

Do you have baggage?

Grant Mullen M.D.

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In the past few issues we have been discussing how important our emotions are and how God wants to lead us to emotional health and freedom. Today I want to give you an easy to understand framework so you can see the factors that influence your emotions.

In my model there are 3 parts to humans, body, personality (or what the Bible calls Soul) and spirit. They all have an influence on your emotions.

The body is the part of you that relates to the physical world. It does that through your 5 senses. Your body is a temporary container that we use while on this planet.

The spirit is your eternal self. It's the part of you that relates to and communicates with the invisible or spiritual realm. It is able to connect to good or evil, the kingdom of God or of Satan.

The personality is the part of you that relates to other people. It includes your attitudes, self image, will and feelings. The health of your personality determines the quality of the relationships you will have in life.

Your personality is molded and shaped by life events. The more good experiences you have, the more positive and pleasant will be your personality. The more painful and wounding experiences you have, the more damaged your personality will be.

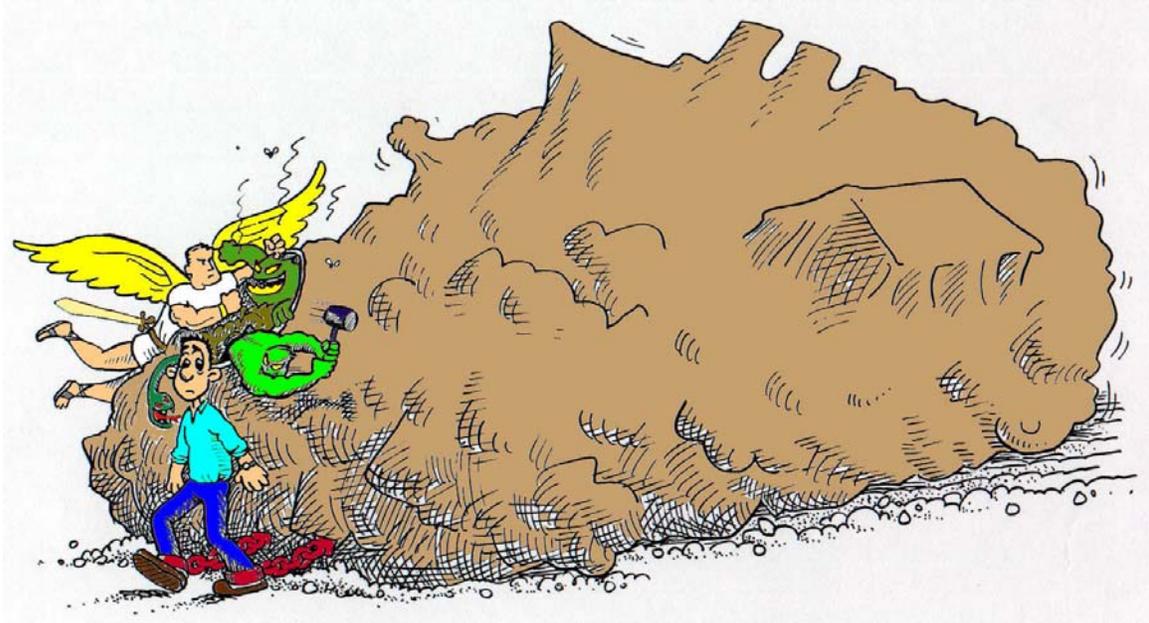
I like to think of the personality as being a large bag into which we put all our life experiences. The more good experiences we have stored there, the better our personality and relationships. The more pain and hurt in the bag, the more dysfunctional we become.

This, is what we refer to as our emotional baggage.

The bag can be small like this:



or large like this one,



depending on what we have lived through and experienced.

Where do you think that bag is located? Yes, you guessed it, between your ears. There is an astonishing amount of room there to store baggage.

Let's look at these 3 parts and see what happens to them before and after we become born again Christians.

Before salvation our spirit is living in Satan's kingdom. As soon as we are born, Satan wants to wound, hurt and damage us so that we will believe all his lies and never be able to accept God's free gift of salvation. He wants to mold us into his image by creating as many negative experiences as possible which are then stuffed into the bag. The longer we remain in his kingdom, the larger our baggage becomes and the greater the damage to our personalities.

When we become Christians, what happens to our spirit? It changes kingdoms and changes ownership. It is a legal transaction. When we invite Jesus into our hearts, our spirit moves into the Kingdom of God and we begin a relationship with Him.

What happens to your body at the moment of salvation? Well, usually not much. If you wore glasses before you were saved, then you probably wore them after. We will eventually get a new body though, but we will have to wait for Heaven.

What happens to your personality at the moment of salvation?

