exists in the world and within his inner world not to cut the congregation off from these realities. This awakening is not accomplished only through propositions but as the hearer self-reflects upon his own emotions in light of Scripture. Lee notes, "Kierkegaard stresses time and again that the task of the believer is to grapple with the paradox in Christianity and not to explain it away; those who want to grasp faith objectively can only remain outside."<sup>15</sup>

Kierkegaard also recognized that the nature of sin often prevents a person from genuinely understanding himself or herself, not to mention the Word of God. The believer needs the Word to be faithfully applied through biblical preaching *and* reflection upon the inner self; a balanced sermon will seek to accomplish both.

---

<sup>15</sup> Lee, Richard C. K. "The Pascalian Heart and the Kierkegaardian Passion: On Faith and Subjectivity." *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (October 2009), 346.

The subjective nature of faith and the fact that God is a subject requires more than external faithfulness but also an inward transformation. Lee, drawing from Kierkegaard, states well,

The reason why objectivity cannot be the way to religious truth, Kierkegaard points out, lies in the very simple fact that God is a subject: “The existing person who chooses the objective way now enters upon all approximating deliberation intended to bring forth God objectively, which is not achieved in all eternity, because God is a subject and hence only for subjectivity in inwardness.” Christianity is not a doctrine, for it focuses on the reality of teacher himself. Thus it cannot be approached by pure intellectual, rational approaches.<sup>16</sup>

For Kierkegaard, the Christian should exist in a state of holy unrest that causes him or her to reflect on their state. This reflection is not a morbid preoccupation with self but is instead designed to encourage the believer always to be reflecting on his or her motivations and desires. Kierkegaard identified two kinds of disorder in the human soul. The first was “tumult, disturbance in externals.”<sup>17</sup> The second is what he called “the stillness of death.”<sup>18</sup> The second reflects the lifeless heart that does not reflect on its state, the state of God, and the world. Kierkegaard believed that a certain amount of inward restlessness was appropriate for the disciple of Jesus:

From the Christian point of view, there are two kinds of true restlessness. Restlessness in the heroes of faith and witnesses to the truth, which aims at reforming things as they are. . . .The other kind of restlessness has to do with the inward deepening. A true love affair is indeed also a restless thing, but it never enters the lover’s head to want to change things as they are. I have worked for this restlessness oriented toward inward deepening.<sup>19</sup>

The inward restlessness that leads to inward deepening is the goal of self-examination in the sermon. Aiding the congregation in their restlessness with the biblical text is essential for developing emotional virtue because without wrestling with inner

---

<sup>16</sup> Lee, “The Pascalian Heart and the Kierkegaardian Passion,” 347.

<sup>17</sup> Kierkegaard, *For Self-Examination/Judge for Yourself*, 21:20.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 21:21.



motives and concerns, the non-biblical desires cannot be replaced. Wayne Grudem right affirms that:

Moreover, as Christians grow in maturity, the kinds of sin that remain in their lives are often not so much sins of words or deeds that are outwardly noticeable to others, but inward sins of attitudes and motives of the heart—desires such as pride and selfishness, lack of courage or faith, lack of zeal in loving God with our whole hearts and our neighbors as ourselves, and failure to fully trust God for all that he promises in every situation. These are real sins! They show how far short we fall of the moral perfection of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

Fred Craddock argues that the congregation should be given more than information and a list of “to-dos” to accomplish after the sermon.<sup>21</sup> Instead, the congregation can be invited to engage and interact throughout the message. However, Craddock warns against the folly of too much inward focus in the sermon; after all, the congregation is present to meet and hear from God. Craddock states,

The Scriptures, by keeping sentinel watch over the life and faith of the church, blow the whistle on lengthy exercises in self-analysis and self-saving, move the chairs out of the small circle, and scatter moods of self-pity or self-congratulation. Sermons that are self-serving are called into question by the very texts which had been selected to authenticate the message.<sup>22</sup>

These times of reflection are not corporate “soul-searching sessions,” but are instead small instances of reflection that invite the hearer to personalize and make subjective what is objective within the sermon. Instead, the preacher will redirect the passage in question back to the listeners by inviting them to see how their life is addressed in the pericope. For example, a passage such as 1 Colossians 3:1, “If then you have been raised with Christ,” leads to the natural questions, “have you been raised with Christ?” Before the accompanying action is provided, the self is addressed.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 752.

<sup>21</sup> Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2010), 25-26.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Breuninger, Christian. “Søren Kierkegaard’s Reformation of Expository Preaching.” *The Covenant Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (August 1993), 24.

These times of reflection are not extended periods of time and may not even be announced, or they may be introduced by a simple phrase such as, “What would you do in that situation?” or “have you experienced this?” The preacher can ask questions that help the hearer reflect inward; holding in one hand the Word and in the other their desires. The preacher may also ask questions such as, “Would you have felt the same way if you were in his shoes?” The hearer is asked to reflect on his or her emotional response concerning the biblical narrative or text. The preacher may also choose to use biblical parables, illustrations, narratives, or poems to bring awareness to the hearer’s heart indirectly.

Johnson notes three areas of self-reflection that a Christian might focus. First, a Christian may be encouraged to reflect on their awareness of God. Johnson notes that “Though God is always present ontologically and covenantally to believers, they do not always experience his presence...In addition, as a result of prior experiences of other humans and God, people have formed a ‘God-image,’ a mental representation of God that may not correspond accurately to the God of the Bible, especially if they were exposed to grossly distorted image-bearers earlier in life.”<sup>24</sup> By reflecting on one’s perception of God, the individual Christian may begin to understand how he or she perceives God and in what ways God has been experienced.

Second, the believer may reflect on an “awareness of self-regulation.”<sup>25</sup> Both awareness of one's beliefs and emotions would fall unto this category. If one uses Roberts’ terminology here, the Christian needs to evaluate their construals of the world (do they believe the right things about the nature of reality?) and become aware of their core desires (do they care for the right things?). The believer is invited to examine their

---

<sup>24</sup> Eric L. Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014), 450-1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 451.

own ideas about God and self as well as their emotions that make up their concepts of self, God, and others. Where excessive negative emotions exist, the Christian may need to engage in one on one dialogue in a counseling environment. By establishing a culture of self-examination, the congregation is permitted to wrestle with the darker aspects of life. In turn, by addressing these faulty ideas and concerns, the believer can begin to develop more biblically appropriate concerns and construals.

Third, the believer can self-examine their interpretation of their past and present. Here the believers are invited to reflect on “one’s internal dynamics” and how they are “ related to one’s story and one’s earlier relationships.”<sup>26</sup> The expositor is not attempting to process all of these issues within the sermon, but as the pericope allows, he will invite the congregation to reflect in these ways. The result will be greater self-awareness and potentially more opportunities for discipleship following the sermon either in small groups, counseling sessions, or the individuals time with the Lord.

By providing permission to the congregation, the expositor is attempting to lower the threshold of negative barriers to self-understanding that prevent maturity. Psychologists refer to defenses that are a means of distraction from sub-conscious pain and or fear.<sup>27</sup> The preacher is not trying to remedy the pain (though the Spirit certainly may use the Word to accomplish such a task) but is instead trying lower defenses while permitting to address the hidden parts of the self before God.

### **Permission to Differentiate Sin and Suffering**

In addition, the preacher may aid the congregation to identify areas of sin and suffering. While often sin and suffering will overlap, the preacher should differentiate suffering that is a result of personal sin and suffering that is the result of living in a fallen

---

<sup>26</sup> Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 453.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 454.

world. The use of a prayer such as from Psalm 139:23-24 can help to set the tone for such introspection.

One crucial aspect of developing CEV is to understand the difference between sin and suffering that is the result of brokenness in the world. The preacher that only focuses on the congregation's sin may harden some and create legalists in others. The preacher who only focuses on suffering—never addressing the congregation's sin—may cultivate a victim mentality that never sees sin as the real problem. An alternative is to recognize that, as any pericope is preached, some in the congregation are struggling with sin, others are suffering from life, and many are experiencing both. The text will speak to both aspects of life differently. Those living in rebellion will need to receive exhortation and grace. Those suffering will need to be given permission to lament and receive the grace and healing of God in the pericope. In other words, the preacher must allow the Holy Spirit to speak a specific word to every person in the congregation without overly limiting the application to one side or the other. This does not mean that applications are not explicitly presented; instead, it means that the preacher may need greater nuance as he describes applications of the biblical text and he will need to vary the application to speak to both those stuck in sin and those amidst suffering.

For example, a college student in the congregation struggling with pornography may feel conviction during a sermon. However, he has confessed his sin to God and some trusted friends, been engaging in a biblical recovery group, and is receiving ongoing discipleship in the area of controlling one's lust. While his sin is real, it seems that directing the application only to convict would be imprudent for his situation. He is aware of his sin. Instead, the preacher may choose to preach the thrust of the passage, but also have a strong focus on union with Christ that leads to grace and strength to overcome temptations. Preaching should not ignore or back away from opposing sin, but if the people of God are going to develop proper concerns and construals, they need to understand their sin in light of their union with Christ. Therefore, every time sin is

opposed there is also an opportunity to promote the ultimate concern: relationship with Christ.

The student is a sinner who is also suffering from temptation. By helping the congregation understand the difference between one's sin and suffering, one can apply grace where it is needed and at the same time exhort holiness where rebellion is present. Paul says it this way: "And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all" (1 Thess 5:14). Thus, the sermon's application may focus on turning from lustful activities, but it should also offer encouragement for those on the journey of recovery. In this way, the application is both affirming the high standard of God's demand while encouraging the congregation to continue on the path, even if they are struggling.

As the preacher models the difference between sin and suffering, the congregation can begin to reflect more honestly about their situation and apply the appropriate form of healing in their life. Another example may be a member struggling with anxiety. While preaching the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:25-34), where Jesus instructs his followers to not be anxious, she begins to feel guilty. She does not want to feel anxious, but she cannot seem to help it. She prays daily that she could trust more. In addition, she feels guilty that she does not feel joyful more often. She feels like a failure as a Christian. By making a distinction between sin and suffering, the preacher can begin to help her to realize that though Jesus does desire his followers to trust God for their every need and to not worry, the reality is that because of sin in the world some will suffer from anxiety. Her anxiety is not a sin. The sin would be to give in to the anxiety and to stop trusting. However, if the preacher does not differentiate between sin and suffering, then she will be left believing that though her desires are right, she is incapable of being obedient. Again, the principle of 1 Thessalonians 5:14 comes into play.

The expositor must grant permission to the congregation to face difficult emotions. Developing CEV is in part based on acquiring right construals and alignment

of correct concerns but will also include the more difficult and time-consuming task of releasing faulty desires to produce their own emotions. Sometimes, difficult emotions are not the result of faulty concerns. Sometimes the concern is precisely correct. For example, a child is abused, and her mother is both angry and saddened by the news. Both anger and sadness are the right responses. At this point, the mother does not need to re-construe the situation to quiet painful emotions. Instead, before God, she will need to face these problematic emotions of hatred toward the offender and the sadness associated with the situation. The expositor can and should give the hearer permission to sit with these difficult emotions before God and not attempt to quickly re-construe the situation.

One way that preachers can help the congregation cultivate CEV is by permitting to grieve the loss of idols of the heart. While idols are often depicted in Scripture as material shrines of worship, modern idols are often more emotional and represent the promise of success, fame, purpose, and acceptance.<sup>28</sup> At times, turning from these idols may not be as simple as cognitive and volitional repentance. If idols of the heart represent good things that have become ultimate things, then it seems that two things need to happen for the person to become whole. First, the believer must have an accurate vision of the beauty of Christ. He must experience Christ's beauty personally and allow the relationship he has with Christ to become the focus of life. Also, the believer may need to grieve the loss of the idol and what it represents, which may often be connected to a failure on behalf of a parent or caregiver to meet specific needs of the individual at a young age. By grieving "the idol," the believer will become more emotionally free and in doing so, let go of an inappropriate concern. Often the replacement of Christ at the center of the person's life will relieve some of the pressure. However, while re-construing the idol as wrong may be possible, truly being able to let

---

<sup>28</sup> Timothy Keller, *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope That Matters* (repr., New York: Penguin Books, 2011).

go of the control of the concern may require a season of lament before God. This is not to say that the believer is grieving the loss of sin, but is instead grieving the loss of a need that was not met in childhood and is not being met in adulthood. These sort of psychological issues often complicate the already messy spiritual relationship between a person and idols. However, the wise pastor must realize that emotional connection will often trump proper construal and part of his work is to expose false concerns and help the congregation release them in order to better hold to the PCC.

For those suffering from difficult emotions, the preacher can provide permission to face them and to heal. Difficult emotions may be best understood as “warning lights” like in a car. They give the subject the impression that something is amiss. These emotions serve a valuable informational and motivational function in the subjects’ life. Likewise, Eric Johnson says that emotions are *signs*.<sup>29</sup> He states that “An emotion is an intrinsically private, subjective aspect of human experience that signifies something.”<sup>30</sup> So, these difficult emotions point to concerns that are being *upset*. The Christian, at this point, has a few options. They can ignore the feelings and repress them. This has a long-term adverse effect on the spiritual health (and physical health) of the subject.<sup>31</sup> These emotions can be stored in memory and though they are not present in consciousness they have an effect on the color of the emotional responses in the consciousness.<sup>32</sup> Second, Christians can *act out* from their difficult emotions. This sort of behavior is what the New Testament condemns (see Galatians 5:20). Another option is to attempt to re-construe the situation to perceive the object of the difficult emotions in a new light. At times re-construal will work but at times it will not. The other option is to

---

<sup>29</sup> Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 300.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 301.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 301.

express the emotions (in the case of sadness and anger) in healthy ways. Generally, these emotions are signs of loss and injustice. So, the Christian may need ample time of expression of both the anger of the offense and the pain of the loss that resulted from it before re-construal can take place.

