

Psychology vs. Christianity

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Common

There's a man in jail for murder and the psychologist is called in. There's another in the hospital after attempting suicide and the psychologist is called in. There's a couple considering divorce and the psychologist is called in. There's a fellow going through Bible College for the ministry, and if he wants a 'job' he had better obtain a degree in psychological counseling. My point? Psychology is *common*. But I ask, is it *correct*? I posit that psychology is quackery. It is destructive to man. It is detestable to God. Reasons?

Disclaimer

I will give reasons but first let me attempt to clarify an important point. Is the whole field of psychology and psychiatry worthless? No. Any medical help for an organic, physiological problem – a pill for a headache or a thyroid gland – is very helpful and very welcomed. Anything of that nature is a great mercy to a needy humanity. But it is not all that simple, is it? The chemistry of the body is very complex, especially the make-up and function of the brain, and thus, it can be a great challenge to distinguish between what is a brain problem and what is a mind problem, that is, tissues v. issues. And there is so much interaction between the two – a broken toe can leave me feelin' kind of low mentally. Yes, the body can affect the mind. Conversely, the mind can affect the body.¹ Foolish spending (wrong thinking) can produce an ulcer.

¹ Proverbs 14:30 KJV

Notwithstanding all the difficulties in dealing with the soul, the quackery is this. First, psychology is a man-made philosophy regarding the soul (psyche), and as such, it invades God's territory. It is in competition with the doctrine of God. For psychology to offer a *spiritual* solution (counsel, doctrine) for a *spiritual* need is an insult to God. Second, for psychology to offer something *physical* (drugs) to treat a *spiritual* need (a mind-altering drug) is senseless and again a transgression against God. Summary?

- Physical treatment for physical need? Yes.
- Secular spiritual treatment for spiritual need? No.
- Physical treatment for spiritual need? No, at least not permanently. More later.

Origins

It might come as a surprise to know that the fathers of psychology were not good men; they were evil men. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was hostile toward Christianity. He used cocaine.² He was convinced it was the wonder drug of his day and he even prescribed it to others, resulting in the death of one of his friends.³ Though he has been marginalized in some places, yet his authority and thought are generally promoted in the classroom to this day. Carl Rogers (1902-1987), a leader in the rise of humanistic psychology, practiced occult. He forsook his wife in her illness for another!⁴ Carl Jung (1875-1961), whose authoritative pronouncements on the psyche are still cherished and quoted by millions, candidly admitted nearing the end of his life that his

2 Dave Hunt & T.A. McMahon, *America The Sorcerer's New Apprentice* (Harvest House Publishers, 1988), p. 127

3 Ibid., p. 140-141

4 Ibid., p. 107-109

works were derived from horrendous experiences with haunting spirit entities. He had a demon spirit guide named “Philemon.” Alas, he himself was nearly insane and at the brink of suicide.⁵ Indeed, what a curse is on the psychologists as evidenced by their own suicide rate. But the point is this: if the root is bad, what can you expect for fruit?

Misinterpretation

Psychology misinterprets sin as mental illness. Thus, the concept of actual guilt is dismissed. The psychologist talks about ‘hurts’ from parents, from background, from environment, etc. But, according to the Bible, the basic problem of the human race is simply sin.⁶ Man has both a bad record and a bad heart in the sight of God.

A bad record! Man is actually guilty before God and he feels it way down deep. He is loaded down with true guilt from a career of crime against God and neighbor. His conscience is defiled and he feels dirty.⁷

A bad heart! Man is a sinner by nature.⁸ He is crossways with the God who made him. He is infatuated with self, easily enraged with pride, frequently inflamed with lust, generally stubborn with rebellion, and angry with bitterness. He does not get his own way and he will hurt others or kill if he must. The Lord Jesus says the non-Christian is a child of the devil and acts like his father.⁹ Sin

5 Ibid., p. 112

6 Genesis 6:5

7 Romans 2:15

8 Romans 3:10f

9 John 8:44

was once so bad that God judged the world and killed all but Noah's family with a universal flood.¹⁰

Man is not mentally ill; he is mentally wrong. Man spends his life entertaining wrong thoughts of God, wrong thoughts of himself, wrong thoughts of life, a wrong view of the world, and eventually those lies and the built-in conflict with reality pile up on him. No wonder he is depressed.

