

## EMOTION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE POLEMIC BETWEEN REFORMED AND PENTECOSTAL/ CHARISMATIC

*Muriwali Yanto Matalu*

*Gerakan Kebangunan Kristen Reformed (GKKR) &  
Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia (GGRI)*

Korespondensi: muryto@yahoo.co.id

**ABSTRACT:** The relevance of emotions in Christian worship have become an important issue particularly when polemic on this topic emerges between Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic Christians. In this paper, the author strives to study and analyze the emotions both in history and in recent study to find out the concept and meaning of that term in the hope that this research contributes to both Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic toward a better worship in the future. The author starts with presenting the polemic between Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic, then describing the concept and meaning of the emotions in history and in recent research, and finally, making proposals on how emotions to be used in Christian worship.

**KEYWORDS:** *Emotions; history of emotions; Reformed; Pentecostal/ Charismatic; Christian worship.*

**ABSTRAK:** Relevansi emosi di dalam penyembahan Kristen telah menjadi isu penting, terutama ketika polemik mengenai topik ini muncul antara orang-orang Kristen Reformed dan Pentakosta/ Kharismatik. Di dalam tulisan ini, penulis berusaha untuk mempelajari dan menganalisis emosi baik di dalam sejarah maupun di dalam studi kontemporer, untuk menemukan konsep dan arti dari istilah tersebut, dengan harapan bahwa riset ini berkontribusi terhadap Reformed maupun Pentakosta/ Kharismatik, sehingga menuju kepada satu penyembahan terhadap Tuhan dengan lebih baik ke depannya. Penulis memulainya dengan menyajikan polemik antara pandangan Reformed dan Pentakosta/ Kharismatik, lalu mendeskripsikan konsep dan arti emosi di dalam sejarah dan di dalam riset yang lebih baru, dan diakhiri dengan mengajukan usulan mengenai bagaimana emosi

digunakan di dalam penyembahan Kristen.

**KATA KUNCI:** *Emosi; sejarah emosi; Reformed; Pentakosta/ Kharismatik; Penyembahan Kristen.*

---

## Introduction

Polemic on emotions between Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic Christians has appeared during many decades. On the one hand, for the Pentecostal/ Charismatic, emotions have a substantial role in worship. However, it is often overdone. While on the other hand, for the Reformed, being too emotionally is against the biblical teachings of maintaining self-control as an aspect of the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Galatians. 5:23). Consequently, some Reformed churches seem to downplay passions in their services. Indeed, as we will see, this distinction came from the fact that the two are rooted in different traditions.

In this paper, we will learn from history and from recent study on how emotions are perceived, then we will endeavor to find contributions for both Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic on how to handle emotions in Christian worships.

A few questions will guide this study: 1) Why do Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic disagree on how emotions are viewed in worship? 2) How do thinkers in history understand emotions, and what are the thoughts of the Christian theologians about this issue? 3) How do contemporary thinkers view emotions? 4) What contributions can be proposed to both Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic church? Based on these questions, we will describe the polemic between Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic, then making a sketch of the history of the ideas about emotions (affections/ passions) and dealing with the thoughts of the Christian theologians. Afterwards, we will analyze recent research on this topic, and finally, the contributions of this study will be proposed as a conclusion.

## Polemic on Emotions between Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic

The subject of emotions became a significant issue after the emergence of the Pentecostal movements at the beginning of the last century and the Charismatic movements at the middle of that century.<sup>1</sup> One of the character-

---

<sup>1</sup> According to the research of Jan S. Aritonang, *Berbagai Aliran di Dalam dan di Sekitar Gereja* (Jakarta: BPK, 2001), 167, Pentecostal movements was started in 1901 with Charles F. Parham as its central figure. And in 197, 203, the Charismatic Movements was started in 1960 when a group of people experienced what

istics of the Pentecostal/ Charismatic style is emotionalism. While addressing the Charismatic life, J. I. Packer suggests that emotionalism is one of the negative aspects in Charismatic life beside elitism, sectarianism, anti-intellectualism, etc.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Packer also listed some positive aspects such as Christ-centeredness, joyfulness, prayerfulness, etc.<sup>3</sup> Reformed Christians, as we will describe, incline to downplay the Charismatic experiences. As a consequence, this disparity leads to a polemic.

