

BBTS
Fall 2022 Lecture Series

A Biblical Primer on Madness

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Agenda

- Introductory Matters (Purpose, Disclaimer, Terminology, etc.)
- Biblical Anthropology and Causes of Madness
- Secular Anthropology and Theories of Psychological Disease
- Biblical View of Madness: Anxiety, Depression, Bipolar, ADHD, PTSD, Schizophrenia, OCD
- Practical Implications for Local Churches

Purpose

- A “*Primer*” (non-exhaustive approach) to madness. This syllabus is a part of a larger work.
- Understand “Mental Illness” or Madness from a Biblical and compassionate perspective
- Connect Biblical forms of sin to modern diagnostic labels
- Understand that all individuals (saved and unsaved) have a proclivity toward a form of “Madness” in the flesh
- Understand that Madness is a spiritual issue, not a physical problem in the brain
 - Distinguish between Valid Brain Disease (Alzheimer, Dementia, Autism, Aging, etc.) and Madness (Schizo, Bipolar, Anxiety, Depression)
- Equip believers with:
 - Historical origins of modern psychology
 - Discernment of psychological terms and diagnosis from a Biblical perspective
 - Modern research that rebuffs the mainstream theories
- Biblical Interventions – Repentance and faith in Christ, sufficiency in Christ and His Word

Disclaimer

- This author seeks to provide insight into madness and the make-up of a soul (spirit & body) from the Word of God.
 - The Spirit-filled believer can “*Know all things*” from a contextually accurate interpretation of the Word of God (I Jn.2:20).
 - In conjunction with the Word of God, the believer has “*divine power*” regarding all things that pertain unto “*Life and godliness*” (II Pt.1:3).
 - The Word of God ***is capable*** of handling the deepest and most complex cases of the human condition and experience (Heb.4:12)
- This author is not a psychologist/psychiatrist; however, this author is a Registered Nurse with experience in the direct care of and therapeutic communication to psychiatric patients in the clinical setting.
- This author will make a clear distinction between Valid Brain Disease and Spiritual Turmoil in the absence of biological markers.
- Not an integrationist approach – all Truth is God’s Truth
 - Integrationist = Any defensible truth that is derived by means of psychological research into the order of humanity is truth derived from general revelation, thus truth derived from God, and thus truth as dependable and authoritative as truth exegeted from Scripture.

- Modern Psychology is ***beneficial*** to the believer in providing a rough categorization of sin, data collection, and research that proves the spiritual realm
- Modern Psychology is ***fallacious*** in its theories of the origin of madness and some of its proposed treatments that demand lifelong dependence (medication, hypnosis, Electroconvulsive therapy, etc.)

Spectrum of Views on Madness

Cause of Madness:

- Secular view: broken brain, chemical imbalance
- Demon possession
- Biblical view: madness occurs when man rejects God and His truth (lost and saved)

Treatment of Madness:

- Secular view: medicine, hypnosis, ECT, etc.
- Minor vs Major – bible helps with minor issues, not major (schizo, trauma) – refer to medical model of psychology
 - Lack of training for Pastor/church members, not a bible problem – I Pt.2:3
- Bible deals with some, Psychology deals with others – pre-Darwin - MD (physical) and Pastor (Spiritual) – churches have relinquished its place to psychology.
- Integrationist approach – gather different tools, pragmatic in use of bible and secular tools – behavioral modification versus heart change
 - counselor is a Christian, but answers are found in psychology.
- Biblical model: sufficiency of Christ and His Word
 - Get saved, baptized, and under the authority of a local church and continual preaching of the Word of God
 - II Peter 1:3-4 “*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*”

	Cultic Shaman	Psychiatrist	Pastor
Diagnose	Secret Knowledge	DSM-5	Word of God
Treatment	drugs, sacrifice	meds, behavioral modification	Grow in Grace
Result	external change	external change	Heart change

What's the Main Idea

- **Madness occurs when we turn away from the LORD and His Truth**
- **The LORD versus Self-Reliance**
 - Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he shall direct thy paths.”*
- **Faith versus Sight**
 - Hebrews 11:6 *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*
- **Obedience versus Disobedience**
 - Deuteronomy 28:15 *“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:”*
- **Reject Truth, Accept Self-deception**
 - James 1:8 *“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”*

The Trouble with Double: Faith vs. Sight		
Word	Meaning	Verse
"Vain thoughts" (εἴρη, se-eph)	split mind	Ps.119:113
"Doubt" (διστάζω, distazo)	to stand in two ways	Mt.14:31
"Doubleminded" (δίψυχος, dipsychos)	two minds, spirits	Jms.1:8

The Normalcy of Suffering

The sovereign LORD God allows affliction and suffering to occur in a vast array of methods for all humanity. Genesis 3 reveals the curse of sin on mankind and on nature that continues to today (Rom.5:12); Romans 8:22 states, *“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”* In all cases of spiritual turmoil and madness, suffering is the impetus that demands a decision to trust the LORD or to trust oneself. Nonetheless, Scripture reveals that the LORD brings about good from the evil that burdens believers (Gen.50:20; Rom.8:28). What is the “good” the LORD works out? Is it temporal riches, health, and fame? Is a pot of gold at the end of the trial? Do we get to ride off into the sunset of a golden retirement of ease? Unfortunately, the American dream has many of us duped into this wrong thinking. Yes, the LORD will not leave the faithful wanting for needs (Prov.10:3), and He does bless with temporal wealth and health (Prov.10:22). The “good” is the spiritual blessing of becoming more like Christ and having a deeper dependence on His Word (Ps.1:1, 119:1-2; Jms.1:3-4).

The Christian life is *“faith to faith”* (Rom.1:17). Believers are to *“think it not strange concerning the fiery trial”* (I Pt.4:12) and expect that *“the world hate you”* (Jn.15:18). Solomon elevated the effects of mourning and sorrow on the heart over joy and mirth (Eccl.7:2-6); likewise, James implored those in sin to *“be afflicted, and*

mourn, and weep” in order to abide in humility and receive the grace of the LORD (Jms.4:9). Suffering and affliction are tests of our faith to patiently wait on the LORD and His Word. Does our preaching, teaching, and discipleship embrace suffering as a test to exhibit our faith in the LORD? Do we prepare our flocks and family on how to respond in micro-suffering to prepare for macro-suffering? Inevitably, all believers will face testing and their capacity of faith, patience, and dependence on the LORD and His Word will in part (Mk.9:24) determine their trajectory towards hope and confidence or unbelief and madness. Psalm 119:71, “*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; That I might learn thy statutes.*”

Why Do We Hide Our Struggles?

Do we maintain the presupposition that all believers are blissfully walking in the Spirit based on externalisms or their portrayed face value? As long as the cultural checklist of that church is in order, no questions or challenges are made at the heart? The issue is less about inquiring one another’s burdens and more about our ability to hide our struggle (Gal.6:2) and carry our own burdens (Mt.11:28; I Pt.5:7). There is scriptural precedent for the spiritually mature to “*encourage himself in the LORD his God*” (I Sam.30:6); however, there is also instruction to “*Comfort the feebleminded, support the weak*” (I Thess.5:14). Altogether, believers are to be “*reproved, rebuked, exhort*” in their local church each Sunday. Nevertheless, it is in our Adamic nature to hide our sin and our struggles (Gen.3:9-10; Rom.5:12); specifically, it can be difficult to share one’s daily challenge to walk in Spirit (Gal.5:16-17), have the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22), and be filled with the Spirit (Eph.5:18). In time, the weight of carrying one’s own burdens in self-reliance can cripple, exhaust, and squelch hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. Subsequently, many Christians can struggle with uncontrolled fear and/or sadness, which if unmitigated can lead down a dark path.

