

“Christian” Psychology

Dr. David J. Rodabaugh

modified (sometimes extensively) from Jim Owen,
Christian Psychology's War on God's Word, (1993, Eastgate, Santa Barbara)

I. Introduction

- A. The New Christianity?—an attempt at combining the "truths" of modern psychology with those of God's Word in order to help others.
 - 1. Substituted Words change the direction of Christian living
 - a. Disease is used for sin
 - b. Addiction is used for lust (comp. Eph 4:19)
 - c. Denial is used for lying
 - d. Dysfunctional is used for sin
 - 2. Equated terms alter Bible Doctrine
 - a. self-actualization is equated with sanctification
 - b. Reprogramming is equated with "renewing your mind" in Rom 12:2
- B. What Has Happened?—the church has been compromised and intimidated by "educated" psychologists!
- C. A Hybrid Gospel—is not the gospel of scripture—Gal 1:8, 9; 2Tim 3:16-17
- D. Christ Only—2Th 3:5; Ps 62:8; Col 1:27

II. The Sufficient Christ

- A. A Dangerous Integration
 - 1. "This approach sees man's fundamental *problem* as ignorance of himself and his psychic injuries, rather than deliberate disobedience to and ignorance of the living and true God." We need to die to self according to Romans 6:8-14.
 - 2. The basis of this type of counseling (comp. 2Tim 3:16-17)
 - a. "It emphasizes man-as-victim rather than man-as-sinner."
 - b. "Such a view radically challenges the biblical doctrines of man's absolute culpability before the cross, the supremacy of the Holy Spirit in the believer's sanctification, and most importantly the sufficiency and authority of Scripture for the believer."
- B. This is an impossible combination since scripture and psychology are based on totally different premises.
 - 1. Scripture gives Christ as the answer to sin and sin as our problem—1Cor 10:13; 2Cor 12:7-10
 - 2. Christ is our hope and anchor—Heb 6:17-20

III. Sin—Rom 3:23

- A. We are by nature, guilty, vile and helpless. Look at the great passages on sin—Ps 78: 9-17, 31-10:2-5; compare Ps 11:5-6; Ro 6:23; 1:18-32
- B. This New Gospel is not in Scripture
 - 1. Paul saw himself as a chief sinner—1Tim 1:15
 - 2. What were we—Tit 3:3; Rom 3:10-23
 - 3. This gospel never offends the sinner even though it should—(repent—Luke 13:1-5) Jn 6:37-40, 44-45, 65-71; 8:30-48-
- C. The Sinner in Scripture
 - 1. It is our nature from conception—Ps 51:5; 58:3; Gen 8:21; Isa 57:20; 64:6; Jer 17:9
 - 2. Furthermore—Ps 12:8; 10:2-5; 36:2-4; Jer 6:15
 - 3. In the NT—Mk 7:21-23; Jn 8:43-44; Rom 1:18-28; 3:11-17
 - 4. Rebellion—2Tim 3:2-5; Ps 10:11, 13; (comp. Isa 14:12-14); Rev 9:20-21; Rom 1:28
 - 5. Man is not a victim—he is a vile rebellious sinner! Rom 8:6-8; Jn 3:19
 - 6. Not twelve steps (or secular—style counseling) but Christ—At 2:36; Eph 2:1-3; Rom 8:28-39
- D. God's Love—1Jn 4:10; (comp. Mt 5:4)

- E. God's Hate—Ps 11:5; 5:5
- F. Objects of his wrath and scorn—Rom 1:20; Eph 2:3
- G. Sinners need Christ (victims don't)

IV. Self-Esteem

- A. Introduction—Three fatal errors of secular and "christian" psychology
 - 1. Psychologists allege that a person's level of self-esteem will determine how well he functions in life.
 - 2. They assert that low self-esteem is the cause of most behavioral problems.
 - 3. They even assert that almost all suffer from low self-esteem
- B. Self-Worth Invades the Church—through claiming that Mt 22:39 teaches self-love when it does not teach that.
 - 1. God knows that we do love ourselves and put ourselves first rather than the Lord and others.
 - 2. This self-love is an expression of our sin nature.
- C. The Bible and Self-Esteem
 - 1. Our problem is high esteem—Ps 10; Rom 1:18-32; 2Tim 3:1-5; Lk 7:36-50; 18:9-14
 - 2. What God requires is a broken and contrite heart—Ps 51:17; Isa 57:15
- D. Great Saints and Self-Esteem—Gen 18:27; Ex 4 (Moses); Job 42:6; Ps 51:17; Isa 6:5; Rev 1:12-17; Phil 3:10
- E. What should be our experience—2Cor 5:14-15; Rom 13:8-10; Jn 15:4-7
- F. Why Does God Love Us? (He chose to)—1Jn 4:10; Eph 1:3-8