Roberts articulates a cognitive perspective, which means that forgiveness is more or less about a struggle to perceive the offender different. Sometimes an emotion is able to be changed by changing one's perception of the situation, but sometimes they are not. Beneath many instances of anger will exist the emotion of sadness at a loss.<sup>33</sup> While reframing the situation may quiet the feelings of anger, the pain that was caused will often remain. Forgiveness, in order for it to have its full effect, must account for the loss of the subject, not just the anger; this is especially true in cases where the sin against the subject was committed in the past and the subject has unintentionally held on to the pain and anger from the event.

Forgiveness will not come easily given that a core concern has been violated. The subject will not easily re-construe the offender without upsetting the core concern again. Only by acknowledging the loss and giving voice to the violation in prayer and often with a trusted friend or counselor will the subject be able to lower the force of the concern enough to then re-construe the offender in a different light. Forgiveness will almost always result in a loss on the part of the one offering forgiveness. The loss is often understood in the form of pain and tears. To forgive without acknowledging the fundamental loss created by the offending party ignores the severity of the sin and denies the humanity of the subject.

There seems to be a difference between making a decision to forgive and emotionally letting go of anger and sadness over the offense and gaining emotionally

---

<sup>33</sup> Matthew McKay and Peter Rogers, *The Anger Control Workbook* (Oakland, CA: Emeryville, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2000), i.



positive feelings toward the offender. So, I would amend Roberts' argument to say that before re-construal of the offense can happen fully, the subject *may* need to acknowledge and express both the anger and pain of the event. When the subject has had adequate time and space to focus on the offense, he or she will then be able to cognitively re-construe the offender in a different light. Efforts to re-construe may be helpful prior but they will only serve to bring minor comfort in the subject, whereas long-term forgiveness may take greater amounts of time. This does not mean that the subject will outwardly need to hold a grudge or say disparaging things about the offending party. Here the subject is obligated to apply Ephesians 4:28, "Be angry and do not sin" until such a time as they have adequately processed their grief over the event and the offending party.

While I agree with Roberts' definition of emotion, I think that he can at times miss the level of influence that a concern has over the construal of a subject. The concern may flavor and color every possible construal and with no relief in sight until the aggravated concern is faced and appeased.

For the Christian, forgiveness is rooted in the forgiving work of Jesus on the cross. The Christian can forgive his enemies and thus quiet the difficult emotions (Matt 6:12) because he has first been accepted and forgiven by Jesus. However, often the believer will not fully comprehend the level of their right standing before God. Often, the process of receiving forgiveness and accepting God's love means facing ones' sins and the sins of others done against them.

David Benner and Robert Harvey offer a three-step method for forgiveness that appreciates both the importance of expression of the difficult emotions as well as the reframing of the situation in light of forgiveness.

1. Preparing to forgive: The emotional work of re-experiencing.
2. Beginning to forgive: The cognitive work of reinterpreting.

### 3. Forgiving: The volitional task of releasing.<sup>34</sup>

The expositor should be prepared to provide the congregation with permission to move through these steps of forgiveness, for example, and not merely attempt to re-construe the situation. The preacher who also permits the congregation to wrestle with the deep emotional pain of life will provide the needed push many need to let go. However, if from the pulpit, the condemnation of any form of anger or sadness takes place, whether explicit or implicit, the process of forgiveness on this model is high jacked. The congregation must be permitted to feel and express in godly ways their anger and grief and then release the offender to God before re-construing the situation. Otherwise, the congregation is being asked to ignore the emotional reality of the offense and to remedy their pain with cognitive techniques which may have short term effects but do not help to alleviate the emotional pressure underneath fully. Forgiveness is an example of letting go of barriers to the will; the following section will look at how the preacher can continue to help the congregation to clear emotional barriers that prevent the engagement of the will.

#### **Promote Empathy with the Characters in Scripture**

The final way that the preacher can help to realign the concerns of the heart will be to expose the congregation to the correct desires and facilitate the congregation in empathizing with the biblical characters. By preaching narrative texts, the congregation is invited to adopt the wisdom and CEV of the characters and author. Wisdom is not just found in short and pithy sayings like what is found in the book of Proverbs but is also discovered in the narratives that make up much of Christian Scripture.

Dryden contends that narrative texts generate wisdom apart from principlization and are critical for the formation of virtue. Not that the simple act of

---

<sup>34</sup> Robert W. Harvey and David G. Benner, *Choosing the Gift of Forgiveness: How to Overcome Hurts and Brokenness* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 65.

reading stories makes people better but “rather, narratives are formative because they inculcate wisdom” (111). Dryden explains,

Aristotle defined wisdom (φρόνησις; variously translated as “practical reason,” “discernment,” or “wisdom”) as the practical skill of perceiving the right action in a particular circumstance (cf. Rom. 12:2). This perception comprehends basic ethical principles alongside the situational particulars that make each moral deliberation unique. In Aristotle’s system of virtue, aimed at the goal of human contentment (εὐδαιμοσύνη), φρόνησις plays a central role as chief of the virtues but it also informed by all the others. Like the other virtues, practical wisdom is a learned skill, developed through training and experience. (111)

Through training and experience, the Scriptures teach wisdom. Exposure to the narratives does more than teach Bible stories; it also provides a way for the Scriptures to model experiences and concrete morality.

Dryden, summarizing Nussbaum, articulates three elements of Aristotle’s account that show how narratives inculcate wisdom.<sup>35</sup> First, he notes the principle of incommensurable goods (111). Dryden states,

Narratives swim in the tensions created by incommensurable goods. Much of the energy of narratives, especially those that incorporate real moral challenges for their characters, is derived from the tensions between competing goods or competing evaluations of the good life. (112)

Narratives can articulate the value distance between goods but also systems. Dryden notes, “The narrative dynamics of the Gospels are often driven by analogous tensions between competing systems of value” (113).

The second way that narratives inculcate wisdom is an emphasis on “particulars over general rules” (113). Aristotle believed that wisdom was the discernment of particulars not “reliance on an abstract system of logically related norms” (113).

Aristotle, did, however, see a need for norms “because wisdom is an act of applying those norms to particular situations” (113). Narratives are vehicles for teaching particulars.

Though often the narratives may be melted down so that only a moral or lesson remains,

---

<sup>35</sup> Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 286-313.

the real import of a narrative is not the moral but the application of the moral in a concrete setting and particular situation.

The third element, states Dryden, is “the essential place of the emotions in the act of perception” (114). Following in the logical stream of Aristotle and Nussbaum, Dryden suggests, “Because emotions are unmediated value judgments, they are useful and necessary as acts of practical reason” (114). He continues,

Narratives engage readers emotionally in a story; in the development of attachments to particular characters, through some form of identification, readers are invited to enter into the space of their moral deliberations. Narratives are purposefully built for this type of engagement where readers experience the confusion of the competing allegiances of characters from the “inside.” This emotional identification facilitates the formation of wisdom by participating in a “virtual” act of discernment, rejoicing in good choices, or alternatively grieving a choice the reader can see will lead to ruin. These are participatory acts of discernment that practice and foster wisdom. (115)

Each of these elements points to the value of narrative in developing wisdom. By extracting a principle from the narrative and disregarding the narrative itself, a fundamental aspect of the narrative is lost; namely, the ability for the narrative to function as a formative agent of the mind, will, and emotions. Preaching that draws out a principle and fails to see what the author is doing with the text will be ignoring a primary source of transformation for the congregation. This is not to say that the preacher should not explain or apply the narrative, but only that the narrative should be told as a narrative and allowed to function as a story. The story form is what houses the formational aspects of the sermon.

### **Tell the Story**

The wisdom needed to live out CEV is found in part within the narratives of Scripture. In addition to applying the biblical text and facilitating times of self-reflection, the subversive sermon should also embrace the biblical story and share it often.<sup>36</sup> Telling

---

<sup>36</sup> The primary story shared in the sermon is the story found within the pericope. What is the story the author is telling? However, once the story is understood and communicated, the preacher will want to connect the sub-story to the grand story of what God is doing in the world. As long as the story is allowed to speak for itself then this technique should not interfere with the a hermeneutic that focuses on

the story of God found in each pericope provides the concrete “why” of the Christian life. The story of God shows the people of God what life in God looks like. Eugene Peterson states,

Story is the primary verbal means of bringing God’s word to us. For that we can be most grateful, for story is our most accessible form of speech. Young and old love stories. Literate and illiterate alike tell and listen to stories. Neither stupidity nor sophistication puts outside the magnetic field of story. The only serious rival to story in terms of accessibility and attraction is song, and there are plenty of those in the Bible too.

Biblical stories invite the reader into the world created by the author.

Preaching the narrative is the lifeblood of subversive sermons. The reason it is critical is that it helps the hearer to relate to the text concretely. The congregation can begin to speak biblical language even if they do not know Greek or Hebrew because the narrative is universally accessible. Renee Sauder puts it like this:

Narrative preaching is effective when we locate the intersection between our own lives and the lives of the actors in the biblical drama. To connect the biblical text with a story that will help explain it, lift it off the page, and give it another dimension is the creative and imaginative challenge of narrative preaching.<sup>37</sup>

The narrative provides a concrete example of life in God’s kingdom that must be inhabited by the congregation. Narratives aid in the development of emotional virtues by shaping *concerns* and depicting concrete morals. Richard B. Hays writes, “Stories form our values and moral sensibilities in more indirect and complex ways, teaching us how to see the world, what to fear, and what to hope for; stories offer us nuanced models of behavior both wise and foolish, courageous and cowardly, faithful and faithless.”<sup>38</sup> Intellectual ascent to abstract principles influences morality but not in the absence of a compelling narrative, which provides the why.

---

the pericope and not a systematic principle.

<sup>37</sup> Renee Sauder, “Igniting Imaginations with Narrative Preaching,” *Vision* 10, no. 1 (2009): 46.

<sup>38</sup> Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation, A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1996), 73.

While many preachers may prefer preaching the Epistles to a narrative, often the narrative of Scripture can aid in the development of emotional virtue in ways the Epistles cannot. Epistles may have a greater effect on the objective construal of the hearer while the narrative will help develop a subjective concern in the hearer.<sup>39</sup> The narrative points to the concern and the “why?” of the divine demand of Scripture. Preachers often assume the “why” and focus instead on the “what.” The narrative makes the “why” concrete and helps the congregation internalize it. By telling the story well, the congregation is reminded of the “why.” An example of the subversive narrative is evident in Deuteronomy as the Hebrew people are on the verge of the Promised Land. Moses is preaching to the gathered congregation. Moses’ instruction in 6:20-25 has wisdom for pastors who wish to direct the concern of their congregations.

Moses begins with a scenario: “When your son asks you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you?’” (Deut 6:20). Like any child, there comes a time when they begin to question the meaning and purpose of their parents’ faith. Children will test to see if the concern that is so central to their parents’ faith has merit for them or not. Maybe, one could overhear a child asking, “why do we follow the rules? Why do we need to trust God? Why do we go to worship?”

Moses’ response gives a clue as to how the heart is shaped and directed. In verses 21-25, Moses’ response to the child is to remind him of the story of the Exodus. The story of the exodus is *the story* for the Hebrew people. This is the story of God and his love. Why the story? Why remind the child of slavery and exodus? Why remind the child of the wonders and power of YHWH? Moses tells the story because it contains more than information—it speaks to the emotions and establishes belonging and purpose.

---

<sup>39</sup> I am not contending that concern cannot be developed through preaching the epistles. In fact, I believe that every pericope can be used to develop concerns. However, narrative texts connect to the congregation in a different way that pastoral letters and as such are a vital genre.

The *why* of the Law is found in the deliverance of God and his love for his people.

Stories subversively shape morality because, in part, they provide the concrete “why.” Ascent to abstract principles will also influence mortality, but not in the absence of a compelling narrative. The use of compelling narratives to shape the imagination of the congregation is vital to the re-calibration of both the concerns and construals inherent in emotional virtues. Doctrine can be formational, but it is a doctrine that is understood within the grand story of Scripture that makes the greatest impact on desires. Vanhoozer puts it this way:

Doctrine resembles cognitive therapy to the extent that it encourages certain ways of thinking about God, the world, and ourselves. Ultimately, however, doctrine addresses the heart, the seat of our desires and dispositions. It is largely for this reason that I want to include the imagination under “cognitive”: the imagination is the kind of thinking that fits parts into larger wholes and discerns meaningful patterns and is in turn grasped (i.e. delighted) by the beauty of the whole. Doctrinal theology helps Christians to acquire theodramatic habits of thought whereby we understand persons and events in relation to the broader theodrama of which everything on heaven and on earth is a part: the story of the father renewing creation in Christ through the Spirit.<sup>40</sup>

The preacher need not deny the objective and didactic portions of Scripture but must realize that both forms have a function to play in the development of Christian virtue. The use of the biblical narrative is the most accessible way to address the heart of the hearer. By telling the story of the pericope well, the preacher can access the heart in indirect ways. Narratives in Scripture that are converted into three-point outlines and stripped of their narrative quality will not have this effect; doctrinal truth may be taught, but the concern of the passage will be lost. The concern—the concrete desire of the text—is a part of the narrative, and once it is removed from the narrative and abstracted it becomes something else altogether. However, if the preacher allows the story to serve its narrative function as wisdom, the Scriptures will be functioning subversively, working behind the scenes through the narrative to engage the heart.

