

## “EMOTIONS IN PREACHING”

Numbers 20:7-12

*Little Girl hearing a preacher preach: She asked her Daddy, “Why is he shouting at the people? Does he want to take them out and give them a spanking? The problem is sometimes sermons can feel like the preacher is just shouting at the people – b/c of emotion. Our text: Moses alters his destiny b/c he allowed his emotions to interfere with his ministry to the people.*

**Numbers 20:7-12** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>8</sup> “Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.” <sup>9</sup> So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. <sup>10</sup> And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?” <sup>11</sup> Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. <sup>12</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”

### I. EMOTIONS AND THE MESSAGE

#### A. We are emotional creatures – we feel things

##### 1. This is one of the glories of being human: **The ability to feel**

a. Joy/excitement/anticipation/wonder/appreciation

1. Whether that is natural/inbuilt – or a reaction to circumstances: *Emotions are normal!*

##### 2. But many feelings/emotions are negative

a. Fear/pain/sorrow/disappointment/irritation/anger/outrage/resentment/confusion/depression

#### B. We are preachers: We are to hear a message from God – then accurately deliver it to people

##### 1. **But emotions affect our perceptions**

a. God told Moses what to say and do: **V7** *Take the rod, and speak to the rock before their eyes*

1. But apparently what he heard was affected by his emotions

b. This is true in getting a message from God: *It is affected by what we feel*

1. Car brand: *What you love – you see – everywhere!*

c. Irritated/angry preachers see their irritations/opinions everywhere in the word of God

1. Sermon workshops: *Judas hung himself/Esau couldn't get it back*

a. Sermon: *3 things that tick the preacher off. Come tonight – 3 more things that tick the preacher off!*

2. *One time I challenged a man about taking personal shots/Judas/Jezebel constantly. If I take those out – what else is there to preach?*

d. You miss what is going on in the world/in people's lives: *Prov Know the state of your flocks!*

1. *This year: I hope you preached more encouragement than you ever have in your entire ministry*

a. *This wasn't the time to bash on Jezebel!*

##### 2. **Emotions make the message personal: V10** *must we fetch you water out of this rock?*

a. The Holy word of God becomes a means to redeem wounded honor/take revenge

1. God's word isn't about you – it's about God! Not about your will – but God's will!

##### 3. **Emotions affect our delivery:**

a. **V10-11** *Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?* <sup>11</sup> *And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice:*

1. A message from God becomes a beating!

b. Sometimes this is how men preach: Angry/upset

1. *Marvin Wells told of when he 1<sup>st</sup> came to church in Killeen: The man pastoring (no longer in the Fellowship) would preach angry. Marvin asked a guy “Why is he so angry? Did I do something wrong?” Friend would encourage – no, he's not. He's just trying to make a point.*

### II. DAMAGING EMOTIONS

#### A. We need to face a myth about emotion and preaching: *I preach better when I'm angry...*

##### 1. You may think so...like a man who says “*I dance good when I get some booze into me*”

a. But nobody else thinks so: *Others think he's making a fool of himself*

##### 2. It might not be so! You may be very deceived by your own emotions

a. *You think you're hitting hot licks – but you're actually offending/alienating/making a fool of yourself*

#### B. Unhealthy emotion in preaching damages people's ability to hear from us

##### 1. If you are offending people with your emotion in preaching – people stop their ears

a. Peter whacked off Malchus ear: *He won't be able to hear as well – unless Jesus does a miracle!*

2. The shame is that you undermine all the other good things you say/do
- C. Unhealthy emotion in preaching stops the blessing of God in our ministry
  1. God doesn't bless us when we dishonor Him
    - a. **We represent God:** *God may want people to know "I'm nothing like him"*
  2. Ultimately it damages our ability to go on effectively in ministry
    - a. You limit the size of your ministry: **Emotional preaching has a self-limiting factor**
    - b. You can derail your ability to go on in ministry
      1. **V12** *therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."*
    - c. Sometimes we have to make a change: *Replace with someone who can control emotion/love people*

### **III. CONTROLLING EMOTIONS**

- A. God requires His men to control their emotions
  1. Qualification for ministry 1 Tim 3:
    - a. *Temperate/sober-minded/not quarrelsome...*
  2. God requires us to put our emotions aside and function for Him – and the good of the people
    - a. 2x in Bible God forbid His ministers to mourn over the death of loved ones
      1. *Aaron/Ezekiel: Do not mourn – function!*
    - b. God is making a point: He is greater and the needs of people are greater than our emotions
  3. **When we control our emotions – it saves us a lot of unnecessary trouble**
    - a. *You may be wrong: If you don't lash out – you no harm*
    - b. *You don't get people's backs up to resist you*
  4. **When we control our emotions – God blesses our ministry**
    - a. Jesus Christ ultimate example: **1 Peter 2:23** *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*
      1. *I've had people I had enough of – wanted to go after them/didn't; Later on God did a miracle*
  5. **When we control our emotions – it gives us credibility with people**
    - a. *SS comment after death in the family/disciplined my daughter put out of the church/out of the house. Hearts broken – but we functioned. Man said, "It gives great peace and confidence when we see the Pastors function in spite of what they are feeling."*
    - b. *Vance Havner preached the morning service a few hours after his wife died. I always said I could never do that. I preached a men's discipleship hours after Dad died. Received comments about how that blessed people.*