

Good morning, Covenant Reformed,

Thank you for gathering yesterday to worship our God in heaven, together as we're created to do! It was a wonderful time of fellowship, and as always, it was great to see you all.

As I prepare sermons, parts of the text tend to stand out to me and applications (some obvious, some less so) to everyday life seem appropriate to discuss. When I eventually deliver some sermons, I realize that my thoughts don't always come across the way I intend. I wanted to apologize for a couple ideas I expressed yesterday that may have presented a position that was off base and offer a couple of clarifications regarding the message.

First, I don't believe that all feelings are deceitful or bad in themselves. What I was trying to address were the feelings that arise from discipline and how easily we can respond to them improperly. God's discipline is meant to shape us, and we should seek to receive it humbly rather than resist it. While I believe this was an important point in the message, I could have been far clearer in distinguishing those particular feelings from our emotions in general.

God created us with the ability to experience emotions, and, being a product of his design, feelings are not inherently wrong or bad. We must learn to evaluate our responses and consider whether they are shaped by godly desires and a proper understanding of our circumstances or are instead centered on ourselves and what we want...how we would have it if we were god.

Second, I said something to the effect that if we are walking with God, the discipline we experience will not be as heavy. That is simply false and I apologize if my words caused any confusion. Some of the most godly people I have ever known have faced, and continue to face, very difficult circumstances. Walking with the Lord does not guarantee an easier life or mean that the obstacles we encounter will be less difficult.

The reality is that walking with the Lord changes how we face those difficulties. It doesn't make them easy, but when we look to Him for strength, lean on Him, and trust in His faithfulness, the effect those struggles have on our attitudes and spirits can be vastly different. We can approach our circumstances with gratitude for God's presence and sustaining grace rather than allowing bitterness to take root over the lot we have been given. I hope

the conclusion of yesterday's sermon made clear the importance of guarding our hearts against bitterness and learning to respond to life's difficulties in a godly manner.

Please reach out to me if you would like clarification on anything I intended to communicate and again, I apologize for any confusion. I endeavor to be clearer in my communication in the future.

In Christ,
Tim