The Apostle Paul was transparent about his struggle to walk in the Spirit in Romans 7:19, “*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*” Subsequently, he declared, “*O wretched man that I am*” regarding the frustration that ensues a life that grieves the Holy Spirit (Rom.7:24; cf. Eph.4:29-30). Similarly, David declared his hatred for “*Vain thoughts*” (*se-eph* - split mind - faith vs unbelief) in Psalm 119:113. These men were transparent and purposeful about their struggles with the flesh so that they would implore themselves to obey the Word by the grace of the LORD. Do we make the habit of recognizing how the battle went? “*Sadness won today*” “*Fear won today*” “*Lust won today*” “*Anger won today*” Like Paul, failure in the flesh urged him to turn to the Lord and walk in the Spirit (Rom.8:1). Pastors and churches need to (continue) to model these Biblical behaviors, which should be reciprocated by the members. Dive into the hearts of the church members. Provide them safety to seek counsel on the challenging areas of their life. Instill hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. We all hide and tend towards self-reliance. Instead, we need to implore another to Walk in the Spirit and rely on Christ and His Word through visceral conversations of Agape love in Christ.

Terms and Definitions

The Biblical term “*Madness*” (Deut.28:28 – שִׁגְאוֹן, *shiggaon*); Eccl.1:17, 2:12, 7:25,9:3 – הוֹלְלָהּ, *holelah*) has been used to describe spiritual turmoil until psychiatrists replaced the word with “*Mental illness*” in the nineteenth century during the secular repeal of creationism and Biblical anthropology by the likes of Darwin, Kraepelin, and Freud. This author will give deference to the Biblical term “*Madness*,” however, both terms will be used interchangeably throughout this work.

Secularists have a challenging time defining “*Madness*.” Psychiatrist and Chair of the DSM-IV stated, “*There is no definition of a mental disorder...I mean you can’t define it.*” Likewise, psychiatrist Karl Menninger stated, “*To define mental illness and mental health is an almost impossible task.*”¹ Much debate has been had among the psychology community on the definition of mental illness. The trouble rests in three key aspects: 1) the inability to objectively identify the root cause of madness, 2) the definition of normal anthropology (i.e., what does a normal person look like?), and 3) the asynchrony between no biological markers found in within a bio-determinism framework that demands a physical origin of mental illness.

The Word of God reveals the answers to these questions: 1) the root cause of madness is one’s inherent sin nature that is ruled by a deceptive, desperately wicked heart, 2) normal is having positional and practical peace with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, and 3) Biblical anthropology consists of a soul that is comprised of physical flesh and immaterial spirit (heart, mind).

The Word of God expresses the conditions, feelings, and emotions of mankind’s experience with sin:

Biblical Terms	Definition	Reference	Secular Term
Perfect Man	Jesus Christ is the standard for "Normal"	Jms.3:2; Heb.2:17, 4:15	Fluid idea of normal
Madness	Psychosis, delusion	Dt.28:28	Psychosis
Astonishment of heart	guilt, bewilderment, confusion	Dt.28:28; Eccl.7:7, Joel 2:12-13	PTSD
Fear of man	Fear, anxiety, OCD	Pr.29:25	Anxiety disorder
Heaviness in the heart	Paralyzing anxiety	Pr.12:25	Anxiety disorder
Wounded Spirit	Severe depression	Pr.18:14	Depression
I will ascend, I will exalt	Pride leads to delusion; mania	Is.14:12-14	Mania, Schizophrenia
Changed his behavior	ability to deceive	Ps.34 title	Mania, Schizophrenia
Hate good, love evil	self-deception from Truth	Micah 3:2	Self-deception - all
Despondent, loss of appetite	natural response to pain of death/sin; guilt	II Sam.12:16-17; Ps.116	PTSD
Mad (μανία- mania)	out of one's mind, enraged	Jn.10:20, Acts 12:15; 26:24, I Cor.14:23	Psychosis
Double-minded (διψυχος - dipsykos)	Two souls, two minds - self-deception - bipolar, schizophrenia	Jms.1:8	Mania, Schizophrenia

Biblical Anthropology

Created in the Image of God

The key differentiating factor from the heresy of evolution and the brain-dysfunction theory of psychology is that “*God created man in his own image*” (Gen.1:27). The Hebrew word behind “*Image*” is תְּצַלֵּם (*tselem*)² that means “*a likeness, a shadow*” and denotes that man’s features and shape are after the similitude of the Creator – Jehovah. Evolution lumps mankind with animal kind in the realm of mammals, which violates the Biblical

¹Berger, D. *The Insanity of Madness: Defining Mental Illness*. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2018, p.1.

²The Hebrew word תְּצַלֵּם (*tselem*) is found fifteen times in the MT and it is rendered as “*Image*” (Gen.1:25; Numb.33:52; I Sam.6:5; II Kgs.11:18).

construct. Furthermore, evolutionary theory indicates that advanced animals (mankind) should not fall under the construct of morality but animal instincts. Evolutionists cannot deny that the human brain is the most complex and sentient organism in the known universe, but compliment the billions of years of evolution to manifest such a marvel. The Word of God prevails in declaring the special care and attention of each created soul in Psalm 139:13, “*I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*”

The Soul – Spirit and Flesh

Genesis 2:7 reveals, “*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*” Simply, the LORD created a soul that is comprised of a spirit (mind, heart, and conscience) and a body. This battle ground truth has been attacked by Gnosticism for millennia and then most recently by the theory of evolution. The lies of Satan in the Garden of Eden spawned the aberration known as “*Gnosticism*” that spread throughout pagan nations, which required acquisition of secret knowledge through pagan rites so the soul could escape the body and return to godhood (“*Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*” – Gen.3:5). Gnosticism was and is slicker than evolutionism in that it embraced the spiritual realm of man, albeit it confused the terminology of the soul and spirit. Darwin’s theory of evolution enshrined materialism that validates “*Truth*” as only things that can be observed through the scientific method. Essentially, if it cannot be observed and measured than it does not exist; subsequently, evolutionist and psychologist deny the spiritual realm and marginalize the mind as a by-product of the physical brain. Presently, modern medicine begrudgingly acknowledges the spiritual realm that is recognized by the masses of humanity and recommends some “*Alternative medicine*” approaches such as reiki, yoga, meditation, and guided imagery (Gnostic tools). In short, it is a tag team effort that if one does not hold to evolution then they should return to Gnosticism. This truth is pivotal to understanding the current construct of psychiatry and the treatment of mental illness.

The psychosomatic nature of the soul is that it contains both spirit and flesh; this truth is established in Genesis 2:7 and it is exemplified all throughout scripture. Proverbs 2:1-5 reveals the physical aspects of maneuvering, hearing, looking, and requesting Truth so that it can be hid in one’s heart to improve understanding in the spiritual aspect of the soul. James 4:13 condemns those that do not practice the truth and knowledge of the Word in their physical lives; furthermore, those with strife in their spiritual hearts manifest the cycle of chaos that can lead to murder and adultery (Jms.3:13-4:5; Mt.5:21-23). Deuteronomy 28 reveals with tremendous clarity and detail that spiritual decisions made in the heart to obey or disobey God’s Word results in spiritual and physical blessings or curses. Notably, Deuteronomy 28:28 reveals on the of the spiritual curses of disobedience, “*The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart.*” The spirit drives the body, not the other way around.

The Curse of Adam

Romans 5:12 clearly details the effects of Adam’s sin on every soul ever born, “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*” The curse of sin has affected each created soul’s spirit and flesh, and eventually results in death (Ezek.18:4; Rom.6:23). The spirit of man consists of the heart, mind, and conscience (Mt.22:37). The curse of sin upon the heart is made clear in Jeremiah 17:9, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can*

know it?” Ephesians 4:18 reveals the corruption of sin-cursed minds, “*Having the understanding³ darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.*” Furthermore, the conscience (συνείδησις, *syneidesis*)⁴ is revealed as a co-knowledge of God in Romans 2:15, “*Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness...*” (cf. Acts 23:1, 24:16, Rom.9:1).