For the Charismatics, emotions have a fundamental role in worship. A few examples could be mentioned here. While explaining his emotional experience with “the Holy Spirit,” Benny Hinn (a Charismatic pastor who often organized great meetings by proposing prosperity gospel) claims, “I felt total peace, and yet I exploded with ecstasy.”<sup>4</sup> We pay particular attention to his last phrase, “exploded with ecstasy.” In comparison to an Indonesian setting, in which the Charismatic movements gain their ground particularly by organizing open air meetings which are attended by hundreds of thousands people similar to that of Hinn, an Indonesian Charismatic pastor criticizes the worship in the Christian tradition (e.g. Reformed tradition) as too rigid and too cold which hinders the presence of God.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, he is maintaining a way of worship, namely, a passionate worship.

Speaking on emotional expressions in Pentecostal worship, Marius Nel writes,

The worship comes in diverse and interactive expressions. At times the congregation worship and even sing in tongues together; at other times, they sing and praise in their mother tongue, they pray for the sick and prophesy, perform miracles, laugh and dance, also when the thanks offering is given (Pinnock 1996:129). Orality of liturgy, narrativity of theology and witness, maximum participation at the level of reflection, prayer and decision-making in a community characterized by inclusion and reconciliation, inclusion of visions and dreams as means of revelation, and a holistic understanding of the body-mind relationship reflected in the ministry of healing and deliverance and demonstrated in the clapping and lifting of hands give Pentecostalism its prodigium (Hollenweger 1986:6), serving as distinctive marks of Pentecostal spirituality (Armstrong 2006:86).<sup>6</sup>

What is more, in giving sermons, Pentecostal preachers are often “calling for a response (interspersed by ‘Amen’ and ‘Hallelujah!’ from listeners)”

---

they said as “baptism in the Spirit” in a small city called Van Nuys.

<sup>2</sup> J.I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1984), 191-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-91.

<sup>4</sup> Benny Hinn, *The Anointing* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 16.

<sup>5</sup> See Niko Njotorahardjo, *Healing Movement* (Yogyakarta: Andi, 2009), 63.

<sup>6</sup> Marius Nel, “Attempting to Develop a Pentecostal Theology of Worship,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 37 No.1 (2016): 1-8.

and even the listeners could add something to the sermon what they think important. There are, in the worship, fervent prayer, soul-stirring music, shouting and passionate testimony by any of the congregations.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, in general, scholars agree that Pentecostal movements rooted in holiness movement; a movement within the Methodist church, a result of the work of John Wesley (1703-1791). The subject of holiness is one of Wesley's main teachings. Wesley believes that after justification through faith and regeneration, believers will receive a second blessing, namely, holiness.<sup>8</sup> Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929), a pastor of Episcopal Methodist Church (in which he studied on the subject of holiness), is a key figure of the birth of the Pentecostal movements. He resigned from the Methodist church for he was not satisfied. He saw that the holiness and the gift of the Spirit were not practiced properly. Another reason, he was also had relationship to other movements which maintain divine healing and Spirit baptism.<sup>9</sup> In the beginning of 1901, Agnes N. Ozman, one of Parham's students, experienced Spirit baptism and practiced speaking in tongue (*glossolalia*). Finally, this phenomenon was experienced by Parham himself and others.<sup>10</sup> Thus, this was the beginning of the Pentecostal movements with the emotional experiences from which later, the Charismatic movements, spread out around 1960s.

For the Reformed tradition, being too emotional is inappropriate and a sign of the worldly life. As a reaction against the Charismatic Christians who lose their self-control (a part of the role of emotions) when they shake, groan, and laugh uncontrollably, Gerhard H. Visscher, argues that the Bible speaks about the Spirit that directs us in exactly the opposite way.<sup>11</sup> According to him, Paul says that the fruit of the Spirit is self-control (Galatians 5:22) and not the opposite.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, he maintains, "the Spirit of God does not make us less fit for the world, but more fit. Drunkenness and the filling of the Spirit are opposites."<sup>13</sup> A Reformed scholar from Ghana, Confidence Worlanyo Bansah, reacts to the Pentecostal/ Charismatic's emotionalism in its connection to the "speaking in tongues." He started his article with the following, "The emergence of global Pentecostalism and Charismaticism brought a great deal of sensationalism and emotionalism into the practice