Yes, man's supreme problem is sin and sin can get compounded by invading opportunistic demons resulting in rage and attempted murder. This was the case with King Saul in the Bible account.¹¹ One moment he was fine, but the next moment, upon the challenge to his pride, he would go wild, with demons pouring gasoline on the fires in his heart. But what does psychology do with a case like that? They handily call it schizophrenia. It sounds so professional. But King Saul's root problem was sin. It began with adult 'thumb-sucking' and then a temper tantrum – more sin driven by demonic powers. His problem was not mental illness, nor 'noble' depression. Rather it is man, captured and driven by wrong thoughts about himself before God. God calls it “a depraved mind.”¹² Listen to a former psychopathologist, "As evidenced by the life stories of both Nebuchadnezzar and King Saul, certain forms of insanity or mental torments can be the judgment of God. I saw this happen in one of my own relatives who refused to repent of his bitterness, outbursts of rage, abuse, hate, etc. Hate and jealousy literally can drive you insane, eventually." The root problem is sin. But man is so proud, and rather than deal with his

10 Genesis 6:13

11 1 Samuel 16:14

12 Romans 1:28f

sin, he will hide under the cloak of mental 'illness'. The root of bitterness grows well in that soil, watered with the attention of others and humanistic pity.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his book, *The Christian Soldier*, gives this revealing insight. Before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, in Barcelona, Madrid and other places, there were psychological clinics with large numbers of neurotics undergoing drug treatment and psychoanalysis. When the Civil War broke out the clinics were virtually emptied. These neurotic people were suddenly cured by a greater anxiety.¹³

It is only as men own up to their sins and their guilt, that they will find help. Jesus died for sins, not 'hurts'! The Great Physician came to deal with *cancer* of the soul, not scratches. The Lord Jesus placed the gospel (good news) at the bottom of the pile, and only as proud man humbles himself, as he digs down through the stockpile of sin will he find the gold of eternal life. Only as proud man contritely but openly calls 'baloney by its name', will he find help from above. But psychology provides a barrel-full of excuses and alibis whereby the sinner can escape the essential "conviction of sin,"¹⁴ and thereby will never come to the place of beating his breast, crying, "God be merciful to me the sinner."¹⁵ Psychology points one in quite the opposite direction – self-esteem. Notice how God did not permit Adam and Eve to go on shifting the blame and it was at that point they found a covering from God.¹⁶ So also, "If we confess our sins, He [God] is faithful and righteous to

13 p. 357

14 John 16:8

15 Luke 18:13

16 Genesis 3:12f

forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."¹⁷ The story is told of a prince who year by year would visit a prison and in an act of sovereign mercy would release one man. As he interviewed the inmates, each one had his excuses for his incarceration – parents, partner, people, even the king. But finally one inmate admits, "It was all my fault." The prince exclaimed, "Here's the man we are looking for. Release him."

A Pill for the Soul?

Psychiatry, the medical treatment of the soul, the administration of mind-altering drugs, appears to be a merciful thing. The idea is to dumb a fellow down to where he can get along with himself and with society. But ultimately the tranquilizer *at least* runs the risk of obscuring the soul's deep need of a radical transformation through a meeting with the living God. The drug will muffle the guilt and the crying need for reality, and he makes it through life, but ends up losing his soul in hell. The power of sin – the fires of lust, the haunting fears, the torment of long-standing grudges – is muffled perhaps for the rest of his life and rather than find real healing by the work of Christ on the cross, his conscience is put to sleep, he quits his shouting, he is never rescued, and his boat slips over the falls to eternal destruction. Laura Chavady, a professor of Psychology, says, "We are not just 'improved' when we are born again; we are a completely new creation. Christ *in* us the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27)! 'Mental illness' is a deception which merely gives man some false comfort – a terrible lie with terrible eternal consequences."