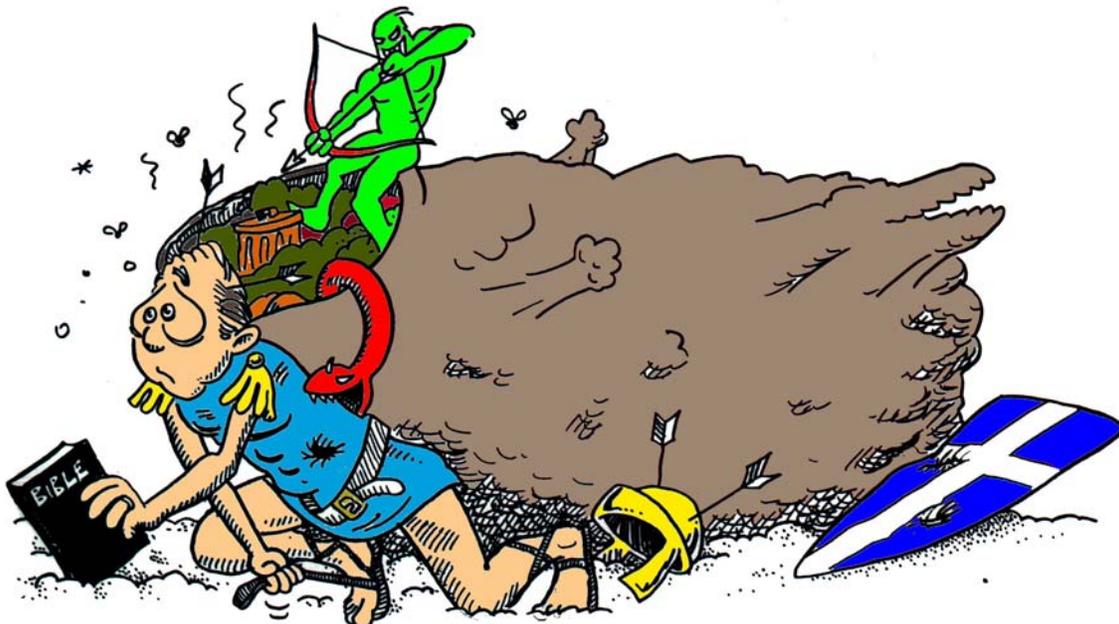
I've already shown you the amount of baggage that you may be carrying from the years in Satan's kingdom. Jesus comes and rescues you when you are at your worst, in a broken and lost state. You don't have to do a thing to clean yourself up or get rid of baggage to qualify for salvation. You just have to ask Jesus to come and He will remove all your guilt and sin from you. So what happens to all that baggage that you were carrying?



At the moment after salvation you become this, a Christian with baggage. Yes, your sins are removed at salvation but your personality isn't. You enter the Kingdom with all your painful memories, bad habits, dysfunctional relationships and attitudes.

Unfortunately, too many Christians look like this, they wrap their Christian clothes around their baggage and think that everything is fine. They don't realize that God wants us to be saved and transformed, so they continue to carry their baggage with all the painful memories and deep inner hurts.

When you are carrying baggage wrapped in Christian clothes, you may think everything is fine because everyone you know looks the same way. The reality is however that you really look like this.



Is this man walking in victory? No, he is stumbling along.

Does this man know the truth? Well, he's carrying a Bible so he knows some truth.

Does he know that something is wrong? Yes, you can tell from his face that he knows something is wrong.

But here is the most important question. Does he know what the problem is?
No he doesn't. He's bewildered. He knows that as a Christian he should be walking in victory but he isn't. The problem is his baggage.
As long as we don't deal with our emotional baggage it will weigh us down and be a constant stumbling block.

Do you think that Christians who look like this are a threat to Satan? Not at all. He's not intimidated by someone who is weighed down by baggage.
What does a church look like when it's filled with these kinds of Christians? It's not a pretty sight. You've probably attended one.

The reason why so few Christians deal with their baggage is because we never talk about it. It's just not a topic that comes up on Sunday mornings. We think that if we don't talk about it, then it's not there or it will go away.

God wants to set us free from our sins and our baggage. He wants to transform each of our 3 parts.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the Bible says, "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To be transformed, we need to do this, take our baggage to the cross. He is waiting with open arms to take your baggage from you. Will you give it to him?



Remember, God wants you to be emotionally free.

Dr. Grant Mullen is a mental health physician and author who lectures internationally on the keys to emotional recovery and healthy relationships. He has a special interest in the integration of medical treatment with spiritual and emotional healing models to see people transformed.

Dr. Mullen is the author of [Emotionally Free](#) and the producer of [14 DVD's](#)

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