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Aritonang, *Berbagai Aliran*, 167-9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>11</sup> See Gerhard H. Visscher, "Toronto Blessing or Temples of the Holy Spirit?" [http://www.canadian-reformedseminary.ca/files/Visscher%20-%20Toronto%20Blessing\\_.pdf](http://www.canadian-reformedseminary.ca/files/Visscher%20-%20Toronto%20Blessing_.pdf) (accessed April 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

of Christianity in Ghana and Africa in general. This led to the stressing of speaking in tongues as evidence of the filling with the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup> In Indonesia, Stephen Tong, although very passionate in his preaching, he also propagates self-control in using emotions especially in Christian life, service, and worship.<sup>15</sup> Based on his strong conviction of the Reformed faith on how Christians sanctify their emotions, he criticizes Charismatic Christians who tend to carried emotions to excess.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, in the Netherlands, Hans Maris, states that the emotional religious experiences of the Pentecostals/Charismatics have similarity with the experiences in paganism.<sup>17</sup> We can add to our list John McArthur who wrote a book entitled “Charismatic Chaos,” which criticizes Charismatic phenomena (including the use of emotions).<sup>18</sup> Besides such resistant from people like Visscher, Tong, Maris, and McArthur, a few Reformed theologians, such as Packer (we have mentioned above), tries to approach the Charismatic emotionalism in a more sympathetic manner. Packer admits that there are some positive points in Charismatic movements,<sup>19</sup> although at the same time he also warns about the danger of such emotionalism. Packer asserts,

Its warmth and liveliness attract highly emotional and disturbed people to its ranks, and many others find in its ritual emotionalism some relief from strains and pressures in other areas of their lives (marriage, work, finance, and so forth). But such sharing in group emotion is a self-indulgent escapist “trip” that must debilitate in the long run. Generally the movement seems to teeter on the edge of emotional self-indulgence in a decidedly dangerous way.<sup>20</sup>

The resistant of these Reformed thinkers and pastors faced a critical response from the Pentecostal thinkers, and extends to other issue, such as, cessationism.<sup>21</sup> For instance, while dealing with the growth of the Pentecostal

---

<sup>14</sup> Confidence Worlanyo Bansah, “Is Speaking in Tongues Real Today?: An African Christian Perspective,” *The American Journal of Biblical Theology* 17/13 (2016): 1-6, for instance argues, “Using Mark 16:15-18 to argue for the existence of tongues beyond the early church in my view is misleading. This is because the longer ending of Mark’s gospel is still debatable among biblical scholars. Speculations are ripe that verses 9 to 20 were not included in the original manuscript and due to the fact that this pericope is missing from some of the old and reliable Greek manuscripts such as the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus as well as the numerous early Latin, Syriac, Armenian and Georgian manuscripts, it has to read with uttermost suspicion.”

<sup>15</sup> His book “Pengudusan Emosi” (Sanctification of Emotion) deals with this issue.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hans Maris, *Gerakan Kharismatik dan Gereja Kita* (Surabaya: Momentum, 2004), 111.

<sup>18</sup> As a response to what he views as false regarding the emotions in Charismatic movements, he argues “God has given us our emotions so that we can respond to His truth. But I do not have an experience that is godly, that leads me to truth in a vacuum. I have an experience in response to truth.” See John MacArthur, “Charismatic Chaos: Sermon 1 - ‘Are experiences a valid source of truth?’” <http://articles.ochristian.com/article2177.shtml> (accessed May, 22, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit*, 186.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>21</sup> On the one side, Reformed tradition holds that supernatural gifts of the Spirit like miraculous,

churches in China, Robert Menzies describes Tong's view of cessationism as a "virulent attacks" to some churches. Based on his interview of Dennis Balcombe, he writes,

The challenges are very real, however. In my recent interview with Dennis Balcombe he stated that the primary challenge Pentecostals in China currently face comes from the virulent attacks from the Indonesian-based pastor Stephen Tong. Balcombe likens Tong's theology, laced as it is with cessationist polemic, to "rat poison," which combines much that is good with a little that is deadly. Balcombe cites several examples of churches that have been destroyed after embracing Tong's teachings.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, Menzies maintains that in spite of Tong's critiques to the Pentecostal view, it is difficult to believe that the cessationist thought will win the hearts and minds of the Chinese Christians. The strengths of the Pentecostal movement according to him is its straightforward approach to the Bible.<sup>23</sup> However, Menzies' criticism of Tong's movement in China is stirred more by his Pentecostal presupposition rather than biblical reasons. In my observation, Tong's teaching often becomes key element in driving Christians back to the biblical doctrines.

