

January 15, 2023 Sermon: EMPATHY

MEDITATE

How do people today avoid dealing with their negative emotions?

According to Kent Hughes, the Beatitudes go against the “delusions of formula Christianity.” It exposes the shallow, “right” answers of those who do not truly know Christ.

Read Matthew 5:4.

EQUIP

Many people let their negative emotions explode in harsh anger, verbal abuse, or even physical abuse. Others let their negative emotions implode into a deep internal depression.

Do you tend to explode or implode?

Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. In your own words, what is the difference between godly and worldly grief?

Read Genesis 4:5-8. Cain wasn't mourning that he had wronged or disappointed God. Cain was mourning because he didn't get the results he wanted out of God. **What kinds of expectations, biases, or false narratives cause our grief to be worldly instead of godly?**

When we explode or implode, we are controlled by our negative emotions, and do not receive comfort from God. Implosion results from self-pity: “I am not good enough. I am a failure. I am nothing. I have no hope.” Explosion results from prideful blame-shifting: “I deserve better. It's not fair. It's someone else's fault.”

CULTIVATE

Godly mourning is firstly empathetic. It is present, vulnerable, and honest about negative emotions. But godly mourning is also righteous. It mourns the unrepentant hearts that believe the false stories of the world. Godly grief understands the perspective of both Creator and created.

What sorts of hang-ups, doubts, fears, or tragedies are on your heart today?

All mourning - and all emotions - have a condition. **What are you mourning today, and why?**

All mourning - and all emotions - have a direction. **Where is your mourning leading you today?**

Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What does it look like for you to be comforted by Jesus?