

## Doctrine of Weeping

1. Emotions are part of the divine design of the soul.
2. While emotions are to be enjoyed they are not to dominate the heart for emotions cannot sustain a person in times of crisis or duress.
3. Excessively emotional people are generally very unstable in attitude and actions. They tend to feel misunderstood and unappreciated when in fact it is they who do not understand the tremendous spiritual resources God has provided to deal with the tragedies and triumphs of life.
4. Through Bible doctrine a person is able to be strong in the Lord as the promises of God are remembered and the principles of the *Word of God* are brought to bear in every situation in life no matter how painful or challenging it may be.
5. Of particular concern are weeping Christians who want to be comforted. Comfort can only be found in the proper usage of Bible doctrine.
6. The Word of God has much to say about weeping.
7. Some weeping is bonified. On three occasions Jesus Himself wept.
  - Christ wept with love at the tomb of Lazarus. *John 11:35 Jesus wept.*
  - The Lord wept with compassion over the city of Jerusalem. *Luke 19:41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.*
  - Jesus wept in the Garden of Gethsemane as He contemplated the great separation from the Father He would experience through the ordeal of Calvary. *Luke 22:44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*
8. As Christ wept so there are legitimate times to cry.
  - Tears of sorrow are normal when a loved one is going away for a long period of time. The saints at Ephesus expressed in tears their love for Paul upon his departure. *Acts 20:37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him.*
  - Tears are appropriate over the sufferings of others. When the friends of Job saw his pain and suffering they wept. *Job 2:12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.*

- Tears should be shed in times of sorrow at the possible death of a child. When Hagar thought Ishmael would die in the dessert she wept. *Genesis 21:16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.*

When one of the sons of David was dying he wept. *2 Samuel 12:22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?*

- When a loved one dies or a great personage passes, tears are appropriate. Following the death of Moses the nation of Israel mourned their loss for thirty days. *Deuteronomy 34:8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.*

*2 Kings 13:14 Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

- Tears of genuine repentance are legitimate. Having confessed the sins of the nation Ezra wept. *Ezra 10:1 Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.*

When Peter realized how he had denied the Lord of glory he went out and wept bitter tears. *Matt 26:75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cockcrow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.*

God is pleased to see teardrops of sorrow over sin. *Joel 2:12 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:*

- Weeping should take place as the salvation of souls is sought. *Psalms 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*
- In moments of reconciliation weeping often takes place. After twenty years of separation Esau and Jacob were reconciled. *Genesis 33:4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.* When Joseph as Prime Minister of Egypt revealed himself to his brothers he wept. *Genesis 45:15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.*
- Unjust laws, which threaten the security and welfare of a people, produces distress and weeping. During the days of the Persian king Xerxes a law was passed which was adverse to the Jewish population in the kingdom. *Esther 4:3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.*

- The loss of gospel privileges should cause the soul to weep. *Psalms 137:1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.*
- The absence of someone to rightly interpret the *Word of God* should bring tears. On the isle of Patmos the Apostle John began to weep when no one was found worthy to communicate Bible doctrine to him. *Revelation 5:4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*
- Tears of love are appreciated and acceptable to the Lord. One day a woman who was a great sinner found Jesus sitting in the home of a Pharisee. So she brought an alabaster box of ointment. *Luke 7:38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*
- Tears of sorrow over those who will not believe are appropriate. The apostle Paul wept over the enemies of the cross. *Philippians 3:18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Rather than get angry that the gospel is being rejected let there be tears.*

9. As there are appropriate times to weep so there is inappropriate weeping.

- Excessive, uncontrollable and continual weeping long after the death of a loved one is not encouraged in *Scripture* for it shows an unwillingness to believe in the goodness and grace of God. Following the death of his beloved child, David arose and ate and took care of himself thereby submitting the will of the Sovereign. “*But now he is dead,*” said David. “*Wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*” (2 Samuel 12:23). The believer is to sorrow, but not as others who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13).
- Emotional repentance is meaningless in the sight of God. Having sold his birthright to his brother Jacob, Esau sought to regain his favored position with bitter tears. But it was too little too late. *Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Genesis 27:38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.*