### Emotions in the History

The discourse of emotions has a long history, as Scarantino describes, "Philosophers' fascination with the emotions is as old as philosophy itself."<sup>24</sup> This is not an exaggerating fact, for ancient Greek philosophers such as Plato (428-348 BCE) and Aristotle (384-322 BCE) had dealt with the emotions while they explained the word *pathē*. Plato expresses that human soul has a powerful *pathē* that energized the body and enabled it to expect pleasant and unpleasant feelings from a given object.<sup>25</sup> Aristotle agrees with Plato in this sense, however both also have a difference in viewing the function of arts performing at the theatre in its relationship to the pathos. While Aristotle believes comedies and tragedies that were played at the theatre as able to bring catharsis which is a mechanism that generates virtuous control of *pathē*,

---

healing, speaking in tongue, etc. had been ceased when the books of the Holy Bible were complete. This view is known as cessationism. While on the other side, Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians believe that such gifts continue to exist today in the church. This view is known as continuationism.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Menzies, "Pentecostal in China" in *Global Renewal Christianity: Spirit-Empowered Movement, Past Present, and Future*, Vol. 1, ed. by Vinson Synan & Amos Yong (Lake Mary: Charisma House), Kindle Electronic Edition: Location 214.4-215.8.

<sup>23</sup> Menzies, "Pentecostal in China" Kindle Electronic Edition: Location 214.4-215.8.

<sup>24</sup> Andrea Scarantino, "The Philosophy of Emotions and Its Impact on Affective Science," in *Handbook of Emotions, Fourth Edition*, ed. Lisa Feldman Barrett, Michael Lewis, and Jeanette M. Haviland-Jones (New York: The Guilford Press, 2016), 3.

<sup>25</sup> Ute Frevert, "The History of Emotions," in *Handbook of Emotions, Fourth Editions*, ed. Lisa Feldman Barrett, Michael Lewis, and Jeanette M. Haviland-Jones (New York: The Guilford Press, 2016), 50.

Plato views artistic mimesis in a negative manner since it can drive people to indulge in orgies of passion.<sup>26</sup> Concerning the place of emotions, both Plato and Aristotle agree “that there were irremovable emotional dispositions of the soul based on natural capacities which make people sensitive to various objects of emotional response.” Moreover, when the emotional powers are manifested via particular evaluations, one will have certain feelings and is moved to act correspondingly.<sup>27</sup>

The Stoic thinkers (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) understand *pathē* as propositions and judgments that moved the soul in a particular manner and direction.<sup>28</sup> They recognize emotions in four primary forms, such as, pleasure (*hēdonē*), distress or pain (*lupē*), appetite (*epithumia*), and fear (*phobos*). According to them, pleasure and distress/ pain have relationship to the present, while the appetite and fear to the future.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, we should not suppress *pathē* but it must be well comprehended and processed, although we have to flee from the impulses of *pathē* in order to gain *apatheia* which is a complete impassivity and peace of mind.<sup>30</sup> Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE) is one of the Roman philosophers who had been influenced by the stoics. Regarding the *adfectus* (Seneca translated it from the Greek word *pathos*), he describes that it has bad outcomes which reduce man’s freedom of action and reasoning. He encouraged his students to treat the future subjects with mild clemency rather than with haughty arrogance. Also, he motivated them to elevate a conduct of life that sought serenity and harmony by lowering passions and affections.<sup>31</sup>

In the modern era, Rene Descartes (1596-1650), who has dualistic view, divides human as two different elements, body and soul. According to him, body produces motion and heat, whereas soul generates thoughts of which two aspects can be recognized, namely, *actions* of the soul which are acts of will (e.g. the will to love God) and *passions* of the soul which are perceptions. Furthermore, he acknowledges that perceptions partly caused by the soul and partly by the body. Some of the perceptions caused by the body are referred to external object which are sensory perceptions (e.g. visual perceptions), some are referred to the body which are bodily perceptions (e.g. pain, hunger), and some are referred to the soul itself which are the passions properly understood. And, he maintains that the passions are experienced only in the soul rather than the body, hence, in his view, emotions are so

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>27</sup> Simon Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 47.