Even the medical community is not agreed as to the significance and effect of drugs on the mind. Serotonin is an example. Stanford psychiatrist and researcher, David Burns, says: "I spent

17 1 John 1:9

the first several years of my career doing full-time research on brain serotonin metabolism, but I never saw any convincing evidence that any psychiatric disorder, even depression, results from a deficiency of brain serotonin."¹⁸

Why bring in medicine when the problem here is not 'tissues' but 'issues'? It is not brain but mind. It is not organic but soul. It is not outer man, but inner man. It is not the physical but the thought-life. Drugs do not cure; they only control. They do not address the cause, but only possibly cover the symptoms. One fellow, diagnosed as schizophrenic, wants to be weaned off the drugs and trust Christ, but writes, "The problem is now I'm tangled up with pills and a psychiatrist." Another says, "I don't want to go back to the psychiatric ward; I think I might commit suicide." They are snared.

Furthermore, God does not want the mind altered, not by drugs. He wants sobriety.¹⁹ He wants us in our "right mind."²⁰ To alter the mind with drugs is what the Bible calls sorcery. It is a serious sin. It will keep you out of heaven.²¹ Interestingly, in the Bible the Greek word for "sorcery" is pharmakeia from which we get pharmacy.²²

Insulting

18 Lacasse & Gomory, 2003, p. 385,
<http://bcinstitute.wordpress.com/2012/06/20/psychotropic-medications-in-search-of-a-biblical-context-2/>

19 Titus 2:12

20 Luke 8:35

21 Galatians 5:20,21

22 Galatians 5:20

Psychology, often employed alongside the gospel as a helper, is an insult to the God of heaven. When it comes to meeting the inner needs of man, God makes the claim of being exclusive and all-sufficient – “seeing that His divine power has granted to us *everything* that pertains to life and godliness,”²³ The Bible claims that it alone is enough to “adequately equip the Christian for every good work.”²⁴ After all, who can fix a car better than its maker? And didn’t Christianity exist for almost 2000 years without psychology? How did man get along without psychology for 2000 years? Indeed psychology and Christianity may have some overlapping thoughts on the surface, but like two great trees, they have some points in common at the top, but when you trace them down to the roots, the trees are on opposite sides of the fence. Even if the psychologist has some truth, God does not want the help of ungodly men, though professionals, to advance it. God esteems the mature Christian as being “able to counsel.”²⁵ The psychologists do not have the ‘tools’ (that is, Bible truths) that the Christian has in order to deal with *root causes*. The Christian has an incredible advantage in analyzing the workings and needs of the inner man. He can observe the workings of the soul through the glasses of truth – the fallen nature of man, yet the power and hope of divine regeneration, the real guilt, yet the blessedness of obtaining forgiveness of sins. These are his real needs and solutions. But these are not acknowledged by the secular psychologist, leaving them at quite a disadvantage in analyzing the needs of the soul, although they boldly call it psych [soul] – ology.

Consider this. The Lord Jesus did not use psychology. Paul the apostle did not use it. God did not give such terms to the Christian.

23 2 Peter 1:3

24 2 Timothy 3:17

25 Romans 15:14

Paul repudiated the use of worldly wisdom and depended on the power and message of the cross in matters of life and holiness, lest man get the credit rather than the Lord.²⁶ Paul admonished, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of *men*, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."²⁷ The Lord Jesus made a great promise, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."²⁸ Will the psychologist send a man to Christ? One dear soul, Veronika, testifies, "I had a heavy burden, but I never came to the Lord Jesus Christ with it, so I couldn't find a rest. I always went to people, even sometimes to ungodly people to find help in my problems. But Matthew 11:28 set me free! I don't need to seek help from people, because I can always go to the Lord with my burden and this perfectly satisfies me." Listen to a former psychopathologist, "I received my degree in psychology, earning straight A's; psychopathology is my specialty. But three years after, I repented and embraced Jesus Christ instead. I have thus learned the mistaken belief of so-called *mental illness* and do not believe in mental illness any longer. Those 'Christians' who believe in it and teach it need to repent, as they are embracing secular humanism and that is in complete opposition to the Scriptures." The Lord Jesus said great error comes from ignoring the Scriptures.²⁹ By definition there is no such thing as 'Christian psychology' any more than 'Christian adultery.'

