

# UNIT V

## EMOTIONS



Have you ever been emotional before/after/during competition or practice? How did it affect you?

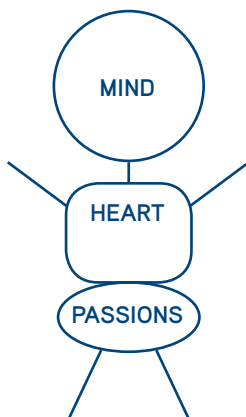
If performance is impacted by distractions, we know often from experience that our emotions can be one of our biggest distractions.

If we don't learn to control our emotions, our emotions will control us.

Have emotions ever hurt the performance of an athlete? When are you most likely going to have an emotional breakdown?

So when might emotion be a good thing?

*Discuss instances like saving someone from a burning building, or jumping in the pool to save a child, etc. Our emotions give us that rush which helps our will act on what our mind is telling us is the right thing.*



Our mind is meant to govern us, letting our will know what the right thing is to choose. Emotions/passions serve that choice. At the same time, emotions/passions can become so strong, that instead of serving that choice they control it.

What are the other areas where uncontrollable emotions, especially anger, often affect us?

**Eph 4:26-27, 31** – “Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice.”

*Exact Sports* gives the following four pieces of advice to control anger in competition (discuss each point):

1. Before you do anything irrational, try to talk through your anger and let it give your body a confidence boost that can make you run faster and play even harder.
2. If you don't learn how to let the little things go during the game, you won't be able to jump back from it the entire game.
3. Communicate with your teammates and coaches. When you keep things bottled up inside that happened in practice or during the first half of the game, it gets the best of you and then your anger takes over
4. Use the anger or frustration you have from your mistake and try to focus only on the next good play you are about to make

Any of these points seem to be pertinent to you in particular?

How might excessive emotion/anger distract us from our relationship with God? What are other things it can lead us to?

*There are three main ways anger surfaces as a bad and sinful thing: blind wrath* (closes the eyes, mind, ears to truth and judges something before we know the facts), *bitterness*, and *revengeful resentment* (these two poison us to cast out love from the situation).

In the “Our Father”, it says “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” God will forgive us in the same degree that we are willing to forgive.

Why is forgiveness such an important part of our relationships? Why is it so hard to forgive?

**Discuss** – Jesus cleansing the Temple; anger is okay unless it leads to sin, etc.

“The power of wrath is a force directed toward the difficult achievement, toward the thing beyond the easy grasp, ever ready to expose itself wherever an ‘arduous good’ waits to be conquered.” Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*

As we discussed above with emotions, anger can be a great thing if we are smart about it and allow it to help motivate us to achieve something that is good and worthy of our pursuit.

**Beatitudes** – “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

What is the first thing you think of when you hear the word “meekness”?

Meekness – the virtue to moderate our anger and maintain a serene mind and heart in the midst of turbulent actions and emotions; *power under control*

**John 18:19-23.** “The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, ‘I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together; I have said nothing secretly. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me, what I said to them; they know what I said.’ When he had said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, ‘Is that how you answer the high priest?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?’”

What do you think of Jesus’ reaction?

To be without any surge of anger is not to be meek and virtuous. Again, anger can be a great tool. To be meek and virtuous is to have power over the anger, and to use it to serve your pursuit of the good.

Meekness gives us freedom – real freedom; a true man is not ruled by his emotions

How can being angry with yourself be harmful?

**Challenge:** What is your hot spot? If a person, pray for them when you see them. If an event or activity, look for something positive in it.