<sup>28</sup> Frevert, “The History of Emotions,” 50.

<sup>29</sup> Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 51.

<sup>30</sup> Frevert, “The History of Emotions,” 51.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

close and so internal to the soul.<sup>32</sup> Another modern philosopher, Spinoza (1632-1677), describes that emotions are centered on passions. He thinks that passions administer human responses and choices. Also, he argues that one can obtain freedom from passions by controlling them.<sup>33</sup>

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there were divergent views between A Priorism and Sensationalism concerning the nature of the mind. The A Priorist thinks mental faculties to be prior to experience and the Sensationalist sees them as product of experience. John Locke (1632-1704), who is a sensationalist although not in extreme sense, understands the powers of the mind as come from two sources, namely, sensations and internal sense (or reflection).<sup>34</sup> This Lockean division has been developed by the 'associationists' who were referred most frequently with the name of David Hartley (1705-1757), who wrote "Observations on Man," that was considered as the source of the teaching. According to the associationists, "all mental states, faculties or powers—from beliefs and desires to moral feelings and complex passions or emotions—were wholly acquired rather than innate."<sup>35</sup>

It is apparently that most of the Western philosophers we have described view emotions/ passions unfavorably.<sup>36</sup> For instance, while Plato warns against the orgies of passions (*pathē*) in its connection to artistic mimesis, Aristotle believes that they must be in virtuous control which can be acquired from comedies and tragedies which were performed at the theatre. The Stoics teach about fleeing from the impulses of *pathē*, and Seneca bluntly argues that *pathē* has bad outcomes which reduce man's freedom of action and reasoning. In modern times, while Descartes believes that emotions partly connect to the soul and partly to the body, Spinoza argues that people have to control passions in order to gain freedom.

### **Emotions in the Thoughts of the Christian Theologians**

In the Christian history, theologians had dealt with emotions as Dixon contends that the two historical figures of the church, Augustine (354—430) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), were in essence speaking about the human

<sup>32</sup> Scarantino, "The Philosophy of Emotions and Its Impact on Affective Science," 9.

<sup>33</sup> Arne Vikan, *A Fast Road to the Study of Emotions: An Introduction* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 75.

<sup>34</sup> Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 99.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>36</sup> Robert C. Solomon argues that Western thinkers (right up to the late twentieth century) took a negative view of emotions and saw them as inherently bodily, involuntary, and irrational. See Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 2.



soul, passion, and affection. He argues that both of them are pillars of classical Christian psychology.<sup>37</sup> The term *adfectus* (from Seneca) become a primary concern of the Christian thinkers, particularly, Augustine.<sup>38</sup> He views human being to have an inner and an outer part. The first is the intellectual man and the second is the sensible, organic creature. The first is superior and controls the second. However, because of the human fall into sin, the inner had to struggle to control the outer (the body). Moreover, our intellect is plagued not only by the disobedience of the body, but also by the degeneration, as a consequence of the fall, of the faculties of memory, knowledge, and will.<sup>39</sup> Based on such view, Augustine maintains that Christians have a right to perform affections like fear and desire as well as grief and joy, provided that the love of God is well ordered.<sup>40</sup>

Similar to Seneca, Augustine warns against the danger of the passions (e.g. lust and anger), although at the same time he encourages believers to perform Godly affections (e.g. sympathy, compassion, hatred of sin, etc.). Hence, he had a dual influence on Christian theologians. Luther and Calvin seem to maintain Augustine's warning on negative passions, while Jonathan Edwards is more positive about the role of religious affections.<sup>41</sup> Calvin, for instance, views affections (along with mind) as tend to corrupt. He maintains, "God gives us the guidance of the Spirit in our prayers to dictate what is right, and regulate our affections."<sup>42</sup> Hence, Calvin is more focus on the negative aspect of the affections which has to be regulated by the Holy Spirit. Contrary to Calvin, Edwards, in his "Religious Affections," maintains the positive aspects of the affections although at the same time he warns believers about false affections.<sup>43</sup>

What is more, Augustine sees passion as signs of deficiency and imperfection. Likewise, Aquinas believes that passion implied imperfections because it is a quality from which the divine was absolutely excluded.<sup>44</sup> Aquinas differentiates between rational intellect and will on the one side and irrational lower appetite on the other, in which the rational has priority over the irrational. In Aquinas hierarchy, the intellect and will are placed

---

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>38</sup> Frevert, "The History of Emotions," 51.