The natural state of the human conscience is “*Defiled*” (Tit.1:15), “*Evil*” (Heb.10:22), and “*Seared*” (I Tim.4:2), whereas the redeemed and Spirit-filled conscience can be “*Good*” (I Tim.1:5) and “*Pure*” (I Tim.3:9). The depravity of the human spirit through its wicked heart, darkened mind, and rebellious conscience is explicitly clear in scripture, and it will tend toward madness and manifest as fleshly evil if not redeemed and controlled by the Holy Spirit! Man’s wicked heart drives the flesh, which is contrary to the brain-dysfunction theory that indicates the body drives the mind. James 1:14-15 reveals, “*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*” Repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only solution for our wicked spiritual nature.

The curse of sin upon the flesh is disease and death. Romans 6:23 reveals, “*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” The curse upon the body is disease and decay as seen in Ecclesiastes 12:1-8. Disease and decay ultimately lead to physical death. Psalm 90:10-12 reveals that the normal course of life for the physical body is seventy to eighty years long, which is followed by death. Upon physical death, the spirit leaves the body and is either with the Lord Jesus Christ (II Cor.5:8) or in hell (Lk.16:22-23). The physical body will be resurrected to everlasting life or to eternal damnation (Is. 66:24; Jn.5:29; Rev.20:15). The brain-dysfunction theory and evolutionist seek to treat and unlock the physical elements of disease, but “*Chase the wind*” since they reject the creation of the soul, the spiritual aspect of the soul, and the curse of sin. The LORD has blessed modern medicine’s efforts to treat and mitigate some purely physical diseases; however, mental illness is primarily a spiritual problem that continues to foil medication after medication.

The Heart – Deceitful, Desperately Wicked, Full of Evil and Madness

At the center of each individual’s daily struggle to walk in the Spirit is the deceitfully wicked heart (Jms.1:13-15). Born again believers are “*new creatures in Christ*” (II Cor.5:17), have a “*new heart...and new spirit*” (Ezek.26:26), and the indwelling Godhead within (Eph.1:13; II Thess.1:12); nevertheless, there is a daily battle between the old man and the Spirit, which if lost can give way to one’s self-deceptive heart and spiritual instability (Pr.3:5-6, Jms.1:8-15). Ecclesiastes 9:3 reveals, “*This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.*” Likewise, Jeremiah 17:9 reveals, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” James asked the rhetorical question that transparently revealed the dismal estate of each man’s heart, “*Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The*

³The Greek word behind “*Understanding*” is διάνοια (*dianoia*) that means “*Mind, disposition*” and is rendered as “*Mind*” (Mt.22:37; Lk.10:27; Eph.2:3; Col.1:21), “*Understanding*” (Eph.1:18, 4:18; I Jn.5:20), and “*Imagination*” (Lk.1:51).

⁴The Greek word συνείδησις (*syneidesis*) is found thirty-two times in the TR and refers to the spirit’s co-knowledge of God (Jn.8:9; Rom.2:15, 9:1, 13:5; I Cor.8:7; I pt.2:19, 3:16, 3:21).

spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (Jms.4:5). Likewise, Paul bemoaned the struggle to walk in the Spirit, *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Rom.7:24). The deceitfully wicked heart is capable of wreaking havoc on oneself in a diverse array of manners; ultimately, it leads the believer to trust themselves and follow carnal wisdom instead of trusting the LORD (Is.26:3-4).

Deuteronomy 29:19 reveals the self-deceptive nature of the heart, *“And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.”* In self-deception, we can bless ourselves and our faulty thinking as appropriate. Ezekiel 33:31 reveals a similar aspect of the self-deceptive heart, *“And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.”* The nature of the heart remains the same in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. The regeneration of a New Testament believer provides a *“new heart...and a new spirit;”* nevertheless, when a believer walks in the flesh away from Truth in disobedience, they grieve the Holy Spirit and become self-deceived (Rom.7:24; Jms.1:8, 13-16, 22, 26).

James 1:13-15 reveals that the heart of the unstable believer will draw him away through enticement to bring forth sin and then death. In essence, the heart that is focused on anything away from Christ and His Word. Too often, believers can turn their heart’s focus to a variety of seemingly innocent things that do not bring sustaining peace. Out lack of faith in areas can drive us to self-reliance, control seeking, and comfort seeking.

Furthermore, believers know better – we are hearers, and not always doers; subsequently, we deceive ourselves in our self-reliant efforts (Jms.1:22). Self-deception steps in during affliction and testing because of one’s own sin, sin from another, or sin from the natural realm. James sought to counter the carnal response to affliction in his letter to the scattered churches; his letter revealed the pathway of self-deception when believers turn away from Truth to self-reliance.

- Test of faith = Jms.1:2
- Believer’s dislike suffering = Jms.1:2
- Respond in unbelief (sight) = Jms.1:3
- Impatience leads to self-reliance = Jms.1:4
- Wander from Truth, lack Wisdom = Jms.1:5
- Shame, guilt, and fear accompany self-reliance = Jms.1:6-7
- Double-minded – unstable in all ways = Jms.1:8
 - Self-Deception – Jms.1:13-16, 22, 26
 - Self-reliance, seek to hide (Jms.1:23), seek to control (blame/argue), seek comfort (food, pornography, drugs, alcohol, relationships, etc.).
 - Self-righteousness (Jms.2), Evil tongue and anger (Jms.3), Sexual sin, murder (Jms.4)

Pride

In tandem with the deceitfully wicked heart is pride, which effects each individual daily. Pride and self-deception lead to varying degrees of delusion. A common delusion we all manifest is “I am better than that sinner.” Another common delusion rooted in pride is “I can solve my problems, I can amass my wealth, I can do anything I want to do.” An advanced delusion is the god-complex where one believes their actions are justified

because they know better than God's Word and man's laws. Lucifer exemplified this delusion in Isaiah 14:14, "...I will be like the most High." It is essential to recognize that pride is foundational to all abnormal behavior, and must be addressed in the counseling process.

Fear of Man

The fear of man drives humanity into a vast array of problems that worsen over time; for example, it enslaves many to anxiety and depression, which if not mediated can compound into devastating effects. Proverbs 29:25 reveals the simplicity of each individual's choice, "*The fear of man bringeth a snare: But whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*" Trusting the LORD in every situation comes with the full backing of the Triune Godhead and the Word of God, whereas trusting oneself and fearing man brings enslavement and paralysis. This sin is foundational to analyzing behaviors and providing Biblical counseling.

Spiritual Gift – Blessing or Blight?

Romans 12:6-10 reveals the list of seven spiritual gifts that are energized when a soul is redeemed and indwelt with the Godhead; conversely, the positive and negative traits of the gift are recognizable in the unredeemed individual. The understanding of spiritual gifts reveals specific Biblical guidance on positive behavior in the Spirit and carnal behavior in the flesh. The secular world realizes the personality constructs in groups of seven or nine such as "*360 assessment*," "*BMI Personality Test*," and "*Enneagram personality testing*." Understanding of one's gift and its operation in the flesh is essential to discerning the nuances and manifestations of mental illness; it provides precision as one navigates carnal and fleshly behavior.⁵

The Family Unit

The LORD made the family unit to be a picture of the Gospel; the husbands are to love as Christ, the wives to submit to the husbands like the church (Eph.5:22-30), and the father is to resemble the Heavenly Father to the children. The Biblical family unit is to be a safe haven of training, discipline, forgiveness, and comfort for all members; this occurs when the Husband submits to the LORD to actively lead and serve his family, the wife submits to the LORD and her husband, and the children submit to their parents. The union of marriage has been under attack since the garden of Eden. Moses revealed the perpetually perversion of marriage in Genesis, which at the time was meant to prevent the Seed promise of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lamech was the first bigamist (Gen.4:19), demonic fornication brought forth unredeemable giants (Gen.6:4; Is.26:14), sodomy (Gen.19:4-5), Lot's incest (Gen.19:36), polygamy (Gen.30:26), rape (Gen.34:2), and harlotry (Gen.38:15). Furthermore, Solomon implored his son to avoid his neighbor's wife and the strange woman (Prov.6:24-35). Sadly, the union of marriage is under constant attack, and all members of the family lose in a myriad of ways.