---

<sup>40</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Putting on Christ: Spiritual Formation and the Drama of Discipleship,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 147-53.

Because the pericope contains wisdom for spiritual formation, the preacher can assume that the structure of the biblical text has a formative agenda. The structure is needed and needs to be taken seriously in both study and delivery. Preaching the story of the pericope well is what Kuruvilla means when he states that preachers should privilege the text.<sup>41</sup> Embracing the narrative means that the preacher will not short change the genre to rush to a theological principle. Instead, the preacher will seek to find the flow of the text and allow the literary structure to carry him along.<sup>42</sup>

### **Invite Empathy with the Word**

In addition to telling the story, the preacher can also tell the story in such a way that the congregation can empathize with the text. Roberts speculates that concerns are in part developed through parental modeling and empathy, stating, “It has to do with our upbringing and past experiences, natural sensitivity, and biological empathy. If you wanted to develop a concern in your children you would want to model that concern with them. Imitate [the biblical concern] for them.”<sup>43</sup> The Bible can become like a parent modeling kingdom concerns. Thus, as the congregation empathizes with the biblical characters, they may gradually integrate biblical concerns.

Since every pericope contains a slice of Christlikeness, it follows that many pericopes will house certain concerns and construals with which the congregation could empathize, especially narratives. By empathizing with the characters in the pericope, the congregation is also empathizing with Christ, and as a result will begin to internalize the concerns of Scripture. Reading wisely means that one will recognize when Scripture is

---

<sup>41</sup> Kuruvilla’s whole work is an effort to aid the preacher in respecting the author’s intention and to privilege the text itself. Abraham Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text!: A Theological Hermeneutic for Preaching*, new ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2013).

<sup>42</sup> See Hershael York, “Preaching Zones of Turbulence—Sermons & Articles,” November 8, 2012, accessed November 8, 2018, <https://www.preaching.com/articles/preaching-zones-of-turbulence/>.

<sup>43</sup> Robert C. Roberts, telephone conversation with author, May 8, 2018.



presenting a character as a positive model or as a negative model. For example, when the congregation empathizes with Joseph in Genesis 50, as he hears the news of his father's death, they will be challenged to confront their broken relationships and their own losses and paternal relationships. The congregation can see that his willingness to forgive his family and recognize God's sovereign plan in the process is a virtuous trait. By turning inward and empathizing with Joseph, the congregation may become more open to their inner world. The sermon is then subversively inviting the congregation to *feel with* the biblical story, not to simply *feel about* it.

The fields of philosophy, psychology, and literature are engaged in dialogue about the nature of empathy for moral development.<sup>44</sup> Amy Coplan writes about the nature of empathy and defines it in this way:

Under my proposed conceptualization, empathy is a complex imaginative process in which an observer simulates another person's situated psychological states while maintaining clear self-other differentiation. To say that empathy is "complex" is to say that it is simultaneously a cognitive and affective process.<sup>45</sup>

The process of empathy is "simultaneously . . . cognitive and affective." Thus, both the mind and the emotions are involved in the process, which means that for the sermon to facilitate empathy in the text both the mind and the emotions must be engaged. The reader/hearer is permitted to *feel with* the character.

This act of *feeling with* the characters takes place in the imagination. Empathy is a creative process undertaken by a subject in which she takes on the subjective experience/perspective of another. Coplan explains, "Roughly, perspective-taking is an imaginative process through which one constructs another person's subjective experience

---

<sup>44</sup> Nancy E. Snow, "Empathy," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2000): 65-78. Amy Coplan and Peter Goldie, eds., *Empathy: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives* (repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Suzanne Keen, "A Theory of Narrative Empathy," *Narrative* 14, no. 3 (2006): 207-36.

<sup>45</sup> Coplan and Goldie, *Empathy*, 5.

by simulating the experience of being in the other's situation."<sup>46</sup> On this model, empathy is not the experience of feeling one's own emotions in light of someone else. Coplan categorizes this experience as sympathy.<sup>47</sup> For example, if one were to see a homeless man on the side of the street begging for money, one may feel sadness over his plight. However, at this moment, he is not feeling sadness at all, in fact, he is quite enjoying his day. Thus, one feels sympathy, but it cannot be said that one feels empathy. Empathy maintains a self-other differentiation where the subject realizes that what he or she is experiencing is the subjective experience of the other. Benner also notes the difference between sympathy and empathy:

An understanding of the difference between empathy and sympathy illustrates this point. In empathy, one enters into another's experience and shares it without losing sight of the fact that it is truly the other person's experience. If this distinction is lost the autonomy of the other is likewise lost and the resulting relationship is more likely to be characterized by sympathy. Sympathy, thus understood, is seen to be a way of responding to one's own pain by attempting to cover it over with reassurance to the other.<sup>48</sup>

The intent of empathy is not to place oneself *in the shoes* of the other but instead imagining oneself *as the other* and then experiencing his or her situation. The question empathy asks is not, "What would I feel in that situation?" but instead, "what does he feel in that situation?" Coplan explains the difference in greater detail:

Other-oriented perspective-taking is, as the name suggests, oriented toward the other. It therefore avoids false consensus effects, personal distress, and prediction errors based on egocentric biases. We stay focused within our simulation on the other's experiences and characteristics rather than reverting to imagining based on our own experiences and characteristics. In other-oriented perspective-taking, when I successfully adopt the target's perspective, I imagine being the target undergoing the target's experiences rather than imagining being myself undergoing the target's experience.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Coplan and Goldie, *Empathy*, 9.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> David G. Benner, "The Incarnation as a Metaphor for Psychotherapy," *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 11, no. 4 (1983): 292.

<sup>49</sup> Coplan and Goldie, *Empathy*, 13.

How does empathy relate to the sermon? When hearers are exposed to the biblical text, the preacher can facilitate group empathy with the text by drawing out the emotional language of the text and highlighting the characterization and the plot of the narrative. By stepping into the biblical narrative, the congregation can imagine what it is like to have these particular biblical concerns or to feel what it is like to have rebelled against God; either way, the congregation is exposed to biblical concerns and taught by the experience.

Suzanne Keen has explored the role of empathy in fiction narratives. She observed that modern authors usually utilize two techniques for creating empathy in their readers: character identification and narrative situation (plot).<sup>50</sup> While the reader of the biblical text will observe both character and narrative to understand the theology of the pericope and the world in front of the text, the preacher can use these two literary traits to establish empathy through the sermon. Ignoring the narrative situation and character identification in the pericope will remove the opportunity for an empathetic event in the sermon, which will lessen the opportunity to connect the concern of the text to the heart of the hearer.

To uncover the emotion of the text, the reader will need to pay close attention to the rhetorical and literary structure of the narrative, especially characterization and plot. Both characterization and plot are the primary tools used by authors to produce emotional appeal in a piece of literature.

### **Plot**

To cultivate empathy, the first thing a preacher needs to do is help the congregation to enter into the plot. Kuhn notes,

The sequencing is not random; the events described typically involve some sort of temporal, causal, or teleological relationship to one another. The plot revolves

---

<sup>50</sup> Keen, "A Theory of Narrative Empathy," 207-36.

around problems to overcome or goals to accomplish by its leading characters. The sequencing is often artfully composed and rhetorically charged.<sup>51</sup>

Authors use the plot to generate concern for the characters and in turn, activate emotion in their reader/hearer. The arousal of these emotions has a formative effect because, as the hearer is exposed to the biblical concerns over time, the concerns of the hearer begin to mirror more the concerns found in the narrative. These sequences bring the reader to moments of effect. The preacher who is aware of these moments can aid the congregation in arriving at them.

Kuhn identifies five “rhetorically affective” moves used within biblical narratives that invite readers into the narrative.<sup>52</sup> He notes that these techniques are often assumed by commentators to be tools used by the authors to help the reader make cognitive connections: “These connections, however, are nearly always understood by interpreters as solely cognitive; their affective dimensions are rarely explored. However, note, too, that these sequencing strategies may also increase the dramatic effect of the stories.”<sup>53</sup>

The first move is to lead readers to “threshold moments.”<sup>54</sup> Threshold moments are defined as “those liminal states when what is sought by leading characters stands on the edge of achievement or failure.”<sup>55</sup> The reader is invited to wrestle with the question of what will happen next and how the conflict will be resolved. By emotionally investing in

---

<sup>51</sup> Karl Allen Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative: Rediscovering Biblical Appeal to the Emotions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 33.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>55</sup> Kuhn cites to examples of “threshold moments” in the biblical text. First, he looks at Luke 24 and the pericopes that depict the women at the tomb, the Emmaus road, and the Great Commission. He notes that the pattern of disclosure, misunderstanding, corrective instruction, understanding, and proclamation is found in all three pericopes. He claims that the “the threefold repetition of this patten creates an extended threshold moment, or series of threshold moments, leading to a final iteration in which doubt is finally resolved and the disciples are sent forth by Jesus as witnesses.” Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative*, 35.

the resolution, the reader/hearer can become attached to the narrative and its resolution. The emotional connection allows the concern to begin to become subjective.

Second, the author may use sequencing that draws connection and comparison. Kuhn notes, “Scholars have long noted the tendency of the biblical narrative to sequence or arrange material in order to color the reader’s perception of particular events or actions of characters.”<sup>56</sup> Bracketing is a common tool used by the biblical authors to draw a distinction to the events: “The narrator constructs this device by placing similar material at the beginning and the end of a narrative unit, either large, small, or in between.”<sup>57</sup> Sometimes the biblical authors will use a technique called “sandwiching,” which “calls the reader to see two stories in close relation to one another.”<sup>58</sup> The Gospel of Mark is most well-known for employing this technique. Mark repeatedly takes one story, opens it up, and places the second story in the middle of the first. He then concludes the first story. The meaning of both stories is to be understood in light of both stories. An example of this sandwiching is found in Mark 5:21-43.

In a related way, sometimes the authors will, as Kuhn suggests, “draw a connection between different parts of the narrative . . . by sequencing episodes in such a manner that the reader’s perception of one event is colored by events preceding it.”<sup>59</sup> Kuhn cites Mark 6:1-6 as an example of this technique. Up until the point that Jesus enters the region where he grew up, he has healed the sick, raised the dead, had power over the weather, and confronted Satan. Yet, when he arrives in the town of his youth he is rejected because “those who think they know Jesus best of all, really—and tragically—

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

do not know him at all (cf. Mark 3:20-21, 31-35).”<sup>60</sup>

Another way that authors use plot is to withhold the resolution of the narrative. A prime example of this technique may be the ending of Mark’s Gospel. Mark ends his Gospel with the women at the empty tomb of Jesus.<sup>61</sup> He does not show Jesus or tell his readers what takes place after the resurrection to the disciples. Instead, the withheld resolution may serve to create tension and encourage emotional engagement with the story. The reader is invited to place himself or herself in the story and to ask, “What am I to do next?” “Will I believe and follow?”

Authors will also use a technique of inverting the expected. Kuhn notes, “Unexpected shifts and turns are common to narrative, but at times these shifts and turns are to such an extreme that it seems likely they are designed to elicit astonishment and wonder in the audience.”<sup>62</sup> Kuhn pictures the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50 as containing several markers of dramatic inversion of the expected.<sup>63</sup>

Finally, Kuhn remarks that the composition of conflict serves both a cognitive and emotional function in narrative. . . . Conflict between characters, competing cultures, or world-views, the forces of nature and human intention or well-being, for the core of most story lines coursing through our literature and all other forms of storytelling.<sup>64</sup>

## **Characterization**

Sternberg observes that “Aristotle’s *Poetics* . . . singles out two lines of dramatic change. One traces the movement of characters from happiness to unhappiness or the reverse; the other, from ignorance to knowledge, climaxing in a recognition

---

<sup>60</sup> Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative*, 39.

<sup>61</sup> Assuming the Mark 16:9-20 are not part of the original manuscript.

<sup>62</sup> Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative*, 43.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 48-49.

(*anagnorisis*).”<sup>65</sup> The movement from happiness to unhappiness is not something that can be stated but must be felt if the congregation is to experience the character’s plight and struggle.

Kuhn notes three ways that the reader/hearer can identify with the characters in the story. First, the preacher can simply *invite the hearer to empathize* with the biblical character. Kuhn notes,

Reader sympathy is typically defined as a reader’s wishes for a character to achieve a beneficial state or to be delivered from some sort of threat or suffering. Reader empathy, in contrast, occurs when a reader becomes so intimately engaged with a character that the reader actually experiences the same or similar emotions as the character, as those are either expressly stated or implied by the author or imagined by the reader.<sup>66</sup>

The more the character is built up in the story, the greater likelihood the hearers will sympathize or empathize with him or her. Sympathy may motivate the hearer to listen intently to the story and internalize it. Empathy, on the other hand, has even greater ability to shape the concerns of the individual because of the level of connection between the character and the hearer. The preacher who learns to highlight the characters within the biblical pericope will aid the congregation in sympathizing and empathizing with them—more on empathy and the sermon in the following chapter.