<sup>39</sup> Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 29-30.

<sup>40</sup> Frevert, "The History of Emotions," 51.

<sup>41</sup> Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 27.

<sup>42</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.20.5, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 150.

<sup>43</sup> In "Religious Affections" Edwards discusses about the false and the true affections. See Jonathan Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections: In Three Parts*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

<sup>44</sup> Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 42.

above the lower appetite. According to him, the lower appetite is moved by various passions, some are irascible and others concupiscible. Hope, despair, fear, courage, anger are the irascible passions. They are movements of the lower appetite towards a sense of good or a desirable object of sense that is hard to attain. While the concupiscible passions such as love, hate, desire, aversion, pleasure, sadness are less movements and more states of potential movements towards sense-goods or away from sense-evils.<sup>45</sup>

As great figures in Christian history, Augustine and Aquinas, have a significant influence on how Christians in general understand and act toward emotions. In the Protestant tradition, or particularly Reformed tradition, through the influence of Luther and Calvin, many churches have had less attention to the role of emotions in worship. For instance, many churches in Indonesia which came from Dutch Reformed tradition, are denying the significance of emotions in worship. Z. J. Ngelow argues that the Protestant churches give a cold and dry ministry compared to the Charismatic movements that perform blazing faith and warmly ministries which attract many people.<sup>46</sup> Michael Horton, an American contemporary Reformed thinker, realizes the missing of the emotional experiences with God in the Reformed tradition. After describing the tendency of the Reformed people who downplay the work of the Spirit (and the significance of experiencing God in their life), and recounting the danger of the Charismatic movements that put the Spirit in the center stage, hence rejecting his mission to glorify Christ, Horton writes,

But if our Reformation tradition has erred, especially of late—and it has—it has been on the side of denying experience, subjectivity, emotion, and the application of redemption. Sanctification, inner renewal, life in the Spirit, victory over sin—because these have been so emphasized, twisted, disfigured, misinterpreted and misapplied in our day, we risk becoming cynical about some very holy matters, quenching the same Spirit who brought us everything Christ purchased for us. While we find it easy (and too often delightful) to apply to charismatics the apostle Paul's lament, "They are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge," can anything be said in favor of knowledge without zeal? In fact, which is the more inexcusable offense: serving God in spite of poor theology, or ignoring Him in spite of better?<sup>47</sup>

### Recent Research on Emotions

A decade ago, Paul Thagard wrote an article entitled "The Emotional

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 35-6.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Aritonang, *Berbagai Aliran*, 214.

<sup>47</sup> Michael S. Horton, "Wanted: Apathetic Lutherans and Calvinists," *Reformation and Revival* 3, No. 2 (1994): 21-7.

Coherence of Religion.” In that article he argues that religion is emotional.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, he argues that all thinking has an emotional component.<sup>49</sup> Contrary to many thinkers in the past who view emotions as have no connection to the reason, and thus maintain a sharp division between emotional thought and rational cognition, he proposes that cognition is emotional.<sup>50</sup> Thus, while Thagard says that the religion is emotional, he identifies emotions as an integral part of the cognition. Similarly, Petri Järveläinen has said that at least during the last few decades emotions have been seen either as a cognitive act of mind or involve such acts as an essential component. Thus, they are not just irrational somatic perturbations and feelings, but they are (or somehow involve) cognitive evaluations.<sup>51</sup>

Besides the difference between most of the past thinkers who see emotions as non-cognitive and the present-day scholars who view them as cognitive (or as substantial elements of the cognitive), a more recent research on emotions shows that emotions are relative and depend on culture. Benedicte Grima maintains that “emotion is culture.”<sup>52</sup> This view is different to the theory that sees emotions as universal, for instance, Charles Darwin (1809-1882) who understands emotions through materialism and biological perspective. In the same way, Paul Ekman argues that emotions are biological and thus universal within humans.<sup>53</sup>

Corrigan argues that the debate between the universalists and the relativists as mentioned above have made a considerable impact to the discussion on religion and emotion. For instance, when scholars thought about a generalization in religion, they found that one of the common elements is emotion.<sup>54</sup> They universalize emotions in religion based on a model they found in churches and chapels in Europe, and even from the everyday devotions of people in the European streets.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, it is a kind of universalizing emotions which are perceived as the heart of the religion by reducing it to only one model, namely, Christianity. On the contrary,

---

<sup>48</sup> Paul Thagard, “The Emotional Coherence of Religion,” *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 5.1-2 (2005): 58-74.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. According to Thagard this division has been challenged by philosophers such as De Sousa (1988), economists such as Frank (1988), and neuroscientists such as Damasio (1994) etc.