V. Victimization

- A. Feelings
 - 1. We sometimes say we "feel" something is true rather than "believe" it true
 - 2. Our goal as Christians is to glorify God (Eph 2:7, etal.)
 - 3. "People are hurting" has replaced "people are sinners." Compare the confrontation with Cain (Gen 4:2-7)
 - 4. Men talk of homosexuals feeling hurt and rejected. God talks of them sinning and rejecting God.
- B. Does Sanctification come through Victimization Therapy?—no!
 - 1. What men need
 - a. First—All of us have sinned—this is uppermost in dealing with our lives and others. We are victims first of all to our own sin and sin nature.
 - b. Second—all believers are new in Christ—the old has past
 - c. We must deal with sin as sin and can only stop sinning through Christ—1Cor 10:13
 - 2. What men get from psychology and modern "christian" teachers
 - a. Men are compelled to certain behaviors (like sexual immorality) because of past hurts.
 - b. We can't deal with the behavior until we deal with the hurts
- C. Self-Esteem and Victimization
 - 1. These are interconnected in modern thought
 - 2. Neither concept is of value to the believer
 - a. We must esteem Christ not self
 - b. We must quit sinning not "deal with hurts."
- D. How are We to Deal with Sin?
 - 1. Walk in the spirit—Gal 5:16-25
 - 2. God always provides—1Cor 10:13
- E. We must deal with sin.
 - 1. Pain and "hurting" are no excuse for sin.
 - 2. Heredity is no excuse for sin.
 - 3. The past (and we do not ever remember it adequately) is no excuse for sin.
 - 4. There is no excuse for sin!

VI. A Way Out

- A. Scripture never addresses us as victims—only as sinners
 - 1. It does not tell us to search the past.
 - 2. We must center our attention on Christ—Col 2:3; 2Cor 10:4-5; Col 3:1-3
 - 3. The past is GONE—2Cor 5:17; Rom 6:1-11
 - 4. Fix our gaze on Him, not our selves or our situation—Heb 3:1; 12:2; Jn 15:1-11
 - 5. We must not think of what might have been, etc. Think of what we have and are in Christ.
- B. Joy in Christ
 - 1. In His Person—1Pt 4:13; Jn 15:11; 1Th 5:16-18; Gal 5:22-23; Phil 3:1; 4:4
 - 2. Requires learning His Word—2Tim 2:15; 3:16-17
- C. There is Counterfeit Joy
- D. The Scriptures are Clear
 - 1. Note—1Jn 4:20
 - 2. Three things are clear
 - a. We know how to live—Jn 13:34; Phil 2:5-8
 - b. We want to obey the Lord because we have a new heart—2Cor 5:17; Rom 8:5; Col 1:29; 2Cor 7:1
 - c. We have the means to obey—Phil 2:13; Rom 15:4; 2Tim 3:16-17; Eph 4:11-13; 1Pt 4:10-11
 - 3. We have his promises—Phil 1:6; 1Th 5:23-24; 2Th 3:3
 - 4. God does not give his glory to another—Isa 48:11
 - 5. We have power to live not sin—1Cor 10:13; Rom 8:32
- E. God's promises are true—including 1Cor 10:13
 - 1. This is clearly denied by "victimization therapy"
 - 2. God explains the problem is sin not low self-esteem or pain—Eph 4:19; Heb 4:12
 - 3. We need the cross and its teachings—1Cor 2:9-16; Gal 2:20
 - 4. When your **desire to serve Christ** is more than your **desire to sin** (whatever that sin might be) then *you will have victory over that sin!*

VII. Who Is To Be the Master?

- A. Scripture is clear—Rom 12:1-2
- B. The church is not the problem.
- C. We must stick to the scriptures not modern psychology
- D. Five Dangers of Support Groups
 - 1. People identify with the group rather than the church
 - 2. There is little deep fellowship with other believers outside the group
 - 3. The person depends on the group, not on the Lord
 - 4. The group's center is the common problem. It is not the Lord and His word.
 - 5. One's relation with Christ becomes self-centered
- E. The better way is the Lord through His word—Jer 17:9

VIII. Describing The Man of Faith—Heb 11:6

- A. Thankfulness—Rom 7:24-25
- B. Dependence—on the Lord—comp Matt 18:3-4
- C. Holy Fear—Heb 11:7
- D. Perseverance—comp At 14:22
- E. Victory—1Jn 5:3-5; Phil 1:6
 - 1. Fruit of the Spirit—Gal 5:22-23
 - 2. Power through weakness—2Cor 12:9-10
 - 3. Weapons—Eph 6:10-20