Second, the preacher may invite hearer identification with the characters. Kuhn states, “Reader identity has to with the extent to which a reader considers himself or herself similar to a character or narrative.”<sup>67</sup> Hearers are encouraged to identify with the characters within the pericope. Kuhn continues, “Affectively, identity may lead readers to develop a sense of solidarity with characters, resulting in sympathy or even empathy,

---

<sup>65</sup> Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 172.

<sup>66</sup> Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative*, 50.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

especially when these characters are at least in some ways admirable.”<sup>68</sup> However, identifying with disliked characters can also have a tremendous effect on the hearer. Kuhn writes, “When readers identify with characters that they don’t admire, this creates opportunities for self-reflection that are far from affectively benign...And such emotion can serve to empower transformation.”<sup>69</sup>

Finally, preachers may invite admiration or disdain for certain characters. Kuhn notes, “Justice, faithfulness, superior wisdom, power over threatening forces, compassion, courage—these and other qualities typically lead readers to admire the characters who possess them in large measure.” While some preachers may be uncomfortable with using characters as moral examples because of the fear of moralism, what is lost is the ability for the congregation to identify with the character. Without character identification, the congregation will lose a concrete example of life in Christ. This technique is not purely emotional and can have cognitive ramifications as well. Kuhn explains, “Through such characterization, an author may lead us to admire certain characters and then use these characters to promote ideas the author wishes to adopt.”<sup>70</sup> Thus, as the congregation admires to likable characters or disdains the unlikable, the message of the author is communicated.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented a foundation for preachers to focus on the subjective experience of the hearer of the sermon. Because the hearer is a subject and relates to God as subject, the preacher must be aware of how the subject is internalizing the message. In order to help the hearer internalize the message, three indirect methods of discourse were

---

<sup>68</sup> Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative*, 51.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.



offered to develop the subjective concerns and construals that lead to CEV. The preacher will permit the congregation to engage in self-examination. Then the preacher will permit the congregation to differentiate between sin and suffering. Finally, the preacher will use rhetorical tools to help the congregation to empathize with the characters of the biblical text being preached. Each method is used to help the congregation to evaluate their concerns and through a process of letting go be able to take on new concerns. The end goal is the PCC becomes centrally located in the heart of the believer.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The production of emotional virtue can take a lifetime of Spirit-led transformation. The preacher who is unaware of the long-term focus may become frustrated that his preaching seems to have only minimal effect on the maturity of the congregation. However, upon the realization that the sermon is meant to cultivate spiritual maturity over the long haul, the preacher can begin to rest in God's long-term work within each sermon.

As a preacher becomes committed to spiritual maturity, he will recognize that maturity is a process, not a destination. Speaking about the process of spiritual formation, Kenneth Boa, states,

We are called to be apprentices of Jesus in kingdom living, and this requires time, development, and patience. As the Gospels illustrate, knowing and believing in Christ is a dynamic process (consider the disciples in John 1, 2:11, and 16:30-31; the woman at the well in John 4; the man born blind in John 9; and Nicodemus in John 3, 7, and 19). Spiritual formation is gradual, and we become more substantial and real as we cooperate with the process by years of small choices in favor of God's purposes. Each choice, whether to obey or resist, makes the next one possible.<sup>1</sup>

Becoming more like Jesus is not an instant act but a gradual process of Spirit-led experiences and Word-directed thoughts. The apostle Paul states, "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect (τετελείωμαι), but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own" (Phil 3:12). The perfection that Paul describes seems to be both *a gift* of grace and *a goal* of life in Christ. Thus, Paul works to bring

---

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 258.

himself closer to “perfection.” Maturity is not a means for salvation but is instead salvation working outward in his life.

The sermon is one piece of the puzzle that brings the congregation one step closer to maturity. By committing to long-term spiritual maturity, the sermon looks beyond merely content delivery or even short-term noticeable effects in behavior in the congregation. The sermon’s effectiveness is measured over years of cultivating the congregation instead of week to week. The preacher with a long-term focus waits for individuals to bear godly fruit in the right season. Such a focus calls for a shift from a “here and now” mentality to an “already but not-yet”<sup>2</sup> mentality that awaits the arrival of fruit produced in the congregation through faithful exposition of the text. The preacher that is focused on the here and now will only construct the sermon for the immediate change. Such a sermon may very well have an immediate impact, but such a commitment ignores the need for inner transformation, which by nature will take time. By focusing on the already (those parts of the Christian life that need to be lived out immediately) and the not-yet (those parts of the Christian life that the believers must progressively put on), the sermon can simultaneously apply the biblical text immediately while at the same time recognizing that each sermon has a more long-range goal. By focusing on maturity as a process, the preacher does not ignore the responsibility to preach with passion, wisdom, and tact each week. Taking a long view of the sermon should not diminish the need for quality preaching. The preacher must take on the philosophy of the farmer. The farmer focuses on planting well and caring for the seed during the season for planting. He then harvests when the fruit is ready, not before. Most of the time, the sermon is a time for planting the seeds of faith. At times, the seeds will rapidly produce fruit, and at other times, the seed will lay in the ground for a long time before any fruit is visible.

---

<sup>2</sup> Normally the phrase “already but not yet” is used in relation to eschatology. I intend the phrase to be used in this way, but I also include within the “not yet” the journey toward spiritual maturity.

A rapid-fruit focus can easily miss the relational aspect of maturity because of the emphasis on doing (which is much easier to initiate and quantify) as opposed to being. The slow and often painful process toward spiritual maturity and emotional virtue involves a relationship with the person of Jesus (see John 15:1-5) and is focused on being and doing (openness and commitment). Jesus leads the disciple on the journey toward maturity. The relationship is strengthened as the Christian begins to embody his or her new reality in Christ and forfeits the old life of the world (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).

Thus, the journey to develop emotional virtues will involve the fundamental reordering of the concerns of the heart. This sort of rearrangement is not done instantly nor is it done using only one method.<sup>3</sup>

If pastors are committed to the development of emotional virtues, then they will need the Bible, an active prayer life, a theologically-drenched imagination, and time—a lot of time. Ecclesiastes 7:8 reads, “Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.” The preacher must realize that the seeds of virtue can be planted in a sermon, but it will take time and Spirit-led experiences to bring that seed to full growth. So, in this dissertation, when I refer to the development of emotional virtues, know that it is the *commitment of a ministry*, not a Sunday. As a pastor stands in the pulpit Sunday after Sunday and preaches the Word of

---

<sup>3</sup> The development of emotional virtues should be understood as a partnership between the Holy Spirit, the congregation, and the preacher. All three have important roles to play with the preacher having an important, but secondary, role. Certainly the Holy Spirit is capable to develop emotional virtues without a preacher. However, it is often through the preaching of the Word that the heart of the hearer is drawn to Christ. The hearer will need to be open to growth and allow the Word and the Holy Spirit access to areas of his or her inner self that need to be cultivated and transformed. Though, many Western Christians lack an emotional vocabulary to describe their inner world and thus awareness of the emotions is often the first step in transformation of the inner life and development of the emotional virtues. Introducing the congregation to an inner life language is important for the formation emotional virtues. Of course, introducing this language will take time and discipline. A good resource for introducing a congregation to an emotional vocabulary is Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014).

God with both a commitment to the development of emotional virtues and the tools to accomplish the task, the congregation grows—slowly.

How does a long-term pastoral commitment to spiritual maturity contribute to the development of emotional virtue? By keeping the focus on the end goal, the sermon will take on the shape of the text and will not be constantly looking at the most immediate issues and ideas that arise within the life of a congregation. Preaching that is not focused on spiritual maturity will fall into three common errors that tend to be more concerned with the immediate than with spiritual formation.

First, preaching that is concerned with long-term spiritual maturity will need to take into account the role of the emotions in the life of the believer. A common error made by some preachers is to focus too heavily on the cognitive “facts” of the text. This kind of sermon will focus on orthodoxy but will not think about how the information is processed or the result of this information on the life of the believer. The preacher is not primarily concerned with the development of the congregation, but instead, his concern is with teaching the content and delivering the facts with precision. York refers to these kinds of sermons as “factoid” sermons.<sup>4</sup> This kind of preaching fails to develop emotional virtue because it fails to integrate the concern of the text with the subjective concern within the congregation. By only communicating facts and propositions, the subjective and relational part of the hearer is ignored. Thus, hearers may grow in knowledge but not in love, joy, or peace. A long-term focus on spiritual maturity keeps the whole self of the congregation in mind when crafting a sermon.

Second, a long-term pastoral focus on spiritual maturity means that the preacher can stay focused on the end goal despite the many important but often secondary issues that arise in the life of a congregation. The preacher may focus only on immediate needs

---

<sup>4</sup> Bert Decker and Hershael W. York, *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: B & H, 2003), 12.

and problems within the congregation without an eye toward long-term development. The congregation may be grateful for his commitment to tackling immediate needs, but in the long run will not grow beyond their current maturity level, at least as a result of the preaching. This sort of preaching fails at developing emotional virtues because, though only surface-level concerns are being addressed. Subjective integration of concerns is ignored and in its place are the various needs of the present.

Third, a preacher who has a long-term pastoral commitment to spiritual maturity will recognize that to grow to maturity, a believer will need the whole counsel of God's word, not just certain texts or doctrines. A preacher who always returns to favorite texts and theologies that he knows draw out emotional responses from the congregation will substitute subjective integration for emotional appeal. The preacher may only have one "stump speech." This sermon seems to find its way into every text and the result is often an emotional response from the congregation. The preacher hits on the "concern-button" with a word or phrase, which leads to a response from the congregation.<sup>5</sup> Paul warns Timothy of this kind of preaching and accuses the congregation of choosing preachers that only address their own selfish desires (2 Tim 4:3). The congregation hears terms and ideas that they agree with, so they are moved emotionally. These ideas may be biblical with no hint of error but when the steady diet in the sermon is only reinforcing those concerns that are already held, then the subjective integration of new biblical concerns cannot take place.

These three kinds of preacher fail to serve the needs of the congregation. Instead, the preacher who adopts a long-term commitment will assume the metaphorical role of shepherd.

---

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of what entails appropriate persuasion over emotional manipulation, see Adam Brent Dooley, "Utilizing Biblical Persuasion Techniques in Preaching without Being Manipulative" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006).

The pastor-shepherd will not be too nearsighted or too focused on only communicating facts. The pastor-shepherd's role is to point out obstacles in the present, but also to prepare the congregation for where they are going next. The next step may be developing more openness to a particular area of life or focusing on growing in commitment to particular commands in Scripture—the pericope will determine the focus. The pastor-shepherd keeps one eye on the trail immediately in front of the congregation and one eye on what is to come—the Lord is seeking to mature the congregation. The preacher must address pressing needs and, at times, emphasize favorite and theologically important texts. Part of the joy of being on a long journey is coming across something familiar that can bring comfort and a sense of normalcy to the trip. At the same time, however, the preacher must recognize that the sermon has both an immediate function and a long-term function. The former points out trouble and joy on the path while the latter prepares for what is to come.

The pastor-shepherd will seek to cultivate the PCC over the lifetime of a congregation. To grow the PCC the emotional concerns are to be curated, fed, and many times need to be uprooted. Faulty concerns can be described as idols of the heart when a disciple has given a lower concern a seat of prominence in his or her heart. The preacher can help to point out idols and over time help the congregation to remove them and replace them.

As the disciple of Jesus lets go of worldly concerns and takes up the concerns of Christ, he or she will begin to mature into Christlikeness. Drawing from this pastoral desire, Paul commands the church in Philippi to “have this  $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon$  among yourselves” (Phil 2:5). Often  $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon$  is translated as “mind,” implying that disciples are called to rational conformity to the thoughts of Christ. However,  $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon$  can also carry the connotation of “concern.” In fact, the translators of the ESV translate  $\acute{\epsilon}\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon$  as “concern” in Philippians 4:10 twice. The context seems to allow  $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon$  to be translated as either “mind” or “concern.” The context may suggest that Paul is calling his readers

beyond cognitive assent to Jesus' thoughts, but to a concern for things with which Jesus is concerned. Paul is describing Jesus' willingness to lay down his own rights, humble himself, and give glory to the Father; a desire that colors Jesus' construal of all reality. In a loose translation, Paul is commanding the Philippians to "care for the same things that Christ cares about." Jesus' concern is made evident in verse 11; Jesus humbled himself to glory of God the Father. Paul is not telling his readers the propositions and information that filled Jesus' mind, but instead, he is helping his readers to understand what concerns were informing Jesus's emotions and actions.

This sort of concern refocusing should be a goal of the sermon. A focus on long-term spiritual maturity will cultivate concerns that lead to emotional virtues because the pastor-shepherd, with the help of the Holy Spirit, is looking at the desires of the heart and not only changing beliefs or behavior.

### **Three Practical Pastoral Mindsets**

The three examples above highlight three ways that a failure to focus on the spiritual maturity of the congregation will not result in subjective integration of the biblical concern. This next section observes four examples that might come up within a regular preaching ministry that help the congregation to have a long-term focus on their own spiritual development and to ignore the desire for short-term fixes.<sup>6</sup>

First, the preacher will encourage the congregation to wait on the Lord during times of strain and difficulty. If CEV will ever be developed the pastor must constantly remind the congregation of the importance of waiting on the Lord. An attitude of waiting on the Lord is both biblical and highly conducive to developing emotional virtues because waiting forces a person to wrestle with inner turmoil and in the process identify lesser concerns to replace them with more biblical ones (more on this in chap. 6).