<sup>51</sup> Petri Järveläinen, “What are Religious Emotions?” in *Religious Emotions: Some Philosophical Explorations*, ed. Willem Lemmens and Walter Van Herck (New Castle: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2008), 12.

<sup>52</sup> John Corrigan, “Cognitions, Universals, and Constructedness: Recent Emotions Research and the Study of Religion” in *Religious Emotions: Some Philosophical Explorations*, ed. Willem Lemmens and Walter Van Herck (New Castle: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2008), 40.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

cultural relativists maintain the difference among religious communities as a correction to the former view that fashioned all religiosity as species of Western, particularly, Christian emotional experience. They argue that emotion is produced in culture and “it is not so mysterious as to insusceptible to analysis.” Thus, while the former scholars universalize religion (reductively) and at the same time resist reductionism, the others demand the profoundly distinction between communities in which religious emotions is perceived as “made in culture.”<sup>56</sup>

However, Corrigan describe that contemporary knowledge on emotions is more significant than in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century through the renewed study of emotions in the sciences and humanities which has been in progress for some decades that provides a variety of challenges to the study of religion.<sup>57</sup> Thus, according to him, the studies of religion that have taken emotion for granted (e.g. the view that religion is emotional) has to be evaluated. He says, “interpretation will have to move from explaining religion as emotional to exploring *the ways in which* emotion and religion are intertwined.”<sup>58</sup> In this sense, Corrigan is right.

In the perspectives of the American psychologist, William James (1842-1910) and the Danish physician, Carl George Lange (1834-1900), emotions are seen as “the experience of psychological alterations, the perception of various kinds of disturbances within the body—changes in respiration, heart rate, perspiration, and so forth.”<sup>59</sup> In his article, “What is an Emotion?,” James criticizes the thought that sees emotions as affected by their brain seat alone. Conversely, he proposes that the emotions “correspond to processes occurring in the motor and sensory centres, already assigned, or in others like them, not yet mapped out.”<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, he maintains that “the emotional brain-processes not only resemble the ordinary sensorial brain-processes, but in very truth *are* nothing but such processes variously combined.”<sup>61</sup> However, some scholars being unfavorable to such theory and prefer to argue that emotions have to be related to ideas, for instance, Robert C. Solomon, who propose a cognitive theory of emotions in which concept and belief are fundamental in creating emotionality.<sup>62</sup> According to him, emotions are rational. This is not only in the sense that emotions connect into one’s behavior in a considerable manner and follow “regular

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>60</sup> William James, “What is an Emotion,” *Mind* Vol. 9, No. 34 (1884): 188-205.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Corrigan, “Cognitions, Universal, and Constructedness,” 42.

patterns (one's personality)," or in the sense that emotions can be described "as a coherent set of causes" as proposed by some psychological theories. But overall, they are judgments, intentional and intelligent.<sup>63</sup> Thus, Solomon concludes, "Emotions, therefore may be said to be rational in precisely the same sense in which all judgments may said to be rational; they require an advanced degree of conceptual sophistication, including a conception of self and at least some ability in abstraction."<sup>64</sup> In this sense, Solomon takes different position from the Western past thinkers (e.g. Christian theologians: Augustine and Aquinas) who perceive emotions/ passions as irrational lower appetite.

### **Proposals to the Reformed and Pentecostal/ Charismatic**

We have seen that there are too much emotions in the Pentecostal/ Charismatic worship and too little emotions in the Reformed worship. Indeed, too little emotions downplay the biblical teaching that believers have to praise him with whole heart and to rejoice in him. The Scripture declares, "I will praise you, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High" (Psalms 9:1-2).<sup>65</sup> Likewise, too much emotions underestimate the biblical teaching which propagates self-control (Galatians 5:23).