Psychiatrist Richard Ganz and his wife were wonderfully saved by Christ in 1972 through the ministry of L'Abri. With his life and

26 1 Corinthians 1:31 – 2:4

27 Colossians 2:8

28 Matthew 11:28

29 Matthew 22:29

teaching then altered, Ganz tells the story of Immanuel, a patient assigned him at the state hospital. Immanuel had spoken only a few words in several years. At one point in an interview he screamed, "I am God." Ganz responded by quoting an appropriate Bible verse.³⁰ Abruptly the writhing ceased and he asked Ganz for the source. Ganz threw him a Bible and urged him to check it out for himself. For one month Immanuel did not speak one word until he appeared at the office and clearly and calmly said, "I want to become a Christian." Well, Immanuel gained Christ, but Dr. Ganz lost his job. Nevertheless, before his one month termination expired, Dr. Ganz saw an orthodox Jew, mostly locked in the fetal position, liberated. Ganz gives this amazing testimony to the power of the gospel. "My remaining weeks at the hospital more closely resembled revival services than psychotherapy. While these two men were growing and sharing their new found faith, others were seeking and questioning, opening up in ways they had never dared when I was simply 'staff.' I heard accounts of emotionally battered and scarred people who had been locked away for years, their problems never getting discussed or resolved. They began hearing of forgiveness in Christ, and a whole new dimension of my work began to take shape. Needless to say, the hospital and medical center personnel were relieved when my month was over. The three of us – Immanuel, the Jewish man, and I – left together, and for each of us it was a moment of liberation."³¹

Hoax

Do you see psychology is a hoax? I know of a psychologist who worked at a Federal Mental Home in Canada for 23 years and he

³⁰ Matthew 24:23f

³¹ Richard Ganz, *PsychoBabble*, (Crossway Books, 1993) p. 21-22.

admitted that he had not seen so much as one patient permanently healed. Psychology has helped to make a sick nation. It has helped to undermine justice, pervert righteousness, and avoid responsibility. The murderer, even the mass murderer, gets off with relatively little punishment under the diagnosis of mental illness. Look at the man who shot former President Reagan. It was attempted murder to impress a woman! He should have been executed without delay.³² But the psychologists got him off and in seventeen years the man was permitted to occasionally step out of the hospital.

Psychology has helped breed an irresponsible society by shifting the blame to background and environment whereas the problem is not heredity, nor head, but the heart. It is my desire to see the impotent and changing philosophies of man exchanged for "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."³³ The Bible is rough medicine – it puts a sword in the path of proud, self-willed man – but it does indeed produce a cure, yes, a miraculous transformation of the inner nature, wrought by the hand of God. And, that is far different, far deeper, than talks, techniques, and tranquilizers. Jesus is a "Wonderful Counselor"³⁴ and "blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly."³⁵ Don't stumble over this simple word!

One woman, after years of headaches, after many stays in the psych ward, after electric shocks so strong that she could not remember her own name for three weeks, testifies, "I told God that

32 Ecclesiastes 8:11

33 1 Timothy 1:11

34 Isaiah 9:6

35 Psalm 1:1

I wanted him to fix what was wrong with me and vowed that I would never see another mental health doctor, or take another psychiatric drug, or have another shock treatment. I was either going to finally lose my mind and any hope of stability or die if He didn't help me. It was a long haul but He did save my soul and over several years filled me with sanity and stability in Him. I've been a Christian now for 38 years. Since 1977 I did not ever again go to another mental health medical doctor, psychologist, or counselor, or take another psychiatric drug, or have another shock treatment. God is enough."³⁶

36 Sunny Jane Roberts, Kansas City