Saved parents are to live out the Gospel for their children; they are to model the "*Chiefest of sinners*" mentality (I Tim.1:15), which points the children to the Savior who bore their sins on the cross (Is.53:5-6; I Pt.2:24). Furthermore, parents are to model the Gospel by repenting of sin, forgiveness, restoration, and

⁵Please consider the following resources on Spiritual Gifts: Strouse, T. *Having Then Gifts: A Practical Guide to Spiritual Gifts*. Cromwell, CT. Bible Baptist Theological Press, 2016 and Main, K. *The Doctrine of Spiritual Gifts*. Endicott, NY. Heritage Baptist Publications, 2018.

accountability with another. Hence, children can receive a practical picture of the Gospel in step with the teaching from the Word of God. In return, the child grows up in a healthy (*not perfect*) environment that acknowledges and addresses sin, which can encourage them to run to the loving Savior to receive forgiveness, restoration, and comfort. Consequently, that idyllic state is a far cry for the lost and many Christian homes. Breakdown at any point in the parental level of the family will negatively impact the children's perspective of the LORD, relationships, comfort seeking, etc.

While each individual owns their choices and actions, one's environment has a tremendous impact on their trajectory; however, one's environment does not *predetermine* one's choices, actions, and trajectory. Sadly, domestic abuse and violence are vastly overwhelming; one in three women and one in four men in intimate relationships have received domestic violence (slapping, shoving, pushing, items thrown at).⁶ Furthermore, from 2016 to 2018, seventy-two percent of murder-suicides involved an intimate partner. Consequently, children witness arguing, abuse, adultery, divorce, and develop a myriad of mental illness from the sordid and wretched display of the eroded parenting unit.

Resultantly, the US marriage rate in 2018 was the lowest it's been since 1900 when recording began; it was down to 6.5 new marriages per 1,000 people. Meanwhile, STI (Sexually transmitted infections) are at a 25 year high; in 2020, Gonorrhea increased 45% from 2016, Syphilis increased 52% from 2016, and Congenital Syphilis increased 235% from 2016.⁷ Families are eroding and trickle-down effect is devastating; local churches have the answer – the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Causes of Biblical Madness

The Curse of Sin – Biblical Expectations in a Fallen World

What is normal in a fallen world? Romans 8:22-23 reminds all inhabitants of Earth, "*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body*" (Cf. Gen.3:7-19). The normal expectations in a fallen world for saved and unsaved include consequence from personal sin (shame), others' sin (words, abuse, murder, deceit), and creation (disease, death, weather, disasters). Utopian attempts have been made by the world and the redeemed; however, they all crumble due to the consequence of personal sin, others' sin, and natural causes. To experience the ramifications of sin is not sin itself, but how an individual chooses to respond will determine their course. The effects of living in a fallen world drive each individual to respond to the variety of consequences, which if not in the sufficiency of Christ and His Word will propound abnormal spiritual and mental behavior. The differentiating factor in a fallen world is one's perspective, which is either through the myriad of secular constructs or focused on Christ through the Word of God.

The modern world has been so influenced by Darwin, Kraepelin, and Freud to believe that normal, albeit painful experiences require a DSM label, which ultimately drives the response of the individual away from Truth

⁶Received from <https://www.ncadv.org/statistics>.

⁷Received from <https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/2020/default.htm>

and towards pharmacology and secular therapy. The label frenzy allows individuals to pick a disorder as a way to express their pain. Dr. Sing Lee notes:

“Culture shapes the way general psychopathology is going to be translated partially or completely into specific psychopathology. When there is a cultural atmosphere in which professionals, the media, schools, doctors, psychologists all recognize and endorse and talk about and publicize eating disorders, then people can be triggered to consciously or unconsciously pick eating-disorder pathology as a way to express that conflict.”⁸

The Sovereign LORD uses the pain of the fallen world to garner mankind’s attention; ultimately, the LORD desires Psalm 33:8, *“Let all the earth fear the LORD: Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.”* The LORD uses trauma, pain, mourning, pressure, and judgment to get mankind’s attention. The LORD allowed Satan to touch Job *“Without cause”* to demonstrate His sovereignty to righteous Job; through the process of mourning Job grew proud, of which he ultimately repented (Job 9:17, 41:34, 42:6). Ecclesiastes 7:2-3 reveals that the time of mourning is better than mirth because the heart of man contemplates spiritual matters, *“It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.”* James implored the sinful church members to mourn the pain of their consequences of sin in order that they return to the LORD; *“Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness”* (Jms.4:9). Isaiah 57:16 reveals that the LORD contends with man until their *“Spirit should fail before me”* or turn to the LORD in broken repentance. Joel 2:12-14 reveals that the natural disaster brought onto Israel brought weeping and mourning; however, the LORD revealed He used that so they would *“Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God.”* The secular construct uses the chaos of the fallen world to label and paralyze individuals, whereas the LORD does not waste the pain of this world, but uses it to draw man to Him.

The modern construct of determinism uplifts the seemingly perfect individuals with strong genes (nature) and superior pedigree (nurture), whereas it is unaccepting of the base and foolish. It is important to expect sin and understand that sin manifests in a vast number of ways in all people. Two broad categories of sin seen in scripture would be overt (obvious) sins and covert (not so obvious) sins. The keynote Biblical example includes the overtly sinful publican and the covertly sinful Pharisee (Lk.18:9-14; Mt.23). Secular determinism lives in the realm of covert pharisees that claims those with the best genetics (beauty and brains) and backgrounds are to replicate, while those with overt sins and consequences should not reproduce (i.e., Emil Kraepelin, Joseph Mengele). Understanding of overt and covert sin will assist in navigating cases of the seemingly *“Perfect”* people.

Response to the Experiences of a Fallen World

How an individual *chooses* to respond to the painful experiences of the fallen world is based on their perspective – secular or Biblical. Adam and Eve sinned in a perfect environment, which is pivotal point in upending the deterministic secular view that humans are either victims or victors of their genetics and environment (nature vs. nurture). Adolf Meyer insisted that the determinants of abnormal behavior were from one’s cumulative

⁸Berger, D. *Mental Illness: Volume 4 – The Influence of Nurture*. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2016, p.18.

negative events of life history up to the point of abnormality; conversely, positive behavior derived from one's cumulative positive events of life. Essentially, those who grow up in perfect environments will have mental stability and those who grow up in negative environments will have mental abnormalities.⁹ Scripture and history reveal this to be untrue as saved and unsaved individuals have risen from lowly backgrounds to temporal achievement because they chose not to be crippled by their circumstances.

The response to stress, pain, and trauma begins unseen in one's heart (Prov.3:1, 4:23). The natural man's initial response will be carnal and fleshly if not redeemed, controlled by the Spirit, and hoping in the promises of the Word of God (Ps.119:49, Eph.5:18). Even still, the redeemed individual must be filled with the Spirit, or they will respond in paralyzed fear, doubt, panic, and distress. The internal and carnal response of the heart will harbor and mull over time, which will eventually manifest externally and begin to impair activities of daily living. The external manifestations of spiritual distress are labeled as mental illness (anxiety, depression, bipolar, schizophrenia). Again, secular constructs provide labels that paralyze the Biblical response of self-reflection, repentance, and dependence on the Lord.