---

<sup>6</sup> These examples are meant to only touch on the themes they represent. Each theme could be expanded into its own book, so I simply wish to draw attention at this point.



The Bible repeatedly encourages patience before God in the face of adversity. The psalmist writes in Psalm 33:20: “Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.” The psalmist is reminding himself and others of God’s steadfast love and care. God’s love invites the disciple to wait on the Lord. David writes in Psalm 27:14, “Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” The promise of God is that when his people wait on him they will receive his blessing: “Wait for the Lord and keep his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land; you will look on when the wicked are cut off” (Ps 37:34).

Prayerfully waiting on the Lord is the default position of the Scriptures for those who are suffering. James writes, “Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (Jas 5:7-8). James then points to the prophets of old and Job as examples of those who suffered with patience.

While the current American culture emphasizes a pressure to not wait, a congregation who can wait on the Lord is well prepared to face the struggle of maturity. If everything in the Christian life is instant and easy, then the disciple will not grow toward maturity. Therefore, the preacher can encourage the congregation to expect God’s grace but to wait for it with patience. Often, patience is needed while going through seasons of suffering.

The pastor-shepherd can keep the *already* and *not-yet* in front of the congregation by encouraging them to wait in the now for the blessing of the not-yet. The Lord will be faithful to his promises; all the people of God need to do is wait in faith. Instead of preaching a gospel of instant change and instant relief of suffering, the pastor-shepherd will preach patience with the Lord and trust in his timing. Patience is not the same as giving up or not caring. Instead, active patience prays and seeks answers while realizing that God is ultimately in charge and his timing is perfect.

Second, the pastor can invite the congregation into the fellowship of Christ's suffering. The preacher who desires to see spiritual maturity develop in the congregation must preach Christ and him alone. Any kind of preaching that ignores the primacy of Christ in all areas of life will descend into attempts to solve the mystery of life apart from the wisdom that God has revealed (1 Cor 1:30). The preacher's task is to help the congregation to see all of life as answered in Christ and to flesh out how he is the answer in each and every situation, even their own suffering.

Suffering can be construed as a part of something far greater. Suffering is one vital tool used of God to produce greater maturity in Christ. Suffering dethrones self from the place of sovereignty and the subject is left to either depend on the Lord or find another means of coping. In seasons of total dependence, the Christian will grow toward maturity because distractions that used to keep them from growing are quieted. All that matters is survival. The preacher can help the congregation to see suffering as an opportunity, painful as it is, for greater fellowship with Christ and conformity to his image. The Bible has much to say about suffering, most of which is ignored by Western Christians because suffering seems so antithetical to the model of the "good life" adopted by most in the West. The Beatitudes, recorded in Matthew 5, paint a starkly different picture of the "good life" and reveal the value of trial and difficulty to the kingdom-minded disciple. In the kingdom of God, those who are least are made first (Matt 20:16). Those who suffer are comforted, but those who—in their own pride—refuse to be comforted will not experience Christ's care.

Suffering teaches obedience and helps to prepare the disciple for what is to come. A short-term focus will ignore this truth and often seek easier paths for maturity. While many lessons can be learned without suffering, some can only be learned as one walks through it. It was the case for Jesus and it is the case for his disciples.

One of the most important pastoral verses in regard the purpose of suffering is Hebrews 5:8, which reads, "Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what

he suffered.” Jesus matured through his suffering. He grew up. If all that was needed for maturity was knowledge, then Jesus had that. What he did not have was the experience of suffering in human flesh; he suffered, grew, was obedient to the Father, and matured. In the same way, the church suffers and—when she waits on the Lord—she matures.

Finally, focus on process instead of arrival. Preachers who expect too much immediate conformity will often place a demand on the congregation that will not lead to long-term growth. Mulholland states,

Spiritual formation is not an instantaneous experience, although there may well be instantaneous experiences at certain points along the journey. Spiritual formation is a lifelong process of growth into the image of Christ. This gradual aspect of spiritual formation moves against the grain of our instant gratification culture.<sup>7</sup>

The wise preacher will realize that growth is a lifelong process and give permission to the congregation to be in that process. At times, members of the congregation will be in rebellion against God and will need the preacher to be direct and firm. Other times, members of the congregation will be living from their weakness and need encouragement to stay in the process. Both tactics are pastoral and both are biblical. Furthermore, there are times when immediate obedience is the only biblical response. If a husband is beating his wife, repentance (which includes immediately ceasing from his violence) is the only response.

However, the reality is that much of spiritual growth takes place over time. As such, the preacher who expects immediate conformity will only frustrate himself and his congregation. Instead, the preacher can show the biblical model, encourage growth, and also elevate grace for those who are genuinely struggling on the journey by helping them to see spiritual maturity as a process. Maturity takes time and—from a human perspective—a good deal of effort. The pastor-shepherd will focus on process/journey over moralistic perfection.

---

<sup>7</sup> Mulholland, *Shaped by the Word*, 25.

## Summary

Expository preaching is a commitment to communicate the authorial intent of Scripture and apply the text faithfully to a modern congregation. Both explanation and application aid in the production of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the congregation; however, an examination of Scripture reveals that emotional virtues (orthopathy) are vital for the maturation of followers of Jesus. I began with the assumption that expository preaching is a preferred method of helping the congregation mature in Christ, which required that I accept that explanation and application were central to the sermon. The question this dissertation sought to answer was, “Are explanation and application alone enough to develop emotional virtues in the congregation?” Or, to put the question another way, “What could be added to expository preaching that could greater facilitate the development of emotional virtues in the congregation?” Or, at least a secondary but balancing component to help produce greater orthopathy in the congregation?

In chapter 2, Roberts’ definition of emotion as a concern-based construal was discussed along with an explanation of the terms *concerns* and *construals*. Roberts’ argued that construals are a way of seeing the world, while concerns are serious desires and aversions. Concerns are motivators that energize a construal, which in turn results in an emotion. For example, anger at an object is the result of the subjects construing that something of concern has been treated unjustly. In addition, both concerns and construals are subjective in that both must be subjectively internalized before they will issue in an emotion. For an emotion to be experienced, both a construal and a concern will be subjectively adopted by the individual. Thus, a person will not feel genuine anger unless he internalizes the truth that something unjust has happened. If he does not believe that something unjust has happened, then he will not become angry.

Having argued for this particular definition of emotion, Roberts’ reflections on Christian emotional virtues were discussed. Paul lists virtues of the Christian life in Galatians 5. Some of those virtues are emotional in nature (i.e., joy and peace). According to Roberts, Christian emotional virtues are construed within the Christian

narrative and doctrine. As an example, joy is not Christian joy unless it issues from both biblical construals and concerns. A Christian will have Christian concerns, to a greater or lesser degree, that serve as the motivating desire of any Christian emotional virtue. A Christian will have a plethora of emotion events but only emotions that issue from both biblical construals and biblical concerns should be considered genuine Christian emotional virtues. Roberts argues that the Christian primary concern (PCC) is for God and his kingdom. As Christians grow in their desire for God and desire for God's kingdom *and* as they construe the world more biblically, they will mature toward greater Christian emotional virtue.

Thus, to develop Christian emotional virtues, both biblical construals and biblical concern (desire for God and his kingdom) must be progressively internalized and made to be subjective. This subjective internalization takes place in various ways but central to the development of these virtues is internalizing the Christian narrative and doctrine.

Chapters three and four presented various direct and indirect methods for helping the congregation to internalize the objective truth of Scripture so that the truth becomes a subjective reality. The direct methods included focusing on the wisdom of the text and not only attending to propositions, promoting mental dexterity in order to see the world in a non-binary manner and apply the PCC to the congregation in addition to more practical applications. The primary way that the PCC is applied is by helping the congregation to understand and participate in their union with Christ. The indirect methods focused on providing the congregation with permission to explore their inner world of emotions so that sinful desires can be dealt with, and areas of suffering can be healed. The congregation was also encouraged to empathize with the characters of the biblical narratives so that as they mirror the characters emotional life, they will begin to adopt their concerns and construals as well.

As the truth of Scripture becomes more internalized, the concerns of the subject begin to reflect more the biblical concerns. The idols of the heart are pushed more to the peripheral and Christ is given greater access. The preacher who can use both direct and indirect methods will be better equipped to help the congregation subjectively integrate the text — preaching that only focuses on content transfer or behavior modification will not facilitate internalization.

However, internalization is a process and not an event. Thus, the preacher ought to recognize that maturity will take considerable time, even for the most consistent and persistent saint, and that much more for the more stubborn among us. The preacher will help the congregation by recognizing the power of preaching the whole canon. In addition, the preacher can highlight the value of waiting on the Lord and suffering with Christ through life. This sort of long-term focus will help the congregation to keep their eyes on Christ even amid painful situations. When the preacher applies the text, he will want to look at both the immediate application of the text and also the formative or long-range application.

The preacher who wants to facilitate the subjective integration of biblical concerns while also maintaining a firm connection to the objective biblical text will need to adopt two commitments that ground the theology of the sermon in the theology of the pericope and within the unifying theological principle of union with Christ. Kuruvilla's work on a hermeneutic of pericopal theology was employed for the purpose of connecting the intent of the biblical author to the sermon. In addition, by focusing on the literary and rhetorical cues within the text, the narrative aspects of the text are permitted greater focus in the sermon. This work expanded upon Kuruvilla's concept of the divine demand. While the premise of the divine demand is sound, based on Roberts' rendering of the PCC, this work contended that in addition to the practices, precepts, and priorities the preacher should also observe the "passions" inherent within the text. Furthermore,

the *passions* energize the other demands of the text because they serve as the “why” for the demand of the text.

The subversive sermon aids in the integration of subject concern by using techniques that indirectly affect change in the heart in the hearer. The preacher provides permission for the congregation to deal with their inner world. However, it also means that the preacher will use any valid means to help the congregation to mature toward orthopraxy. Many times, this will mean engaging the emotions that are already present.

### **A Plea for Balance in the Pulpit**

Fear will often keep pastors from integrating the subjective with the objective. My own theological tradition is conservative Evangelical. The tendency among conservatives is to fear and avoid anything that looks subjective or liberal. To take up another metaphor, it is as if conservative Evangelical preachers are at times driving on the highway but have veered off into the ditch to the right. However, instead of correcting the trajectory of the car, they continue to drive in the ditch out of fear of swerving too far (at all?) to the left. Instead of engaging in the appropriate correction (in this case the interjection of subjective concerns into the sermon) many remain in the ditch. They are still moving in the right direction, but the path is not as smooth or productive.

Finding balance between the objective truth of Scripture and the subjective experience of the hearers in the pulpit is difficult for two reasons. First, preachers who love the Bible do not want to water down the message at all, and for good reason. Scripture is God’s word to his people. Anything that dilutes the message will only hurt the congregation. Second, subjective experiences and concerns are difficult to quantify and discuss. By nature, they are not uniform and predictable. The introduction of elements into a sermon that are designed to make hearers reflect on their state does place attention on the hearer instead of on Scripture for a moment. This seems counter-intuitive to preachers who value the Word of God. However, without subjective integration, the hearer is left with propositions that have little bearing on their concerns. Those in the

congregation who are more self-aware may naturally seek to internalize the message on their own. Though, for many, the preacher will have to model this behavior and repeatedly use tools to facilitate this process.

Preachers who desire to craft expository sermons that develop and integrate subjective biblical concerns will walk a tightrope with two chasms on either side. On the one side is the chasm of objective truth that is void of subjective reality. On the other side is the chasm of subject experience that is not grounded in the objective truth of Scripture. A sermon that tends to favor narrative and subjective elements will be vulnerable to fall from the wire to the left into the subjective chasm. The sermon too focused on theological propositions and rigid application without subjective internalization may fall into the chasm on the right. To maintain balance when so much is at stake, the preacher will need a balance pole to lower his center of gravity (hear humility) because each person has a tendency to lean one way or the other. The balance pole, in this case, is a commitment to Scripture and a commitment to people. In addition, Roberts' definition of emotion as concern-based construal represents the two hand-holds on the pole. The right hand holds to the construals. The left hand holds to the concerns. When they are held at the same time, the preacher can find balance, however, if at any time he chooses to only hold to one or the other he is surely soon to topple to one side or the other. Walking a tightrope is a choice and is certainly not for the faint in heart. Choosing to integrate messy subjective concerns into the objective theological world can seem chaotic. However, faithfully reclaiming the subjective experience of the congregation as a place that God wishes to express his love is a gift that every pastor ought to want to gift to his congregation.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abasciano, Brian J. "Does Regeneration Precede Faith? The Use of 1 John 5:1 as a Proof Text." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 84, no. 5 (October 2012): 307-22.
- Allison, Gregg R., and Evangelical Theological Society. *Speech Act Theory and Its Implications for the Doctrine of the Inerrancy/Infallibility of Scripture*. Portland, OR: TREN, 1994.
- Alma, Hans A. "Self-Development as a Spiritual Process: The Role of Empathy and Imagination in Finding Spiritual Orientation." *Pastoral Psychology* 57, nos. 1-2 (September 2008): 59-63.
- Anderson, Kenton C. *Choosing to Preach: A Comprehensive Introduction to Sermon Options and Structures*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.
- Andrews, Benjamin, P. J. Watson, Zhuo Job Chen, and Ronald J. Morris. "Postmodernism, Positive Psychology and Post-Traumatic Growth within a Christian Ideological Surround." *Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 5 (September 2017): 489-500.
- Antonaccio, Maria. "Picturing the Soul: Moral Psychology and the Recovery of the Emotions." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 4, no. 2 (2001): 127-41.
- Araújo, Lia, Oscar Ribeiro, and Constança Paúl. "Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being in Old Age through Positive Psychology Studies: A Scoping Review." *Bienestar Hedónico y Eudaimónico en la Vejez a Través de Estudios Psicológicos Positivos: Una Revisión de Alcance* 33, no. 3 (October 2017): 568-77.
- Aristotle. *The Rhetoric and the Poetics of Aristotle*. N.p: Createspace, 2011.
- Arthurs, Jeffrey, and Andrew Gurevich. "Theological and Rhetorical Perspectives on Self-Disclosure in Preaching." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 157, no. 626 (2000): 215-26.
- Augustine, Saint. *On Christian Doctrine*. Translated by J. F. Shaw. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Teaching Christianity*. 2nd rev. ed. Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1996.
- Austin, J. L. *How to Do Things with Words*. Edited by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Austin, Michael W. "The Doctrine of Theosis: A Transformational Union with Christ." *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8, no. 2 (2015): 172-86.
- Bahlul, Raja. "Emotion as Patheception." *Philosophical Explorations* 18, no. 1 (March 2015): 104-22.