Though Judas wept over his betrayal of Christ his tears were meaningless for his heart was not fundamentally changed. *Matthew 27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. 5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.*

King Saul was known to weep often when challenged by David concerning his bad behavior but his repentance was emotional and meaningless. *1 Samuel 24:16 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.*

- Weeping that forgets the promises and grace of God is not appropriate. The Lord was very angry with the Exodus Generation when the people wept for the foods of Egypt. Moses was told to gather the people *Numbers 11:18 And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. Numbers 11:20 But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?*
- Weeping which is rooted in self-pity and self-centeredness is sin. Following the rebuilding of the Temple after the end of the Babylonian Captivity some of the people who remembered the first temple wept because the second temple was not as lovely as the first. That was wrong. *Ezra 3:12 But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy.*
- The greatest sphere of weeping is found in the eternal state. Those who have rejected the gospel, those who have spurned the gracious invitation of Christ to be saved shall find themselves weeping without end for time without end. It is a frightful scene the Bible sets before mankind.

*Matthew 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 22:13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 24:51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.*

10. While there are legitimate and illegitimate reasons to weep the Lord does not want weeping to be the normal experience of the heart. Life is not to be negative but positive. Though sin has brought judgment and sorrow into our lives God has designed there to be joy on the other side of evil. *Psalms 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

The Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah and said, *“I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isa. 65:19).*

When a person weeps day in and day out that is neither normal nor healthy. The divine remedy is to learn more Bible doctrine. The divine solution to hurting hearts is to become more occupied with the person of Jesus Christ and the principles of His Word. Only then will joy spring eternal in the heart.

11. For those who find themselves caught up in what is considered to be unusual pressures of life the pattern for inner joy and happiness is Jesus Christ. Consider the circumstances of the Lord’s life.

- As a newborn baby the king of the land sought to kill Him.
- From his mother’s womb the Lord’s life was in constant danger.
- He was forced to live in an obscure village in very humble circumstances.
- When He began His public ministry there was an immediate and hostile reaction to His message to the point that men attempted to murder Him.
- Throughout His ministry the Lord faced organized ridicule, sarcasm and plots to discredit and then destroy Him.
- Hardly a day went by that the Lord was not challenged doctrinally or questioned to the point of despair by foolish men who were too clever for their own good.

And yet, despite all of this pressure and more the Lord only wept on three recorded occasions. Is that not because Christ found the solution to weeping excessively? What was the secret to the Lord’s inner happiness except this: He knew the Father and beyond that He had a mission to accomplish. So great was this mission that it excited Him and He did not want to eat. This point is made in John 4. About the time the Lord was through ministering to the woman at the well the disciples returned from the city with some food. *“Master,” they said, “Eat.” “But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. (John 4:31-35)*

12. For those who are weeping excessively over the affairs of life the invitation is extended to stop crying by

- learning much Bible doctrine
- loving the Father
- by engaging in a spiritual work larger than self.

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  - Jesus wept in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44)
7. As Christ wept so there are legitimate times to cry.
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  - When a loved one dies or a great personage passes tears are appropriate (Deuteronomy 34:8; 2 Kings 13:14).
  - Tears of genuine repentance are legitimate (Ezra 10:1; Matthew 26:75).
  - God is pleased to see teardrops of sorrow over sin (Joel 2:12).
  - Weeping should take place as the salvation of souls is sought (Psalm 126:5-6).
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  - Emotional repentance is meaningless in the sight of God. (Heb 12:15-17; Genesis 27:38; Matthew 27:3-5; 1 Samuel 24:16).
  - Weeping that forgets the promises and grace of God is not appropriate. Numbers 11:18 Numbers 11:20
  - Weeping which is rooted in self-pity and self-centeredness is sin (Ezra 3:12).
  - The greatest sphere of weeping is found in the eternal state (Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28).
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