The biblical perspective is that mankind is called to live by faith (Rom.1:17), whereas Satan tempts the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life that promote sight-based living. The life of faith is centered on the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word, who set the perfect example of how to respond to all issues of the fallen world. Hebrews 4:15 reveals His example for the believer's response in all areas, "*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*"

The epistle of *James* was written to persecuted churches and believers that faced a variety of tribulations that included personal sin (Jms.1:13-15), effects of others sin (Jms.3:3-12, 4:1-4), and natural causes (Jms.5:14). These tribulations would encompass a diverse array of responses such as fear of man, panic, trauma, instability, and double mindedness that would result in a vicious downward cycle of sin and chaos if not countered with a Biblical response (Acts 8:1-4; Jms.3:14-18). James pointed to the "*Perfect*" Lord Jesus Christ who responded perfectly in word and deed to His experiences in the fallen world, which was exacerbated by Satanic opposition each step of the way (Jms.3:2; Mt.4:1-10). In essence, believers need to patiently hope and wait on the Lord Jesus Christ during difficulties of all sizes for an eternal reward (Jms.1:12; II Cor.4:16-18). However, believers that depart from the place of Wisdom (church – pillar and ground of truth) and subsequently lack wisdom from the Word, will become spiritually double-minded and unstable as they follow carnal wisdom by default (Jms.1:8; 3:14-15). *James*, along with other scripture, reveals that the carnal hearts of man that do not patiently wait on the LORD, but follow carnal wisdom that will tend toward double-mindedness, instability, chaos, fighting, and immorality (Jms.3:14-4:5). The manifestations of persistent instability outside Biblical wisdom are commonly diagnosed as anxiety, depression, bipolar, and schizophrenia.

Response to the Sin of Others

Genesis records the harrowing life of Joseph, while being a sinful young man, he was often the recipient of other individual's sinful deeds. His brothers cast him into a pit and sold him into slavery (Gen.37:28). He was tempted and slandered by Potiphar's wife (Gen.39:1-10). He was wrongfully imprisoned (Gen.39:20). He was

⁹Ibid, p.5.

helpful and friendly, but his deeds were forgotten and unappreciated (Gen.40:23). Joseph's responses were based on his fear of the LORD (Gen.39:9, 42:19). Joseph prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, who was wrongfully accused, betrayed, slandered, and harmed by others. The sin of others is painful and hurtful; however, believers are to respond as the Lord Jesus Christ and not in the flesh.

Victim-Sinner Paradigm

It is easy and sometimes unavoidable for an individual to create an identity that is solely focused on the harm and evil done to them by another. The victim identity. In each case, the received sin varies in extremity from the perspective of others, but to the individual that received the sin – it was deeply hurtful. The reception of evil and harm from others is painful, real, and has lasting consequences.

Sometimes an individual's victim identity does not draw sympathy from others, and other times it is given a lifetime credence of validity. Nevertheless, it is important to have a Gospel-centered perspective that all individuals are sinners, victims of other sins, and susceptible to a sin-cursed world. Furthermore, I Peter 2:24 reminds the church member, "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*" Despite the most valid account of victim identity, "*God manifest in the flesh*" – the Lord Jesus Christ – was perfect, innocent, and He bore my sins on the cross. Our individual and collective sin killed Jesus. This is not cause to devoid a victim from counseling or compassionate care, but ultimately each individual must come back to the purpose of the cross of Calvary.

The Spiritual Damage inflicted by the Tongue

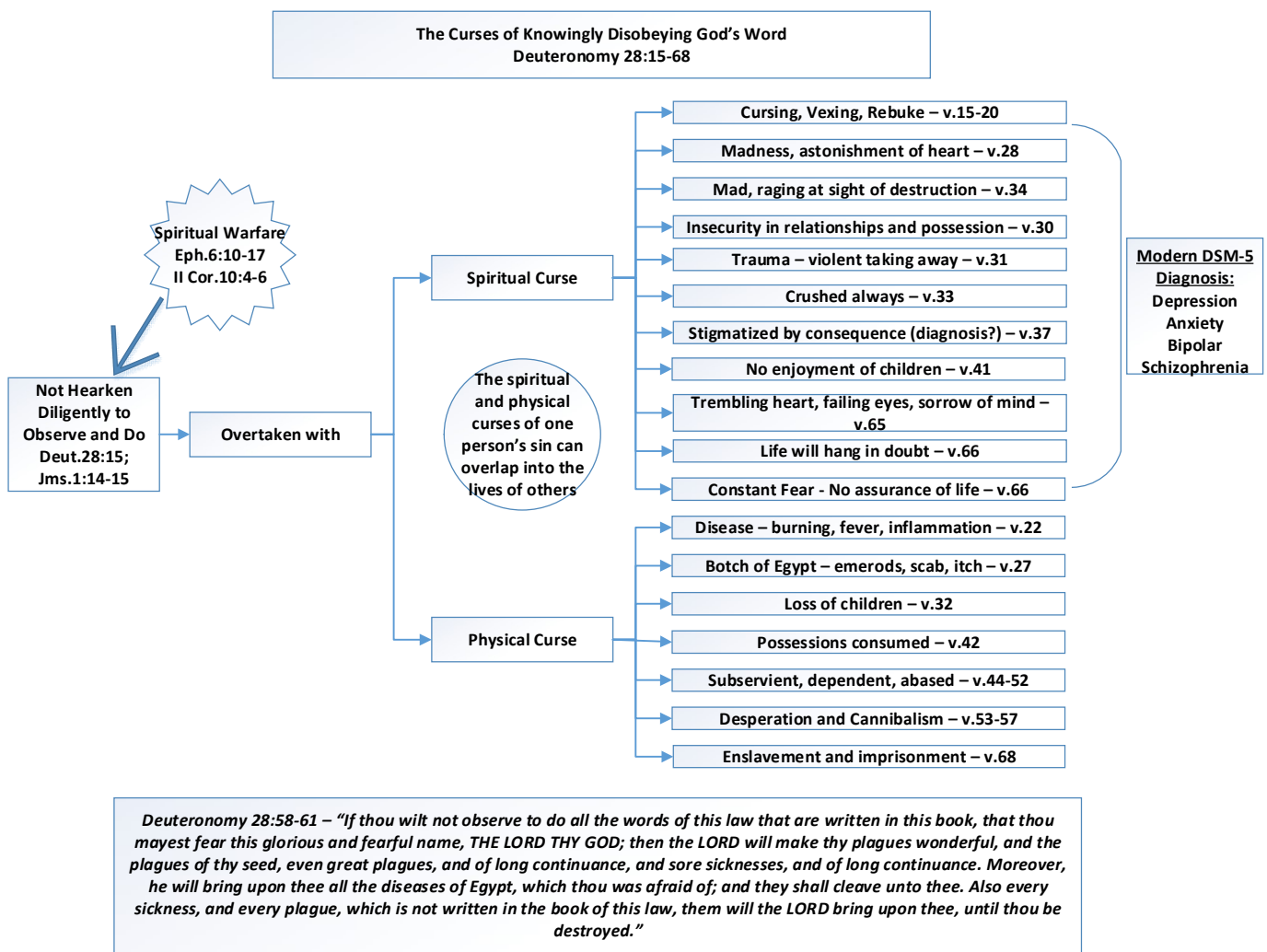
Proverbs 18:21 reveals the severe damage that can be inflicted on another person by the tongue, "*Death and life are in the power of the tongue: And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*" The verse is a warning for speakers and listeners. Those who speak must ensure they do not use their fiery member as a tool to harm others spiritually, which can lead to physical ramifications (Jms.3:1-10). Those who receive deadly words must choose to respond in a Christ-like manner to mitigate the sting and hurt inflicted by the words. I Peter 2:22-23 highlights the Lord's response to deadly words, "*Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*" The tongue is an "*Unruly evil, full of deadly poison*" that can inflict deadly wounds; however, Christ held his tongue and committed himself to the Righteous Judge.