- Bailey, Raymond, ed. *Hermeneutics for Preaching: Approaches to Contemporary Interpretations of Scripture*. Nashville: Baptist Sunday School Board, 1993.
- Bal, Mieke. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.
- Ballmer, T., and W. Brennstuhl. *Speech Act Classification: A Study in the Lexical Analysis of English Speech Activity Verbs*. New York: Springer Science & Business Media, 1981.
- Barker, Kit. "Speech Act Theory, Dual Authorship, and Canonical Hermeneutics: Making Sense of Sensus Plenior." *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 3, no. 2 (September 2009): 227-39.
- Barton, Stephen C. "Eschatology and the Emotions in Early Christianity." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 3 (September 2011): 571-91.
- Batterson, Mark. "Preaching with Half a Brain: Does Your Sermon Prep Employ Both the Left and Right Sides of Your Skull?" *Leadership Journal*. Accessed October 4, 2013. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2007/winter/preachingbrain.html>.
- Baty, Dan S. "Heart to Heart Preaching: How to Tap Authentic Emotions, Both Yours and the Listeners." *Leadership* 14, no. 2 (March 1993): 61-63.
- Bauckham, Richard. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Beck, Deborah. "Narratology and Linguistics: An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Homeric Speech Representation." *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 138, no. 2 (2008): 351-78.
- Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The American Puritan Imagination; Essays in Revaluation*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1974.
- Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology*. Lexington, KY: CreateSpace, 2014.
- Bloomquist, L. Gregory. "Subverted by Joy: Suffering and Joy in Paul's Letter to the Philippians." *Interpretation* 61, no. 3 (July 2007): 270-82.
- Boa, Kenneth. *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Borgman, Brian S. *Feelings and Faith: Cultivating Godly Emotions in the Christian Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009.
- Bradstreet, Anne, Charles E Hambrick-Stowe, and Edward Taylor. *Early New England Meditative Poetry*. New York: Paulist Press, 1988.
- Breuninger, Christian. "Søren Kierkegaard's Reformation of Expository Preaching." *The Covenant Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (August 1993): 21-36.
- Broadus, John A. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. Louisville: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1944.
- Bruce, F. F. *Paul: The Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids: Paternoster, 1977.

- Brumm, Ursula. "Faith and Imagery in Puritan Meditation Literature." In *Religion and Philosophy in the United States of America*, 1:61-75. Essen, Germany: Verlag Die Blaue Eule, 1987.
- Brunsdon, Alfred R. "A Three Musketeering Approach to Pastoral Care: Reflections on Collaboration between Pastoral Care, Narrative Therapy and Positive Psychology." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35, no. 1 (January 2014): 1-9.
- Burnett, D. Graham. "'Joy in Repetition': Poetry, Prayer, and the Purpose of Rhythm." *American Poetry Review* 37, no. 4 (August 7, 2008): 11-13.
- Callahan, Sidney Cornelia. *In Good Conscience: Reason and Emotion in Moral Decision Making*. New York: Harper, 1991.
- Carr, David. "Torah on the Heart: Literary Jewish Textuality within Its Ancient Near Eastern Context." *Oral Tradition* 25, no. 1 (2010): 17-40.
- Carrick, John. *The Imperative of Preaching: A Theology of Sacred Rhetoric*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2002.
- Carter, Terry G., J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays. *Preaching God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Preparing, Developing, and Delivering the Sermon*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Cassirer, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951.
- Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids Baker, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Effective Use and Development of 'Life-Situation' Illustrations in Contemporary Preaching: Analysis and Application of Interpersonal Hermeneutics for a Rhetorical Model of Homiletical Communication." Ph.D. diss., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Charry, Ellen T. *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Charry, Ellen T., and Eric L. Johnson. "Interview with Ellen T. Charry: Towards a Christian Positive Psychology." *Edification* 5, no. 1 (November 2011): 61-68.
- Charry, Ellen T., and Russell D. Kosits. "Christian Theology and Positive Psychology: An Exchange of Gifts." *Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 5 (September 2017): 468-79.
- Clark, David K. *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*. Edited by John S. Feinberg. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.
- Clark, Robert Edward David. "Christianity and the Flight from Love." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1937): 339-46.
- Clore, Gerald L. "Psychology and the Rationality of Emotion." *Modern Theology* 27, no. 2 (April 2011): 325-38.

- Cochran, Elizabeth Agnew. "The Moral Significance of Religious Affections: A Reformed Perspective on Emotions and Moral Formation." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 28, no. 2 (May 2015): 150-62.
- Cohon, Rachel. "Is Hume a Noncognitivist in the Motivation Argument?" *Philosophical Studies* 85, no. 2/3 (1997): 251-66.
- Conoley, Collie W., Marla E. Pontrelli, Mercedes Fernández Oromendia, Beatriz Del Carmen Bello, and Chelsea M. Nagata. "Positive Empathy: A Therapeutic Skill Inspired by Positive Psychology." *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 71, no. 6 (June 2015): 575-83.
- Coplan, Amy. "Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 62, no. 2 (2004): 141-52.
- Coplan, Amy, and Peter Goldie, eds. *Empathy: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives*. Reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Cox, Richard H. *Rewiring Your Preaching: How the Brain Processes Sermons*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012.
- Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. 2nd ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 2010.
- Crenshaw, Gerald Scot. "An Examination of the Relationship between Biblical Authority and Self-Disclosure in Preaching." Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997.
- Crossley, Michele L. "Formulating Narrative Psychology: The Limitations of Contemporary Social Constructionism." *Narrative Inquiry* 13, no. 2 (July 2003): 287-300.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Narrative Psychology, Trauma and the Study of Self/Identity." *Theory & Psychology* 10, no. 4 (August 2000): 527-46.
- De La Fabián, Rodrigo, and Antonio Stecher. "Positive Psychology's Promise of Happiness: A New Form of Human Capital in Contemporary Neoliberal Governmentality." *Theory & Psychology* 27, no. 5 (October 2017): 600-621.
- De Souza, Marian. "The Empathetic Mind: The Essence of Human Spirituality." *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 19, no. 1 (February 2014): 45-54.
- De Temmerman, Koen. "Ancient Rhetoric as a Hermeneutical Tool for the Analysis of Characterization in Narrative Literature." *Rhetorica* 28, no. 1 (2010): 23-51.
- Decker, Bert, and Hershael W. York. *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition*. Nashville: B & H, 2003.
- DeMaria, Robert. "The Ideal Reader: A Critical Fiction." *PMLA* 93, no. 3 (1978): 463-74.
- Dirkx, John M. "The Power of Feelings: Emotion, Imagination, and the Construction of Meaning in Adult Learning." *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education* 2001, no. 89 (Spring 2001): 63-72.
- Dominiak, Paul. "The Logic of Desire." *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 16, no. 1 (April 2014): 37-51.

- Dooley, Adam Brent. "Utilizing Biblical Persuasion Techniques in Preaching without Being Manipulative." Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006.
- Driver, Julia. "Moral Sense and Sentimentalism." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*. Edited by Roger Crisp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Dwan, David. "Edmund Burke and the Emotions." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 72, no. 4 (October 2011): 571-94.
- Edwards, Aaron. "Preacher as Balanced Extremist: Biblical Dialectics and Sermonic Certainty." *The Expository Times* 126, no. 9 (June 2015): 425-35.
- Edwards, Jonathan. *Jonathan Edwards on Revival*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Religious Affections*. Reprint, Mineola, NY: Dover, 2013.
- Elliott, Matthew A. "The Emotional Core of Love: The Centrality of Emotion in Christian Psychology and Ethics." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 31, no. 2 (2012): 105-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Emotions." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.
- Emmons, Robert A. "Why a Positive Psychology of Gratitude Needs Original Sin." *Christian Psychology* 8, no. 1 (January 2014): 16-20.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.
- Erickson, Millard J., and James L. Heflin. *Old Wine in New Wineskins: Doctrinal Preaching in a Changing World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.
- Eslinger, Richard L. "Story and Image in Sermon Illustration." *Journal for Preachers* 9, no. 2 (1986): 19-23.
- Essex, Keith. "Sanctification: The Biblically Identifiable Fruit." *The Master's Seminary Journal* 21, no. 2 (September 2010): 193-213.
- Fedler, Kyle. "Calvin's Burning Heart: Calvin and the Stoics on the Emotions." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 22 (September 2002): 133-62.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas K Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Ferguson, Robert U. "Motivation or Manipulation in the Pulpit." *Preaching* 6, no. 6 (May 1991): 10-12.
- Fesko, J. V. "Sanctification and Union with Christ: A Reformed Perspective." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 34, no. 3 (July 2010): 197-214.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Vos and Berkhof on Union with Christ and Justification." *Calvin Theological Journal* 47, no. 1 (April 2012): 50-71.
- Forde, Gerhard O., Sinclair B. Ferguson, Laurence W. Wood, Russell P. Spittler, and E. Glenn Hinson. *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*. Edited by Donald Alexander. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1989.
- Forestell, J Terence. "Christian Perfection and Gnosis in Philippians 3:7-16." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (April 1956): 123-36.
- Foyle, Anastasia. "Living like Common People: Emotion, Will, and Divine Passibility." *Religious Studies* 45, no. 4 (December 2009): 373-93.
- Frame, John M., and J. I. Packer. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2013.
- Freeman, Mark. "Paradoxes of the Constructed: Narrative Psychology and Beyond." *Studies in Meaning* 5 (January 2015): 119-51.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Psychoanalysis, Narrative Psychology, and the Meaning of 'Science.'" *Psychoanalytic Inquiry* 27, no. 5 (December 2007): 583-601.
- Frey, Stephanie K. "Learning the Human Heart: Reading for Preaching." *Word & World* 13, no. 2 (March 1993): 123-29.
- Friedrich, Daniel. "The Alluringness of Desire." *Philosophical Explorations* 15, no. 3 (September 2012): 291-302.
- Galli, Mark. "Enough of Me Already! It's Time to Find Other Ways to Illustrate Sermons than Me, Me, and Mine." *Leadership* 31, no. 1 (December 2010): 88-89.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching That Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Gamsu, Marcia. "Passion and Detachment." *Existential Analysis* 21, no. 1 (January 2010): 63-75.
- Geuss, Raymond. "Virtue and the Good Life." *Arion* 8, no. 1 (2000): 1-24.
- Ghosh, Anindita, and Amrita Deb. "Positive Psychology Interventions for Chronic Physical Illnesses: A Systematic Review." *Psychological Studies* 62, no. 3 (September 2017): 213-32.
- Gill, Christopher. "Cynicism and Stoicism." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*. Edited by Roger Crisp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Gilman, James E. *Fidelity of Heart: An Ethic of Christian Virtue*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reenfranchising the Heart: Narrative Emotions and Contemporary Theology." *The Journal of Religion* 74, no. 2 (1994): 218-39.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Gorman, Heather. "Persuading through Pathos: Appeals to the Emotions in Hebrews." *Restoration Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2012): 77-90.
- Graves, Mike. "Preaching to Head and Heart." *Review & Expositor* 99, no. 4 (September 2002): 643-44.
- Greidanus, Sidney. "Detecting Plot Lines: The Key to Preaching the Genesis Narratives." *Calvin Theological Journal* 43, no. 1 (April 2008): 64-77.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989.
- Griffin, Emory A. *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1976.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Hackney, Charles H. "Imperfectible: Why Positive Psychology Needs Original Sin." *Christian Psychology* 8, no. 1 (January 2014): 5-14.
- Harvey, Robert W., and David G. Benner. *Choosing the Gift of Forgiveness: How to Overcome Hurts and Brokenness*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology*. Edited by Stanley M. Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997.
- Heacock, Clint. "Rhetorical Influences upon the Preaching of Jonathan Edwards." *Homiletic* 36, no. 2 (January 2011). Accessed October 31, 2018. <http://ejournals.library.vanderbilt.edu/index.php/homiletic/article/view/3460/0>
- Heisler, Greg. *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery*. Nashville: B & H, 2007.
- Herman, David. "Storytelling and the Sciences of Mind: Cognitive Narratology, Discursive Psychology, and Narratives in Face-to-Face Interaction." *Narrative* 15, no. 3 (2007): 306-34.
- Hess, Mary E. "Mirror Neurons, the Development of Empathy, and Digital Storytelling." *Religious Education* 107, no. 4 (July 2012): 401-14.
- Hill, Peter C., and Steven J. Sandage. "The Promising but Challenging Case of Humility as a Positive Psychology Virtue." *Journal of Moral Education* 45, no. 2 (June 2016): 132-46.
- Hirsch, E. D. *The Aims of Interpretation*. New ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Coming with Terms to Meaning." *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 3 (1986): 627-30.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Meaning and Significance Reinterpreted." *Critical Inquiry* 11, no. 2 (1984): 202-25.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Transhistorical Intentions and the Persistence of Allegory." *New Literary History* 25, no. 3 (1994): 549-67.
- Hollinger, Dennis P. "Preaching to Both Brains." *Preaching* 11, no. 1 (July 1995): 35-38.
- Hundley, Stephen C. W. "The Pastor Confesses: Self-Disclosure as a Tool in Contemporary Preaching." D.Min. diss., Wesley Theological Seminary, 1985.
- Jacobsen, William Harold. "Preaching as Mimesis: The Importance of Paul Ricoeur's Theory of Mimesis for Preaching." Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1995.
- Johnson, Eric L. *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *God and Soul Care: The Therapeutic Resources of the Christian Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2017.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "One Edge of a Two-Edged Sword: The Subversive Function of Scripture." *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 9, no. 1 (2016): 54-76.
- Johnson, Gregory. "LeDoux's Fear Circuit and the Status of Emotion as a Non-Cognitive Process." *Philosophical Psychology* 21, no. 6 (December 2008): 739-57.
- Johnson, Nan. "Reader-Response and the Pathos Principle." *Rhetoric Review* 6, no. 2 (1988): 152-66.
- Joseph, R. "The Right Cerebral Hemisphere: Emotion, Music, Visual-Spatial Skills, Body-Image, Dreams, and Awareness." *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 44, no. 5 (September 1988): 630-73.
- Joseph, Stephen, P. Alex Linley, and John Maltby. "Positive Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality." *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 9, no. 3 (June 2006): 209-12.
- Kaiser, Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- Kazen, Thomas. "Evolution, Emotion and Exegesis: Disgust and Empathy in Biblical Texts on Moral and Ritual Issues." In *Linnaeus and Homo Religiosus: Biological Roots of Religious Awareness and Human Identity*, edited by Carl R. Brakenhielm 191-18. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, 2009.
- Keel, Tim. "Naked in the Pulpit: How My Preaching Became an Act of Intimacy." *Leadership* 26, no. 1 (December 2005): 78-81.
- Keen, Suzanne. "A Theory of Narrative Empathy." *Narrative* 14, no. 3 (2006): 207-36.
- Kierkegaard, Soren, Howard V. Hong, and Edna H. Hong. *Practice in Christianity: Kierkegaard's Writings*. Vol. 20. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.



