



*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20*

**Rev. Dr. Deborah Crawley, Teacher**  
**Sis. Tammi Brown, Asst. Teacher**

---

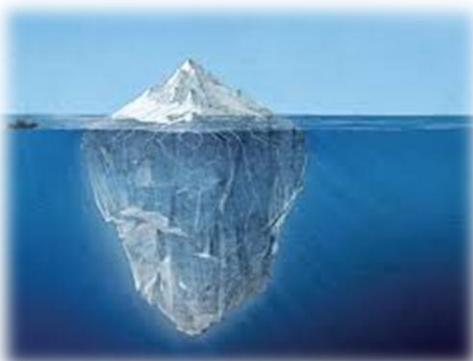
## **Spiritual Formation: Emotional Health & Spiritual Maturity**

### **The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality: Part 1 — 1 Samuel 15:20-24**

Only 10% of an iceberg is visible above the waterline, 90% is below the surface - so it is with us. People see 10%, but 90% is beneath the surface, hidden from others and sometimes even so deep that it's hidden from us. It is this 90% that we want to explore over the next few weeks.

When we ignore the emotional component of our lives, we move through the motions of Christian discipleship, activities and behaviors, but deeply rooted behavioral patterns from the past continue to keep us from living an authentic life of maturity in Christ.

We often fail to reflect on what is going on inside us and around us (emotional health) and are too busy to slow down to be with God (contemplative spirituality). As a result, we run the risk of remaining spiritual infants, failing to develop into spiritually and emotionally mature adults in Christ.



## The Iceberg Picture

Only 10% of an iceberg is visible above water. 90% is hidden beneath the surface.

10% (what people see): \_\_\_\_\_

90% (what people don't see): \_\_\_\_\_

Which area do you tend to focus on more? \_\_\_\_\_

## Bible Focus – 1 Samuel 15 (Saul)

What stands out to you about Saul's response to correction?

---

---

## Three attributes of Saul's emotionally unhealthy spirituality

### 1. Saul says no to reflection and self-awareness

Saul's actions are being driven by a need for the approval of others and by overwhelming jealousy. 'I was afraid of the people' he tells the prophet Samuel as an excuse for his actions. And here, 'please honor me before the elders and my people'. Even as their King, Saul is concerned by what others are saying about him; he needs them to like him, he needs their approval. Then he is consumed by jealousy for David, so much so that six times he tries to have David killed.

The emotions, hidden beneath the surface of Saul's life, are controlling his actions. Saul has not spent the time reflecting on his motivation and emotions.

I wonder if we take the time to reflect on the emotions that are driving us. Do we spend time looking beneath the surface of our actions to our experiences and emotions in order to become more self-aware

You are not living in reality unless you are in touch with what is going on inside. The more you are aware of your own interior being, the more you are able to become aware of God.

### Point 1 – Self-Awareness

If you don't know what's driving you, it's driving you.

What emotions did you feel most strongly this week?

What may have been underneath those feelings?

---

---

### 2. Saul says no to cultivating his personal relationship with God

Unlike David, there is no indication that Saul is developing and nurturing his

relationship with God. He's serving God on the outside, he's doing stuff for God, but he doesn't seem to be spending the time with God in order to listen to his voice.

Samuel says to Saul "to listen is better than sacrifice". Saul is doing the religious stuff, "bringing his sacrifice", but he's not listening to God.

## **Point 2 – Doing for God vs. Being with God**

When are you most tempted to stay busy instead of being still with God?

---

---

What would 'being with God' look like for you this week?

---

---

### **3. Saul says no to being broken through setbacks and difficulties.**

Struggles, setbacks, failures and difficulties are a part of life – they happen to all of us. The question is, what do we do with them? Saul ignores them, refuses to acknowledge them and charges on as if nothing has happened. But setback, failures and brokenness can be used by God to teach us important lessons if we allow the time and space to reflect.

Jesus had to learn obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8) so do we.

There is no other way to learn patience than through waiting. There is no other way to learn humility than through being humbled. There are no shortcuts. Adversity strips away illusions and brings about an authentic life.

So, an Emotionally Healthy Spiritual life is one that spends time in reflection, looking beneath the surface at our motivation and emotions. It is one that takes personal responsibility for cultivating a personal relationship with God, and it is one that is prepared to learn the lessons of adversity and brokenness.

An emotionally healthy spirituality is more David than Saul.

## **Point 3 – Learning Through Brokenness**

Where have you experienced a recent setback, struggle, or disappointment?

---

What might God be teaching or shaping in you through it?

### **Check-In: Signs of Emotional Unhealth (circle or highlight)**

- Avoiding feelings
- Overworking/over-serving
- Hiding pain
- Fear of people's approval
- Busyness
- Defensiveness
- Ignoring the past
- Living without limits

Which one is most relevant to you right now? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Weekly Practice – Daily Emotional Check-In (5 minutes)**

1. What did I feel today? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did I feel it? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did I invite God into it? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Personal Prayer**

Lord, search me and show me what's beneath the surface. Give me courage to be honest and grace to grow. Amen.