Managing our Emotions

**Introduction**
We are either managing emotions or emotions are managing us. We are harnessing our emotions producing a positive outcome or we are harnessed by our emotions with negative results.

Paul helps us to understand the emotional challenges are normal and natural in Romans 7:14-20.

Jesus through his sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:21-48 uses the outward (symptoms) to point to the inward (root cause) condition. He deals with several topics including: Anger and hate, lust, stumbling, oaths, prayer and more to help us identify with our need of his help by the Holy Spirit.

Illustration: Learning to manage emotions is like learning to fly an airplane. Dr. David Eckman
“Becoming Who God Intended” Dr. David Eckman

I. The Holy Spirit helps to manage the inner man
   a. Ephesians 5:18 Be filled with the Spirit
   b. Romans 15:13 Holy Spirit fills us with all joy and peace
   c. Galatians 5:16 Walk by the Spirit
      Walk: Peripateo – to live, regulate one’s life
   d. Galatians 5:22-25 are emotional goals of the Holy Spirit
   e. Ephesians 6:18 Pray in the Spirit
   f. Romans 8:26 Holy Spirit intercedes with strong and powerful emotions
   g. Ephesians 4:25-32 godly communications

II. Physical management tools
   a. Rest
   b. Exercise
   c. Entertainment

**Conclusion**
Whether you realize it or not, your imagination is filled with pictures of reality. The Bible indicates these pictures reveal your true “heart beliefs”—the beliefs that actually shape your everyday feelings and reactions to other people, to life’s circumstances, and to God. Getting the true pictures in your mind—grasping reality from God’s perspective—will help bring your thoughts and emotions under control. It will lead you to a life filled with the positive emotions of love, joy, and peace. And you will finally be able to live out the richness of true Christianity...the life God the Father has always intended for you. Dr. David Eckman
Illustration: Dr. David Eckman excerpt from “Becoming Who God Intended”

Learning to manage emotions, good and bad ones, is very much like learning to fly an airplane. Airplanes fly on something invisible; they are kept up by what the pilots cannot see. Small or large planes seem to float on the air hung upon invisible wires. What they do appears magical even after lift or the ability for the air to push a plane wing upward is explained.

People float on emotions in a similar way. The emotions within can’t be seen by us but they lift us upward with joy and push us downward with anxiety and depression. Any pilot would say understanding how the air can push a plane up or an air pocket can dramatically drop a plane down is critical. Understanding how to manage emotions is more important because our emotions are closer to us than the air around an airplane. Just like the air, oftentimes, emotions are unseen and unnoticed. But sometimes they are blatantly obvious.

I fly fairly frequently and every once in a while we have to fly through turbulence and storms. It does not bother me all that much because I work under the assumption that the pilots know what they are doing. I feel that they have been very well trained for any type of weather or situation that the heavens hold. Once when flying from Chicago to the West Coast our plane lost one of its four engines. The pilot with incredible calm informed us that the plane could fly perfectly well with losing even another engine, and then he safely flew us back to Chicago for another plane.

We also have to learn to manage our lives with all the changes that our internal weather brings us. That inner weather could be just as dangerous as anything the skies can hold. States of anxiety, depression, worthlessness, guilt, shame come with all the force of hurricanes at times. Pilots make a point of avoiding flying through hurricanes, but unfortunately we can’t fly around our inner storms. When those storms hit, we need to be as skilled as pilots.

Why do pilots fly? It’s a great way of getting places. Flying is fast, sometimes breathtaking, and they can get to wonderful places far away. Managing our emotions can do the same things for us: we can experience all that life offers in a healthy way, and we can make life goals, savor relationships, and become the people that we and God want us to be. Managing emotions is important and gets us to healthy places.

Before manned flight became a reality, some of the brightest people on the planet felt and thought that flying would not work. They asked, how can you fly on something you can’t see (at least they could see water and the oceans), and that is literally as light as air? Planes with engines and a million flights later changed their minds.

In some ways with regard to emotions our culture and even our church culture is like the days before flight. Emotions are ignored, downplayed, and mismanaged. When we go to certain churches, the best and sometimes only advice we receive is to ignore them and not to trust them. That’s like telling a pilot to ignore hurricanes, and lightning storms. It’s not wise advice. Managed well we can soar on healthy emotions and we can effectively work with the painful ones.

That is what this book is about: how to manage emotions and live off of the healthy ones. Pilots receive training and are given maps and pictures to guide their flights. What you will find in this book will not only be a description of how emotions work, but skills for their management, and of special importance critically significant word pictures that have been used to positively change the emotional lives of thousands. You will discover also a significant truth about biblical pictures that when applied to our emotions, these pictures will bring the peace and joy that God promised.