- Kim, Dae Hyeok. "Genre-Sensitive Expository Preaching of the Lament Psalms: Honoring the Message, Medium, and Mood of the Text." Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013.
- Kim, Hoin. "Explaining, Illustrating, Arguing and Applying: Preaching in Terms of Appealing to the Whole Person." Th.M. thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002.
- Kim-van Daalen, Lydia Cornelia Willemina. "Emotions in Christian Psychological Care." Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013.
- Klein, William W., Craig Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, and Eckleberger, Kermit Allen. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003.
- Köber, Christin, and Tilmann Habermas. "How Stable Is the Personal Past? Stability of Most Important Autobiographical Memories and Life Narratives Across Eight Years in a Life Span Sample." *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 113, no. 4 (October 2017): 608-26.
- Kolbet, Paul R. "Augustine, Kierkegaard, and the Seduction of the Word: Rediscovering an Unfamiliar Theological Style." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 31, no. 1 (2015): 57-65.
- Kuhn, Karl Allen. *The Heart of Biblical Narrative: Rediscovering Biblical Appeal to the Emotions*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.
- Kuruvilla, Abraham. "Application as Improvisation." *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 9, no. 2 (2009): 36-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How Do You Read?" A Hermeneutic for Preaching." In *Leitourgia: Christian Service, Collected Essays: A Festschrift for Joykitty M. George*, edited by Andrew B. Spurgeon, 51-70. Bangalore, India: Primalogue, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Pericopal Theology." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 173, no. 689 (January 2016): 3-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Privilege the Text! A Theological Hermeneutic for Preaching*. New ed. Chicago: Moody, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Text to Praxis: Hermeneutics and Homiletics in Dialogue*. New York: A & C Black, 2009.
- Lambertson, John Paul. "The Theory of Sermon Illustration as Revealed in Text Books and Other Pertinent Writings on Preaching, 1880-1955." Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1959.
- Larson, Craig Brian. "The Art of Positive and Negative Preaching: If You Want to Reach the Hearts of Listeners, Consider the Heart of the Sermon." *Leadership* 16, no. 1 (December 1995): 76-84.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Preaching Pyrotechnics: Why Some Illustrations Work Better than Others." *Leadership* 13, no. 2 (1992): 116-23.
- Lauritzen, Paul. "Emotions and Religious Ethics." *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 16, no. 2 (1988): 307-24.

- Ledoux, Joseph. *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.
- Lee, Richard C. K. "The Pascalian Heart and the Kierkegaardian Passion: On Faith and Subjectivity." *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (October 2009): 338-55.
- Lewis, Paul. "'The Springs of Motion': Jonathan Edwards on Emotions, Character, and Agency." *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 22, no. 2 (1994): 275-97.
- Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching & Preachers*. 12th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972.
- Lomas, Tim. "Positive Psychology—The Second Wave." *Psychologist* 29, no. 7 (July 2016): 536-39.
- Lorenzo-Luaces, Lorenzo, John R. Keefe, and Robert J. DeRubeis. "Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy: Nature and Relation to Non-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy." *Behavior Therapy* 47, no. 6 (November 2016): 785-803.
- Mackey, Jeffrey A. "The Emotion of Biblical Song: A Reflection on Lament & Praise." *The Living Pulpit* 11, no. 4 (October 2002): 48.
- Manes, Everett Earnest. "The Use of Illustration in Contemporary Preaching." M.A. diss., The University of Chicago, 1935.
- Marais, Nadia. "Happy? A Critical Analysis of Salvation in Ellen Charry That Portrays Human Flourishing as Healing, Beauty and Pleasure." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36, no. 1 (January 2015): 1-10.
- Marcum, James A. "The Role of Emotions in Clinical Reasoning and Decision Making." *Journal of Medicine & Philosophy* 38, no. 5 (October 2013): 501-19.
- Marks, Joel. "Emotion East and West: Introduction to a Comparative Philosophy." *Philosophy East and West* 41, no. 1 (1991): 1-30.
- Martin, Troy W. "The Voice of Emotion: Paul's Pathetic Persuasion (Gal 4:12-20)." In *Paul and Pathos*, 181-202. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.
- Mathewson, Steven D. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- McClure, John S. "Narrative and Preaching: Sorting It All Out." *Journal for Preachers* 15, no. 1 (1991): 24-29.
- McDill, Wayne. *The 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*. 2nd ed. Nashville: B & H, 2006.
- McDonnell, Kilian. "A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit." *Theological Studies* 46, no. 2 (June 1985): 191-227.
- McGrath, Alister E. "Loving God with Heart and Mind: The Theological Foundations of Spirituality." In *For All the Saints: Evangelical Theology and Christian Spirituality*, 11-26. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.

- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999.
- Mellas, Andrew. “‘The Passions of His Flesh’: St Cyril of Alexandria and the Emotions of the Logos.” *Phronema* 29, no. 1 (2014): 81-99.
- Metzger, Paul Louis. “Fleshed Out: The False Dilemma of Union with Christ versus Incarnational Ministry.” *Cultural Encounters* 9, no. 2 (2013): 100-103.
- Miles, John A. “Laughing at the Bible: Jonah as Parody.” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 65, no. 3 (1975): 168-81.
- Miller, J. Hillis. *Speech Acts in Literature*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- Miller, Perry. *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1956.
- Mitchell, Henry H. “Lament & Praise.” *The Living Pulpit* 11, no. 4 (October 2002): 6.
- Mohler, R. Albert, Jr. *Culture Shift: Engaging Current Issues with Timeless Truth*. Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2008.
- Mohler, R. Albert, Jr., and John MacArthur. *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World*. New ed. Chicago: Moody, 2008.
- Moreland, J. P. *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*. Rev. ed. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2012.
- Mukund, Bhavna, and T. B. Singh. “Positive Psychology and Mental Health.” *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 6, no. 2 (April 2015): 197-202.
- Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Upper Room, 2001.
- Mullet, Judy H., Nels M. K. Akerson, and Allison Turman. “Healing the Past through Story.” *Adult Learning* 24, no. 2 (May 2013): 72-78.
- Nauss, Allen H. “Preaching Sermons That Will Be Remembered: Unleashing the Spirit’s Power in the Brain.” *Concordia Journal* 34, no. 4 (October 2008): 264-91.
- No, Kisun. “The Narrative Function of God in the Gospel of Mark.” Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999.
- Nussbaum, Martha Craven. *Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Narrative Emotions: Beckett’s Genealogy of Love.” *Ethics* 98, no. 2 (January 1988): 225-54.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Oatley, Keith. “Emotions and Cultural Products: A Taxonomy of the Emotions of Literary Response and a Theory of Identification in Fictional Narrative.” *Poetics* 23, no. 1 (January 1995): 53-74.

- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Rev. and expanded ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007.
- Packer, J. I. *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994.
- Painter, John. "The Fruit of the Spirit Is Love: Galatians 5:22-23, an Exegetical Note." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, no. 5 (December 1973): 57-59.
- Pang, Patrick. "A Study of Jonathan Edwards as a Pastor-Preacher." D.Min. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary 1991.
- Passmore, Jonathan, and Lindsay G. Oades. "Positive Psychology Techniques—Random Acts of Kindness and Consistent Acts of Kindness and Empathy." *Coaching Psychologist* 11, no. 2 (December 2015): 90-92.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Positive Psychology Techniques—Three Good Things." *Coaching Psychologist* 12, no. 2 (December 2016): 77-78.
- Pearce, Sarah J. K. "Pity and Emotion in Josephus's Reading of Joseph." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 4 (2014): 858-62.
- Peloso, Jeanne M. "Adult Amages of God: Implications for Pastoral Counseling." *Journal of Pastoral Counseling* 43 (November 2008): 15-31.
- Pennington, Jonathan T. *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- Pennington, Jonathan T., and Charles H. Hackney. "Resourcing a Christian Positive Psychology from the Sermon on the Mount." *Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 5 (September 2017): 427-35.
- Peters, Ted. *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life*. Louisville: Westminster/J. Knox, 1993.
- Petievich, Carla, and Max Stille. "Emotions in Performance: Poetry and Preaching." *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 54, no. 1 (January 2017): 67-102.
- Piper, John. *Doctrine Matters: Ten Theological Trademarks from a Lifetime of Preaching*. Minneapolis: Desiring God, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Fact! Faith! Feeling!" *Desiring God*. August 28, 2002. Accessed December 14, 2017. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fact-faith-feeling>.
- Pyper, Hugh S. "Reading David's Mind: Inference, Emotion and the Limits of Language." In *Sense and Sensitivity: Essays on Reading the Bible in Memory of Robert Carroll*, edited by Alastair G. Hunter and Philip R. Davies, 73-86. London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- Ramm, Bernard L. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation; A Textbook of Hermeneutics*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Rechtien, John G. "Logic in Puritan Sermons in the Late Sixteenth Century and Plain Style." *Style* 13, no. 3 (June 1979): 237-58.

- Rhoads, David. "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 3 (1982): 411-34.
- Richard, Ramesh. *Preparing Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
- Rigby, Paul. "Paul Ricoeur, Freudianism, and Augustine's 'Confessions.'" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53, no. 1 (1985): 93-114.
- Roberts, Robert C. "Aristotle on Virtues and Emotions." *Philosophical Studies* 56, no. 3 (July 1989): 293-306.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Carl Rogers and the Christian Virtues." *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 13, no. 4 (1985): 263-73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Emotions among the Virtues of the Christian Life." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 20, no. 1 (1992): 37-68.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Emotions and the Canons of Evaluation." *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, December 3, 2009. Accessed September 27, 2018. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199235018-e-26>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Emotions in the Moral Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Existence, Emotion, and Virtue: Classical Themes in Kierkegaard." In *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard*, edited by Alastair Hannay and Gordon Daniel Marino, 177-206. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Feeling One's Emotions and Knowing Oneself." *Philosophical Studies* 77, nos. 2/3 (1995): 319-38.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Forgivingness." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1995): 289-306.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Fruits of the Spirit." *Reformed Journal* 37, no. 2 (February 1987): 9-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Idea of a Christian Psychology." *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 40, no. 1 (2012): 37-40.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Psychotherapeutic Virtues and the Grammar of Faith." *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 15, no. 3 (September 1987): 191-204.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Psychotherapy and Christian Ministry." *Word & World* 21, no. 1 (2001): 42-50.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Spirituality and Human Emotion*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What an Emotion Is: A Sketch." *The Philosophical Review* 97, no. 2 (1988): 183-209.

