

Emotional Immaturity

Emotional immaturity is a hidden enemy in many families.

It robs personal relationships of harmony and joy, and is the root cause of conflicts, selfishness and anxieties.

Why is emotional immaturity such a great problem?

Ephesians 2:1-2 [New King James] *“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,”*

The unseen influence in this world is Satan.

1 John 5:18-19 [New King James] *“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”*

This present society is ruled by Satan.

The Creator God has allowed this so that as we resist Satan’s influence we may mature, [James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9].

Jesus Christ did **not** tell Satan that this world was **not** his to offer, [Matthew 4:8-9].

Satan broadcasts his way of life, that of vanity, jealousy, greed and fear to every human being.

This broadcast is **not** only in words and pictures, [in this modern world through TV and Internet], but also in moods and attitudes, negative, destructive attitudes such as discouragement, anger, hostility and competition.

Wrong attitudes can and do turn people away from the truth as found in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, [John 17:17] also prevent people from entering into God’s Kingdom, [His created family].

Revelation 21:7-8 [New King James] *“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

The cowardly or fearful will be excluded from God’s Kingdom.

The Greek word translated “cowardly” is “*dēilōs*” meaning timid and by implication fearful and faithless, lacking emotional maturity.

How can we grow in emotional maturity? –

We all experience a wide range of constantly changing circumstances that are difficult to handle, and often result in our losing our battle with Satan, our unseen spiritual enemy.

These situations can be described in four major levels of emotional and physical stress.

Level 1 – high physical energy and good circumstances –

This is the good situation, the easy one to handle, no problem here.

Most of us do **not** encounter big attitudes problems in such a situation and our level of emotional maturity is **not** tested.

Satan would have a hard time influencing us at such a time.

Level 2 – high physical energy and bad circumstances –

Such a situation is challenging but usually we can handle this type of situation. We are in fine spirits but when we have some difficulty such as a flat tyre on the way to work. Still, no problem, change the tyre and off we go.

Problems don't loom large when we are physically feeling up to handling them.

Level 3 – low physical energy and good circumstances –

We may be physically tired at the end of a day's activities, but we are glad to be home with family and an evening meal.

All will be well after a good night's sleep that will refresh us to face another day.

Psalms 127:1-2 [New King James] *“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labour in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.”*

When our relationship with our Creator God is fine, He will give us the blessing of a good night's sleep.

Level 4 – low physical energy and bad circumstances –

This is the real danger zone!

The same flat tyre after a short night's sleep and long day's activity can spell trouble.

Likewise, a sick child, hassle at work with the boss, getting stuck in heavy traffic, a bad meal, or misunderstanding with our mate becomes a far more difficult matters to deal with.

Now we have the makings for a real trial or even a spiritual disaster, if we allow Satan to have his way.

How can we negotiate our way through this danger zone?

Here are some tips:-

1) Recognise when you are in level 4 – knowing what we are up against is a precaution itself, forewarned is forearmed.

2) Guard against letting your attitude slip – Satan will be trying to find weak spots in your spiritual armour.

Make sure that you are fully protected, wearing all the various pieces.

Ephesians 6:10-18 [New King James] *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints”

Each piece of this spiritual armour is studied in the article ‘*The Armour Of God*’ listed on this website under the sub-heading ‘*Satan*’.

3) Contain the problem – don’t let the problem escalate.

When in level 4, little problems can become big, like a spark causing a forest fire.

Don’t start blaming others, using profanity, criticising people or leaping to broad, sweeping, negative conclusions.

Don’t get paranoid or assume the worst, for this can turn a minor inconvenience into what could end up a catastrophe.

Contain the problem by concentrating on the immediate issues at hand, carefully and prayerfully work them through.

James 1:19-20 [New King James] *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”*

These words are God-given wisdom that can contain any problem.

What you don’t say or do may prove to be more important in the long run than what you do say or do.

4) Be constantly alert to Satan’s “fiery darts” –

When in level 4 is a situation where Satan finds the best openings for his “fiery darts” of negative emotions, gloom and despair.

James 4:7-8 [New King James] *“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”*

Resist the attack of Satan by drawing near to the Creator God in prayer and the study of His Word, the Christian Bible.

1 Peter 5:8-9 [New King James] *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”*

The devil can be a powerful influence but we have within us, having surrendered our lives to our Saviour Jesus Christ, [Romans 12:1] the Holy Spirit which is far greater than Satan the devil.

1 John 4:1-4 [New King James] *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”*

Satan may use other human beings to try and break down your confidence in our Saviour, Jesus Christ, be aware of this threat, for it is when we are in level 4 that Satan will bring such people into the situation to deceive us or blind us to the wisdom of God's Word, the Christian Bible.

Uncontrolled emotions, which are evidence of spiritual and emotional immaturity, can prove to be disastrous when in level 4.

It would be nice of course, if all our challenges would come when we are rested and ready for them in every way, but life simply is not that way.

Often we have to face sore trials when under difficult personal circumstances.

Such times are the real test of our emotional maturity.

Determine to master, with the help of the Creator God, the problems and challenges of the dangerous level 4 zone, where problems and attitudes collide.

Doing so will make us more mature Christians.

1 Peter 1:6-7 [New King James] *“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,”*

It is when we are under such trials in level 4 that we realise our total need of the Creator God to be guiding and strengthening us on a daily basis.

Such a realisation will draw us nearer to God through prayer and the study of His Word, the Christian Bible, through which we mature as Christians.