

Past Feeling

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Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. (Ephesians 4:19)

Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: (Romans 1:31)

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. (Isaiah 49:15)

I. We hear a lot about psychopaths these days - what is a psychopath?

First a bit of terminological history, to clear up any confusion about the meanings of "sociopath," "psychopath," and related terms. In the early 1800s, doctors who worked with mental patients began to notice that some of their patients who appeared outwardly normal had what they termed a "moral depravity" or "moral insanity," in that they seemed to possess no sense of ethics or of the rights of other people. The term "psychopath" was first applied to these people around 1900.

A. These are the scientific criteria for identifying a psychopath:

Uncaring

Psychopaths are described as being callous and showing a lack of empathy, traits which can be described as "coldheartedness." The criteria for dissocial personality disorder include a "callous unconcern for the feelings of others."

They cannot seem to understand or share the feelings of others.

A psychopath has no conscience, while a sociopath has a conscience, but it is weak and doesn't stop him from doing what he does.

The emotion of disgust also plays an important role on our ethical sense. We find certain types of unethical actions disgusting, and this works to keep us from engaging in them and makes us express disapproval of them. But psychopaths have extremely high thresholds for disgust, as measured by their reactions when shown disgusting photos of mutilated faces and when exposed to foul odors.

Shallow emotions

Psychopaths, and to a degree, sociopaths, show a lack of emotion, especially the social emotions, such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment.

Irresponsibility

Psychopaths show unreliability, they blame others for events that are actually their fault. They may admit blame when forced into a corner, but these admissions are not accompanied by a sense of shame or remorse.

Insincere speech

Ranging from "glibness" and "superficial charm" to "untruthfulness" and "insincerity," to outright "pathological lying" and "conning others for personal profit or pleasure," there is a

trend toward devaluing speech among psychopaths by inflating and distorting it toward selfish ends. (blowhards)

Overconfidence

Possessing a “grandiose sense of self worth.”

Narrowing of attention

Psychopaths are easily distracted and have a hard time focusing on a task when there are interruptions and distractions.

Selfishness

Showing a pathologic egocentricity [and incapacity for love], a parasitic lifestyle.

Inability to plan for the future

Showing a “failure to follow any life plan.” Psychopaths have a “lack of realistic long-term goals.”

Violence

The criteria for dissocial personality include, a “very low tolerance to frustration and a low threshold for discharge of aggression, including violence.”

- II. God created man, but He did not leave man alone, because that was not good and it was not in God's plan.

¶ And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. (Genesis 2:18)

- A. First God created all the animals and other living creatures.
1. This was Adam's first experience with feelings for other living creatures.
 2. Obviously, Adam thought about them and studied them and their lives, because he gave them names.

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. (Genesis 2:19)

3. Adam did not just look at them as things, but as fellow creatures who were alive and had feelings themselves.
- B. This was good, but it did not fulfill God's design for man to made in his own image and likeness.

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (Genesis 2:20)

1. Adam needed someone like himself in order to be able to experience life as God intended it to be.

¶ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (Genesis 2:21-22)

- C. Adam could share in the feelings of another person like himself.
1. This was the very heart of God's plan for man.
 2. God made man to live together with others like himself in peace and love and fellowship.
 3. Man is a social creature and he is made to have feelings for others, and to share in the feelings of others.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (Romans 12:15)

4. God never intended for man to be selfish and to seek his own desires at the expense of others, but to be compassionate and a blessing to enrich the lives of others.
 5. That is one of the reasons that God looked at all He had made and said "it is very good."
- D. Feelings are tied to morality because morality is all about how we treat God and others. If we are past feeling and have no compassion or concern for how our actions affect others then we have no morals.

And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. (Luke 6:31)

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:30-31)

III. Sin entered in and wrecked God's perfect arrangement for man.

- A. Sin begins when a person puts their own feelings, needs, and desires above the welfare of others.
1. Not only does this happen with strangers and people you don't know, but it happens among people who do care for each other - families, marriages, etc.

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- B. Sin's effect is that it causes a person who is pursuing their own interests to stop considering what other people feel.

Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: (Romans 1:31)

1. Affection means to have our heart affected by something outside of ourselves, especially other people.
2. God's design is that we are affected by the sorrow, suffering, and pain, as well as the joy, blessing, and happiness of others.
3. This verse tells us that in the last days people will be hard and coldhearted about others.

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. (Matthew 24:12)

- C. The result of sin is that a person like this ceases to feel what others feel and becomes completely immersed in their own feelings and desires.
1. They have no compassion, sympathy, or pity.

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- D. This is called depravity and it is the result of sin.

IV. God made us in his own image and likeness and He made us to enjoy living.

- A. The basic thing about the life of our souls is that we have these feelings and emotions that we all experience.
- B. When we reach out to others in compassion, sympathy, and pity we experience joy, satisfaction, and happiness.

- C. When we forget the feelings, the sufferings, and the needs of others and we become focused on our own feelings and needs we experience frustration, anger, depression, and bitterness.
- D. The only people who are happy are those who think of others before themselves - just as God does with us.
- E. God made man to be the object of his love.
 - 1. He made man to have someone like himself to bestow his benevolence upon.
 - 2. He became a man so that He could show mankind his compassion toward him.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

- V. The only cure for being "past feeling" is to be born again.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:26)

- A. The old is no good - because of sin it is ruined and depraved and corrupt - it must go.
- B. The life must be surrendered back to God and He must be enthroned in the heart.
- C. It is impossible to truly know God and not be quickened in our soul and spirit, which means all the feelings are brought to life again.

The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. (Psalms 145:8)

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

- D. When we obtain the mind of Christ we will think of others again and we will be like Him in our attitudes toward them.