- Robinson, Haddon W. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Robinson, Jenefer. *Deeper Than Reason: Emotion and Its Role in Literature, Music, and Art*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2005.
- Rouhollahi, M., A. Khodabakhshi, and D. Taghvaei. "Effects of Positive Psychology on Irrational Beliefs and Quality of Life in Depressed Patients." *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 7, no. 2 (June 2016): 209-11.
- Russell, Walter B., III. "Does the Christian Have 'Flesh' in Gal 5:13-26." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 2 (June 1993): 179-87.
- Sanghani, Jayashree. "Role of Positive Psychology Intervention on Self-Regulation." *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 5, no. 4 (December 2014): 482-92.
- Sangster, William Edwin. *The Craft of Sermon Illustration*. London: Epworth, 1946.
- Scarantino, Andrea. "How to Do Things with Emotional Expressions: The Theory of Affective Pragmatics." *Psychological Inquiry* 28, nos. 2/3 (April 2017): 165-85.
- Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017.
- Schimmel, Solomon. "Education of the Emotions in Jewish Devotional Literature: Anger and Its Control." *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 8, no. 2 (1980): 259-76.
- Schnall, Eliezer, and David Schnall. "Positive Psychology in Jewish Education: Gratitude in the School and Synagogue Classroom." *Religious Education* 112, no. 2 (April 2017): 160-71.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.
- Schuetze, John D. "Is Love an Action or an Emotion?" *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 104, no. 4 (September 2007): 264-66.
- Schwartz, Sanford. "Hermeneutics and the Productive Imagination: Paul Ricoeur in the 1970s." *The Journal of Religion* 63, no. 3 (1983): 290-300.
- Searle, John R. *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Reprint, London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Segal, Gideon. "Beyond Subjectivity: Spinoza's Cognitivism of the Emotions." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 8, no. 1 (March 2000): 1-19.
- Shaw, Karen L. H. "Divine Heartbeats and Human Echoes: A Theology of Affectivity and Implications for Mission." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 37, no. 3 (July 2013): 196-209.
- Shook, John. "Can Psychology Be Positive about Religion?" *Free Inquiry* 26, no. 6 (November 2006): 41-42.

- Shrestha, Arjun Kumar. "Positive Psychology: Evolution, Philosophical Foundations, and Present Growth." *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 7, no. 4 (October 2016): 460-65.
- Siciliano, Jude. "Preaching to the Hungers of the Heart: The Homily of the Feasts and within the Rites." *Worship* 77, no. 3 (May 2003): 282-83.
- Simmons, William A. "Divine Sovereignty and Existential Anxiety in Paul: Soliloquy and Self-Disclosure in Philippians." In *Spirit and the Mind*, 119-29. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000.
- Slote, Michael. "Moral Sentimentalism and Moral Psychology." *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, June 11, 2007. Accessed September 28, 2018. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195325911.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780195325911-e-9>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sentimentalist Virtue Ethics." *The Oxford Handbook of Virtue*, February 22, 2018. Accessed September 28, 2018. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199385195.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199385195-e-47>.
- Smith, James K. A. *Awaiting the King: Reforming Public Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. New ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.
- Smith, Robert. *Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life*. Nashville: B & H, 2008.
- Smith, Steven. *Dying to Preach: Embracing the Cross in the Pulpit*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009.
- Snow, Nancy E. "Empathy." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2000): 65-78.
- Solomon, Robert C. "On Emotions as Judgments." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1988): 183-91.
- Stapleton, John M. "Loving God with the Mind and Thinking with the Heart: The Pastor-Theologian in the Pulpit." In *Power to Comprehend with All the Saints*, edited by Cynthia A. Jarvis, 205-20. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching in the Demonstration of the Spirit and Power*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.
- Starkey, Charles. "Manipulating Emotion: The Best Evidence for Non-Cognitivism in the Light of Proper Function." *Analysis* 67, no. 295 (July 2007): 230-37.
- Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Stott, John. *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982.
- Strawn, Brad D., and Warren S. Brown. "Liturgical Animals: What Psychology and Neuroscience Tell Us about Formation and Worship." *Liturgy* 28, no. 4 (October 2013): 3-14.
- Strongman, Kenneth T. *The Psychology of Emotion: From Everyday Life to Theory*. 5th ed. Chichester, West Sussex, England: Wiley, 2003.
- Sudol, Ronald A. "Meditation in Colonial New England: The Directives of Thomas Hooker and Ebenezer Pemberton." *Christianity and Literature* 28, no. 4 (June 1979): 36-43.
- Sullivan, Paul. "Our Emotional Connection to Truth: Moving beyond a Functional View of Language in Discourse Analysis." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 38, no. 2 (June 2008): 193-207.
- Swartley, Willard M. "The Relation of Justice/Righteousness to Shalom/Eirēnē." *Ex Auditu* 22 (2006): 29-53.
- Swears, Thomas. *Preaching to Head and Heart*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.
- Tellis-James, Charlie, and Mark Fox. "Positive Narratives: The Stories Young People with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) Tell about Their Futures." *Educational Psychology in Practice* 32, no. 4 (December 2016): 327-42.
- Thiessen, Henry C. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2006.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
- Thompson, Curt. *The Soul of Shame: Retelling the Stories We Believe About Ourselves*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015.
- Titus, Craig Steven. "Aquinas, Seligman, and Positive Psychology: A Christian Approach to the Use of the Virtues in Psychology." *Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 5 (September 2017): 447-58.
- Torevell, David. "Acting Out of Affections: Embodiment, Morality and (Post) Modernity." *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 5, no. 1 (June 2000): 27-36.
- Tripp, Paul David. *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002.
- Turner, Shores Franklin. "Utilizing Self-Disclosure in Preaching to Address Four Postmodern Challenges." D.Min. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002.
- Twombly, Charles C. "Redemptive History and the Shaping of the Affections." *Crux* 20, no. 4 (December 1984): 21-26.
- van der Merwe, Dirk G. "Early Christian Spiritualities of Sin and Forgiveness according to 1 John." *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 70, no. 1 (2014): 1-11.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Early Christian Spirituality according to the First Epistle of John: The Identification of Different 'Lived Experiences.'" *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 69, no. 1 (March 2013): 1-9.
- Vanderveken, Daniel, and Susumu Kubo, eds. *Essays in Speech Act Theory*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2001.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. "Ascending the Mountain, Singing the Rock: Biblical Interpretation Earthed, Typed, and Transfigured." *Modern Theology* 28, no. 4 (October 2012): 781-803.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Continuing the Dialogue: A Theological Offering." *Edification* 4, no. 1 (May 2010): 41-46.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Discourse on Matter: Hermeneutics and the 'Miracle' of Understanding." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 7, no. 1 (January 2005): 5-37.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Faith Speaking Understanding: Performing the Drama of Doctrine*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity; Apollos, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Forming the Performers: How Christians Can Use Canon Sense to Bring Us to Our (Theodramatic) Senses." *Edification* 4, no. 1 (May 2010): 5-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Love's Wisdom: The Authority of Scripture's Form and Content for Faith's Understanding and Theological Judgment." *Journal of Reformed Theology* 5, no. 3 (September 2011): 247-75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Putting on Christ: Spiritual Formation and the Drama of Discipleship." *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 147-71.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J., and Craig L. Blomberg. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Anniversary ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J., and Eric L. Johnson. "Interview with Kevin J. Vanhoozer: What Does It Mean to Be Biblical? What Should Biblical Authority Look Like in the 21st Century?" *Edification* 4, no. 1 (May 2010): 75-78.
- Vasterling, Veronica. "Cognitive Theory and Phenomenology in Arendt's and Nussbaum's Work on Narrative." *Human Studies* 30, no. 2 (2007): 79-95.
- Viljoen, Francois P. "Righteousness and Identity Formation in the Sermon on the Mount." *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 69, no. 1 (2013). Accessed October 18, 2018. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001939625>.
- Vines, Jerry, and James L. Shaddix. *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons*. New ed. Chicago: Moody, 1999.

- Volz, Kirsten G., and Ralph Hertwig. "Emotions and Decisions: Beyond Conceptual Vagueness and the Rationality Muddle." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 11, no. 1 (January 2016): 101-16.
- Voorwinde, Stephen. *Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels*. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Paul's Emotions in Acts." *The Reformed Theological Review* 73, no. 2 (August 2014): 75-100.
- Wainwright, William J. "Jonathan Edwards and the Sense of the Heart." *Faith and Philosophy* 7, no. 1 (January 1990): 43-62.
- Wallace, James W. *Preaching to the Hungers of the Heart: The Homily of the Feasts and within the Rites*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002.
- Ward, Richard. *Speaking from the Heart: Preaching with Passion*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1992.
- Warren, Timothy S. "The Theological Process in Sermon Preparation." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156, no. 623 (July 1999): 336-56.
- Watts, Richard E., and Bengü Ergüner-Tekinalp. "Positive Psychology: A Neo-Adlerian Perspective." *Journal of Individual Psychology* 73, no. 4 (2017): 328-37.
- Weddle, David L. "Image of the Self in Jonathan Edwards: A Study of Autobiography and Theology." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 43, no. 1 (March 1975): 70-83.
- Welborn, Laurence L. "Paul's Appropriation of the Role of the Fool in I Corinthians 1-4." *Journal of Theology (United Theological Seminary)* 100 (2002): 39-54.
- Wenkel, David H. "The 'Breastplate of Righteousness' in Ephesians 6:14: Imputation or Virtue?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 58, no. 2 (2007): 275-87.
- Westerhoff, John H. "What Has Zion to Do with Bohemia." *Religious Education* 76, no. 1 (January 1981): 5-15.
- Wetzel, James. "Moral Personality, Perversity, and Original Sin." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 23, no. 1 (March 1995): 3-25.
- Wilkins, Michael J. *Matthew*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- William-Johnson, Meca, Dionne Cross, Ji Hong, Lori Aultman, Jennifer Osbon, and Paul Schutz. "'There Are No Emotions in Math': How Teachers Approach Emotions in the Classroom." *Teachers College Record* 110, no. 8 (August 2008): 1574-612.
- Wilson, Paul Scott. *Imaginations of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1988.
- Winans, Amy E. "Cultivating Critical Emotional Literacy: Cognitive and Contemplative Approaches to Engaging Difference." *College English* 75, no. 2 (2012): 150-70.

York, Hershael. "Text, Emotion, and Audience: Finding the Line Between Planning and Manipulation in Worship and Preaching." *EHS*, no. 2010 Conference EHS (2010): 123-32.

Zachrich, David R. "The Illustrated Sermon: A Guide for the Use and Evaluation of Metaphor in Preaching." D.Min. diss., Western Theological Seminary, 1984.

Zuidema, Jason. "Pascal, Blaise." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

## ABSTRACT

### EMOTIONAL VIRTUES IN A FAITHFUL EXPOSITORY MINISTRY: UTILIZING ROBERT C. ROBERTS TO ARGUE FOR A MODEL OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING THAT FOSTERS THE MATURATION OF EMOTIONAL VIRTUES WITHIN A CONGREGATION

Jonathan Craig Seals, Ph.D.  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019  
Chair: Dr. Hershael W. York

This dissertation applies the work of Robert C. Roberts in the field of philosophy of emotion to the craft of expository preaching. The purpose of this research is to explore his definition of emotion and to present a framework of Christian emotional virtues that will aid expositors to preach sermons that better cultivate emotional virtues such as joy and peace.

The first chapter develops the thesis and argues for a biblical warrant for the development of emotional virtues. The second chapter aims at two goals: (1) Present Roberts' definition of emotion as "concern-based construals." The paper argues that construals (ways of seeing the world) and concerns (serious desires) are necessary to generate an emotion. As a result, at times, emotions are altered by changing one's construal of the situation, but at other times, one must address an underlying concern. (2) The second goal is to present Roberts's concept of Christian emotional virtue. Roberts argues that Christian emotional virtues are made up of biblical construals and a primary Christian concern, namely a desire for God and his kingdom. Chapters three and four offer homiletical applications of Roberts's work on emotion and Christian emotional virtues. This dissertation concludes that, in order to develop biblical concerns and construals, the expositor must focus on the subjective internalization of both biblical

concerns and construals. Chapter three presents several methods of direct communication that establish the Christian construal and also cognitively ground the primary Christian concern. However, in order to transform deeply held concerns and bypass cognitive defenses, chapter four presents methods of in-direct communication that address the inner world of the hearer. This work argues that both direct and indirect forms of communication should be utilized together in order to provide a holistic approach to the subjective internalization of biblical concerns and construals; with the result of subjective internalization being the cultivation of Christian emotional virtues.

## VITA

Jonathan Craig Seals

### EDUCATION

B.A., Carson Newman College, 2007

M.Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

### MINISTERIAL

Pastoral Care, Allen Funeral Home, Morristown, Tennessee, 2000-2008

Youth Pastor, New Blackwell Baptist Church, Rutledge, Tennessee, 2004-2006

Youth Pastor, Fairfield Baptist Church, Morristown, Tennessee, 2006-2008

Pastoral Intern, Inglewood Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas, 2009-2010

Engage Revival Preacher, SBCT, 2010

Student Pastor/College and Career Pastor, North Fort Worth Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, 2010- 2013

Senior Pastor, Park Hill Baptist Church, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, 2013-present