Response to Natural Causes

Tragedy, disease, and death are to be expected in a fallen world. Luke 13:1-5 provides the Lord Jesus Christ's response to the woeful circumstances that cause unexpected death. The first event was the slaying of certain Galileans by Pilate, whose blood was mingled with pagan idols. The second event was the tragic toppling of the tower of Siloam that killed eighteen individuals. The Lord's response to both events dealt with the eternal and spiritual realm instead of the temporal realm of distress; twice He declared, "*Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*" (Lk.13:3, 5). In their temporal distress and mourning, the Lord pointed them to the eternal ramifications of dying without tasting the water of everlasting life through faith and repentance. The eternal state with its rewards or consequences must be preeminent in dealing with temporal issues of living in a fallen world (II Cor.4:16-18; Jms.1:12).

Disobeying God's Word

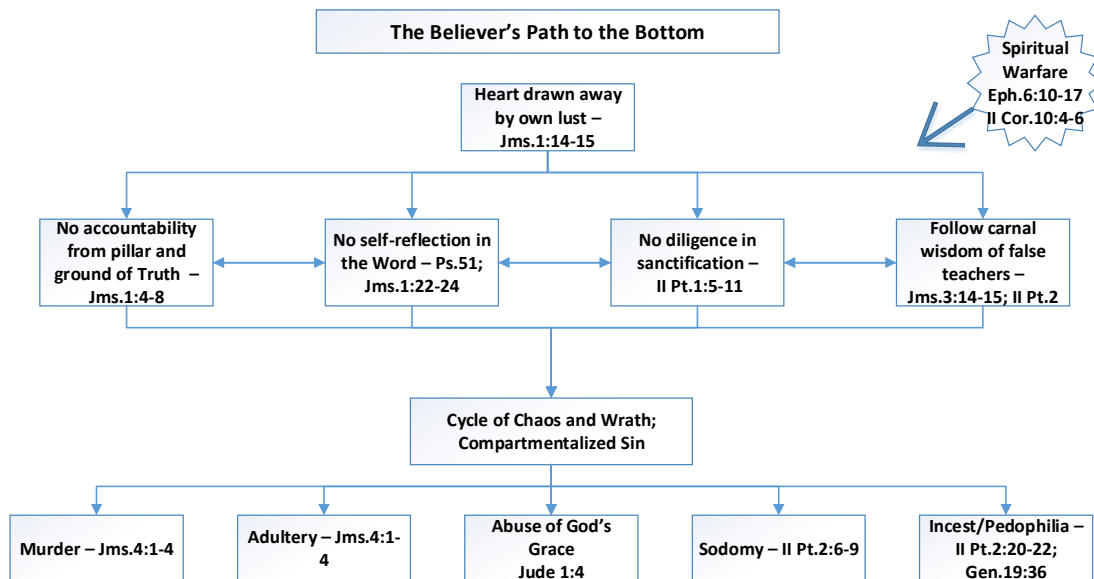
Ultimately, responding to personal sin, others sin, or natural causes of the fallen world must be according to scripture; responding in adherence to secular wisdom not in line with scripture is sin and will exacerbate the problem. Disobedience to God's Word begins in one's heart and then manifests externally. Our nature is to deceive and be hypocritical by masking our true heart; hence, the seemingly "innocent" person can manifest behavioral issues "Out of the blue." Whereas, others will openly rebel against God, His Word, parents, and follow sinners (Prov.1:1-10). Deuteronomy 28 details that spiritual decisions to obey God's Word in all areas will result in spiritual and physical blessings or spiritual and physical curses. The focal point of the passage is that the spiritual drives the physical, and not the other way around. Deuteronomy 28:28 reveals a few of the spiritual curses of disobedience as "Madness" (שִׁגְיוֹן, *shiggaon*), "Blindness" (עִוְרוֹן, *iwwaron*), and "Astonishment of heart" (תִּמְהוֹן לֵבָב, *timhon lebab*). These spiritual curses entail furious and fanatic thinking full of darkness and confusion (cf. Jms.1:8). See the below figure "The Curses of Knowingly Disobeying God's Word" for a visual breakdown of the passage.



Spiritual Warfare

Living in a fallen world with a wicked heart is miserable enough; however, on top of those elements lies the persistent attacks of Satan and demons. Ephesians 6:12 reveals that believers “*wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*” Paul revealed the demonic hierarchy that provides constant attack on the believer. Matthew 4:1-10 reveals that the Lord Jesus Christ was tempted by Satan, but the Lord rebutted each temptation with the all-powerful Word of God! Christ warned Peter of Satan’s attack in Luke 22:31, “*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.*” Acts 5:3 reveals the Satanic attack on two saved church members, Ananias and Sapphira, “*Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost.*” As demonstrated in Matthew 4, spiritual warfare ensues when the flesh is weakened; hence, spiritual attacks must be considered when looking at the full paradigm of one’s spiritual/mental condition.

The unsaved world walks “*According to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*” The Bible, history, and present practitioners of darkness reveal that all mankind can access the demonic realm through occultic instruments such as immorality, drugs, alcohol, piercings/tattoos, bloodletting, murder/abortion, etc. (Lev.19:28; Deut.14:1, 18:10; Zech.13:6; Mk.5:2-5). Modernized procedures of the occult realm are more sanitized and less macabre as previous generations; however, they are broadly accepted by society as was child sacrifice in most cultures for millennia.¹⁰ Demonic possession is clearly seen in the unregenerate world that is replete with the instruments of the occult; however, demonic oppression can be seen in the realm of the believer that has regarded spiritual sin in their heart and is physically weak.



¹⁰British Anthropologist, Nigel Davies, provides a comprehensive look at the willful and mostly voluntary practice of human sacrifice that has touched every civilization of every millennia. Davies, N. *Human Sacrifice in history and today.* New York. William Morrow and Co. 1981.

Secular Theories of Psychology

Common Theories

The problem with evolutionary theories is that they: 1) reject the biblical makeup of a soul as flesh and spirit, 2) subject humans created in the image of God to the animal realm, and 3) assuage the guilt and responsibility of “bad people” by subjecting them to be mere victims of evolution instead of responsible sinners.

Materialism is the Darwinian theory that humans are strictly physical beings with no spiritual element (anti-Genesis 2:7). If it cannot be seen, observed, and tested then it does not exist. Subsequently, the “mind” is a physical by-product of the brain, which is in stark contrast to the spiritual entity of humans created in the image of God.

Humanism stems from Darwin’s half-cousin, Francis Galton, who proposed that humankind are the highest good and determiners of morality in the universe. Obviously, this fallacious ideology deviates from the Word of God. Consequently, the ideology postulates that intellect, capacity, behavior, and strength are determined by ones genes. Humanism would synergistically work with the other evolutionary constructs such as materialism and determinism.