Some current churches which are called Reformed-Charismatic propose a synthesis in order to accommodate both the Reformed biblical teachings and the emotional worship of the Charismatic. Such combination is performed by churches such as King's Church London and Covenant Life Church.<sup>66</sup> On King's Church London which is pastored by Andrew Wilson, Brett McCracken describes,

The rollicking worship pulsed for nearly an hour in the humid Sanctuary: energetic singing, hundreds of hands raised, prophetic words referencing the Spirit's flames, and sparks of spontaneous prayer among strangers from different states and nations. When the worship ended, the crowd sat down, opened their English Standard Version Bibles and settled in for a 35-minutes expository sermon on Galatians ...<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Robert C. Solomon, *Not Passion's Slave: Emotions and Choice* (New York: OUP), Kindle Electronic Edition: Chapter 3, Location 34.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, Location 34-5.

<sup>65</sup> New King James Version.

<sup>66</sup> See Brett McCracken, "The Rise of Reformed Charismatics," *Christianity Today* (2017), [www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/january-february/rise-of-reformed-charismatics.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/january-february/rise-of-reformed-charismatics.html) (accessed February 28, 2019).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

Indeed, such combination is basically good. Also, I agree with Wilson who assert, "The mind and the emotions are not rivals. The way God reaches people is through both."<sup>68</sup> But, it seems, particularly in the case of King's Church London, that emotions were still exhibited in excessive manner. I propose that such worship still need to be evaluated especially on how believers show emotions/ passions in order to get more harmony between the Reformed biblical teachings and the passionate worship of the Charismatic.

In spite of the solution made by the Reformed-Charismatic churches, in the following I will present my suggestions based on the previous study. *First*, to the Reformed Christians. Although the past Christian theologians who have considerable impact to the Reformed tradition tend to have negative view on emotions/ passions (e.g. they view emotions/ passions as signs of imperfection and irrational), recent research shows that emotions cannot be separated from the reason, or in other words, the emotions are rational. Emotions/ passion are not evil in themselves and have to be integral part in Christian worship provided that the fruit of the Spirit; the self-control is maintained. Even the biblical narratives deal with the emotions in many places. Edwards argues, "The Holy Scripture do everywhere place religion very much in the affections; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion and zeal."<sup>69</sup> Thus, Reformed Christians need to change the perspective on how emotions are viewed particularly in the worship. In fact, the liturgical usage in the Reformed worship is basically biblical for it is in accord with God's order (c.f. God's order in creation, and the order in the worship of the people in Old Testament, e.g. Leviticus 10: 1-7). Also, it is in harmony with the New Testament's instruction to administer the worship in decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). However, the worship must be done with holy passions/ affections in order that it can be a living worship before the living God.

*Second*, to the Pentecostal/ Charismatic. It must be realized, that too much emotions in worship will generate an amount of dangers. In such worship, contemplating and enjoying one's own emotions will be possible to exist rather than reflecting and enjoying God. Moreover, performing too much emotions in worship shows that those who involve in such worship lack of self-control. In this sense, the past thinkers' view on emotions, either philosophers or theologians, that understand emotions/ passions as have to be controlled by reason, should be a good reminder in order to avoid what Plato says as, "orgies of passion" or what the Stoics describe as, "the

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, 102.

impulses of *pathē*." Indeed, worshiping God with emotions (passions/ affections) is substantial in Christian worship as long as it is orderly undertook. Hence, Pentecostal/ Charismatic worship will be biblical provided that: 1) The Christian truth is maintained and leads the passionate worship. 2) The use of emotions must be assisted with self-control. 3) Pentecostal/ Charismatic enthusiastic singing (praising) is a good thing but it has to be based on biblical truth. In fact, many Pentecostal/ Charismatic songs lack of sound biblical doctrines.<sup>70</sup> Also, singing and praising should not take time too much since preaching God's word will employ time longer for it is central in Christian worship.

---

<sup>70</sup> For instance, most of the Pentecostal songs in Nigeria only stress on Holy Spirit and personal relationship with God. See Udok, Ekaette Clement, Odunuga, & Adeola Funmilayo, "Music and Pentecostalism: The Nigerian Experience." *Review of Arts and Humanities* Vol. 5, No. 1 (2016): 52-60. In this sense, these Pentecostal songs downplay many important biblical doctrines.