Determinism or bio-determinism builds upon materialism by indicating that humans are the helpless by-products of their genes, brain, and environment. Subsequently, those with mental illness are helplessly pre-determined to the disease because of bad genes or a bad environment (nature vs. nurture). The mentally ill, murderers, and pedophiles are considered victims of evolution instead of sinners. This view rids mankind of responsibility for sin. Evolutionist Richard Dawkins explains:

*“But doesn’t a truly scientific, mechanistic view of the nervous system make nonsense of the very idea of responsibility, whether diminished or not? Any crime, however heinous, is in principle to be blamed on antecedent conditions acting through the accused’s **physiology, heredity, and environment**. Don’t judicial hearings to decide questions of blame or diminished responsibility make as little sense for a faulty man as for a faulty car?”¹¹*

The theory of nature (physical biology) versus nurture (environment) is based on bio-determinism, which pre-determines an individual to a particular mental disorder. In regard to nurture, one’s environment will greatly influence one’s outcome; however, it does not pre-determine one’s outcome. The nature versus nurture theory provides a place to point the finger for one’s sin to assuage guilt and responsibility. Biblically, all man is born with bad biology – the curse of sin; furthermore, all live in a groaning and moaning world filled with sin (Rom.8:22). Nevertheless, each man will give an account of their words and actions before the Lord (Mt.12:36; Rom.14:12).

Brain-dysfunction theory is the idea that mental illness is the result of a broken brain, which was perpetuated by Emil Kraepelin. The theory builds upon materialism and determinism; its current focus is on genetic deficiencies since current diagnostic tests and imaging do not reveal physical damage to the brain. Despite

¹¹Dawkins, R. “Let’s All Stop Beating Basil’s Car,” http://edge.org?q2006/q06_9.html.

proponents of this theory the DSM-5 reveals the lack of measurable evidence to reveal an actual issue with the brain.

“In the absence of clear biological markers or clinically useful measurements of severity for many mental disorders, it has not been possible to completely separate normal and pathological symptoms expressions contained in the diagnostic criteria.”¹²

In particular, neurologist and neuroscientist that study the pathology of the physical brain do not see a connection between the physical elements of the brain and mental illness.

Neuroscientist Elliot Valenstein reveals, *“I will argue that the evidence and arguments supporting all these claims about the relationship of brain chemistry to psychological problems and personality and behavioral traits are far from compelling and are most likely wrong. The claim that psychotherapeutic drugs correct a biochemical imbalance that is the root cause of most psychological problems also rests on a very shaky scientific foundation. These ideas are simply an unproven hypothesis, but...they are heavily promoted as a well-substantiated explanatory theory.”*

Chemical Imbalance theory is a widely accepted fallacy that mental illness is caused by imbalanced neurotransmitters in the brain (dopamine, serotonin, etc.), which is an off shoot of determinism. For example, depression is caused by chronically low levels of serotonin or mania and schizophrenia are caused by too much dopamine.

Clinical Psychiatrist Steven Reidbord indicates:

“Chemical imbalance is a phrase used by psychiatrists and laypeople alike. When a mental problem seems to arise from within instead of without, it is said to be due to a chemical imbalance. In truth, however, no chemical imbalance, nor any structural abnormality in the brain, has ever been found to account for anything we currently consider a psychiatric disorder.”¹³

Clinical Psychiatrist Joanna Moncrieff – landmark study to debunk chemical imbalance theory

“The main areas of serotonin research provide no consistent evidence of there being an association between serotonin and depression, and no support for the hypothesis that depression is caused by lowered serotonin activity or concentrations. Some evidence was consistent with the possibility that long-term antidepressant use reduces serotonin concentration.”¹⁴

¹²American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. 5th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013, p.21

¹³Berger, D. *The Chemical Imbalance Delusion* Taylor, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2001, p.21.

¹⁴Moncrieff, J., Cooper, R., Stockmann, T., Amendola, S., Hengartner, M., and Horowitz, M. “The Serotonin Theory of Depression: A Systematic Umbrella Review of the Evidence.” *Molecular Psychiatry*. July 2022.

Darwin and Materialism

In 1871, Darwin's theory of evolution enshrined materialism that validates "Truth" as only things that can be observed through the scientific method. Essentially, if it cannot be observed and measured than it does not exist; subsequently, evolutionist and psychologist deny the spiritual realm and marginalize the mind as a by-product of the physical brain. Darwin's theories have been embraced by materialists with great dogma and are now protected out of necessity by psychiatrists and the pharmaceutical industry.

The idea of determinism or bio-determinism stemmed from Darwin's materialism and evolution, which indicates that humans cannot control their actions, thoughts, desires, or feelings. Furthermore, determinism renders humans as "*Helpless products of genetics, brain, and environment.*" In the *Origin of Species*, Darwin noted that "*Hereditary factors were passed on from generation to generation, controlling the traits of offspring.*" It is key to note that determinism was foundational to the desire for racial hygiene and cleansing by the Nazis. Subsequently, helpless humans should not be held to moral standards because they are victims of evolution. For example, the DSM-5 denotes sexual abuse of children as *pedophilic disorder* instead of a choice to morally sin.

However, many physicians and psychiatrists have always denied Darwin's theory. Carl Jung indicated in 1948:¹⁵

"The dogma that mental diseases are diseases of the brain is a hangover from the materialism of the 1870s. it has become a prejudice which hinders all progress, with nothing to justify it. Even if it were true that all mental diseases are diseases of the brain, that would still be no reason for not investigating the psychic side of the disease. But the prejudice is used to discredit at the outset all attempts in this direction and to strike them dead. Yet the proof that all mental diseases are diseases of the brain has never been furnished and never can be furnished...such a view leads straight to the materialistic gospel."

Emil Kraepelin and Brain-Dysfunction Theory

Dr. Emil Kraepelin was German physician in the nineteenth century who defined the Brain-Dysfunction theory, which postulated that schizophrenia was a form of juvenile dementia and attributed mental illness to brain pathology. His theory was in line with Darwin's materialism, which demanded a biological cause for the symptoms of schizophrenia. Dr. Kraepelin publicly embraced and promoted Darwinism; furthermore, he promoted racial hygiene, which carried weight beyond his death and into the holocaust.¹⁶ The Nazi physician Joseph Mengele, who was also known as the "*Angel of Death*," embraced determinism as the foundation for his lethal experiments on the Jews in the Auschwitz concentration camp; he penned, "*Weaker humans should not reproduce. This is the only way for humankind to exist and sustain itself.*"¹⁷ Kraepelin carried the error of determinism so well that it is zealously upheld in the present construct of psychiatry.

¹⁵Berger, D. *Mental Illness: Volume 2 – The Reality of the Spiritual Nature*. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2016, p.42.

¹⁶Berger, D. *Mental Illness: Volume 1 – The Necessity for Faith and Authority*. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2016, p.64.

¹⁷It is critical to note that the LORD used lowly Mary to deliver the Savior into the world; Luke 1:48 reveals her heart of praise, "*For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall*

Sigmund Freud – Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud was a colleague of Emil Kraepelin; however, Freud saw the futility in attempting to treat mental illness and schizophrenia. Instead, Freud sought to understand the causes of mental illness through psychoanalysis, which focused on both deterministic nature and nurture (genetics and environment). Nevertheless, Freud and Kraepelin successfully changed the general public's perspective on anthropology to a materialistic and deterministic view from a Biblical dualism approach. Freud was staunchly against spiritualism that prevailed in the nineteenth century. Freud's theory of psychoanalysis was embraced for a short time; however, his lasting imprint has been on promoting the deterministic view of humanity, which entails man is a helpless victim of evolution.

Freud noted his success in changing this perspective:

*“Mankind was now seen as being part of the natural order, different from non-human animals only in degree of structural complexity. This made it possible and plausible, for the first time, to treat man as an object of scientific investigation, and to conceive of the vast and varied range of human behavior, and the motivational causes from which it springs, as being amenable in principle to scientific explanation. Much of the creative work done in a whole variety of diverse scientific fields over the next century was to be inspired by, and derive sustenance from, this new worldview.”*¹⁸

Robert Spitzer – Godfather of Modern Psychiatric Diagnosis

Spitzer was the principal author of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Disorders, 3rd ed.* (DSM-III, 1975). He injected life into the faltering field of biological psychiatry by optimizing and popularizing the DSM. He created new diagnostic labels of mental illness to fit normal aspects of life, which enticed the un-repentant human nature to have an excuse for sinful choices.

Historian Ed Shorter notes:

*“Spitzer decided to take psychiatric diagnosis in another direction entirely, making the diagnoses as precise as possible in order to correspond to what were presumably natural disease entities. This was known as cutting nature at the joints and was precisely what Kraepelin had set out to do many years previously.”*¹⁹

Spitzer's update to the DSM-III included distress from symptoms and duration of distress; in essence, if someone experienced symptoms of fear and anxiety that interrupted their daily life for a period of weeks then they would obtain a diagnostic label. This enabled the deterministic view by allowing patients and doctors to

call me blessed.” Furthermore, I Corinthians 1:27-28 declares, *“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”*

¹⁸Ibid, p.72.

¹⁹Ibid, p.74.

declare any negative experience or behavior as a mental illness. Ultimately, this enables individuals to make spiritual changes but to rationalize behavior, which is further complicated by pharmacological treatment that allows the individual to stall in their progress of ever addressing the root issue!

Choices and Repentance

At the root of the secular mental health construct is the deceptive agenda to provide an external cause (excuse) for one's sinful choice, response, and behavior, which then prevents one from self-reflecting on their sinful heart and turning to Christ in repentance. The secular construct has provided labels and categories to allow individuals to pull out that "*Card*" to justify normal, sinful behavior that negatively impacts those around them. The deterministic theories of nature vs nurture provide rationales for behavior because of brain-dysfunction, environmental issues, and traumatic events such as bad parenting and childhood. It erodes the truth of personal accountability for sin, and removes the need for repentance. While traumatic events, emotional, physical, and verbal abuse abound in the sin-cursed world, each individual still has the personal choice and volition to turn to the LORD or respond in the flesh. The book of *James* focuses on responding to diverse troubles in a Christ-like manner when it comes at great personal cost and pain; "*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*" (Jms.1:2).

Ecclesiastes 12:14 reveals, "*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*" Every work will be judged, despite the excuse secular medicine provides to assuage guilt. Likewise, Galatians 6:7 declares, "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" Man will sow the blessings and curses of each choice he makes (Deut.28:1-15). The *Torah* upheld the principle of personal responsibility and accountability; Deuteronomy 24:16 reveals, "*The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*" Parents cannot be judged for the sins their children make, and children cannot be judged for the sins and mistakes of their parents. Furthermore, Ezekiel 18:20 declared, "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*" Label or no label, each man owns his action, choice, and response.

In the modern construct, King David could have blamed his sheltered childhood as a shepherd boy, or his wife Michal who resented him for his murder of Uriah and sin with Bathsheba (I Sam.16:11-12; II Sam.6:16). However, David modeled self-reflection and repentance in Psalm 51:2-4, "*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: And my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, And done this evil in thy sight: That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, And be clear when thou judgest.*"

Overview of the Diagnosis of Madness

- No biological markers - some correlations, but DSM says they are not definitive enough
 - Pneumonia Diagnosis is made when:
 - Chest x-ray reveals patch infiltrates in the lungs
 - White Blood Cell count is elevated, Sputum Culture reveals type of pathogen
 - Elevated temperature, labored breathing
- Diagnosis is simply a description, not an explanation
 - Anger Disorder
 - Red face, bulging veins, clenched fist
- Diagnosis is made when the presence of a medication that correlates with a description of symptoms
 - Zoloft advertisement:
 - *“Social anxiety can be overwhelming. You might shake, sweat, or feel panicky. You may feel embarrassed when you are in a group. You may worry that you are being judged. You just feel so isolated. These are some signs of social anxiety disorder. It is a real medical condition that can get in the way of your daily life. the cause is know known. But it may happen when natural chemicals between the brain’s nerve cells are out of balance. Prescription Zoloft works to correct this imbalance.”*²⁰
- Over diagnosis
 - Normal behavior is given diagnosis (ADHD, anxiety, depression)
 - Relation between psych diagnosis and pharmaceutical industry – *“if there’s a med for it, we will give you a diagnosis”*
 - Most basic psych diagnosis are given by primary care physicians - do not have time to provide thorough initial assessment - lead to diagnosis and medication prescription; subsequently, many have prescriptions that are not followed up on unless patient sets time up.
- Redefine sin as a physical and mental illness
 - DSM includes diagnosis for voyeurism, pedophiles, sadism, kleptomania, oppositional defiant disorder.
 - Important to rule out valid brain disease
- Socio-cultural impact of Diagnosis
 - John Applegate *“the DSM is a cultural document. It influences society and itself is influence by society”*²¹
 - Homosexuality
 - Included as a psych disorder in DSM 1 and DSM 2; however, it was removed in DSM 3. Alfred Kinsey did a study that revealed 10% of men engaged in that behavior so it should be considered normal.
 - ADHD
 - American standard of education
 - Overloaded public school system
 - Pharma’s promotion of Ritalin and Adderall to teachers and parents
 - Screen based media excess - promotes distraction and instant gratification

²⁰Emlet, M. *Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnoses & Medications*. Greensboro, NC. New Growth Press, 2017, p.22.

²¹Ibid, p.33.

Biblical Definitions of Mental Illness

The Reality of Profound Fear, Sadness, Mania, and Self-Deception

Anxiety, depression, mania, personality disorders, and schizophrenia are painfully real. As laid out, the debate is over the origins of madness (physical or spiritual) and the treatment of madness (physical or spiritual). The Word of God provides numerous examples of believers that faced exceptionally intense spiritual emotions. In particular, King David, the “*Sweet Psalmist of Israel*,” faced “*Horror*” (Ps.119:53) and his soul often “*Cleaveth unto the dust*” (Ps.119:25); nevertheless, he declared in Psalm 119:71, “*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; That I might learn thy statutes.*” Only a believer that is singly reliant on the LORD and His Word could make that statement. As born again church members, it is our duty to evangelize the lost with the Gospel so that their hearts can be transformed by the new birth; furthermore, we are to walk other believers back to the place of faith in the Word of God as they navigate their painful experiences.

Self-Deception, Self-Reliance, Self-Righteousness

The most prevalent mental health issue (sin) of mankind is self-deception and self-reliance that manifests as self-righteousness, which intertwines within Gnostic systems that promotes deathlessness and the deification of man. When the truth of man’s innate sin is too much to bear, he rejects his reality and need of a Savior and turns to self-deception and self-righteousness. Pride of morality and works leads to the delusion and audacity that one can stand before Jehovah Elohim without *the Advocate* – the Lord Jesus Christ (Pr.8:34-35; Rom.5:1; I Jn.2:1-3).

Secular constructs of behavioral modification are based on the concept of self-righteousness and inherent good within people. Matthew 12:43-45 (Lk. 11:14-26) reveals the demonic aspects of moralism and the ineffectiveness of behavioral modification outside of the Gospel power of Christ. The Pharisees claimed that Christ cast out “*Devils through Beelzebub*,” which prompted the Savior to diagnose their wretched estate. Matthew 12:27 reveals that the Pharisees were in the business of exorcism, “*And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?*” (Lk.11:19; cf. Acts 19:11-20). The Lord revealed the temporary effects of their form of behavioral modification in Matthew 12:43-45, “*When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.*”

The Savior highlighted the demonic element of the self-righteous Pharisees, which can clean up (behavioral modification) a house for a period; however, that self-reliant change would incur seven more wicked spirits and became worse off than before. Subsequently, the unbelief of the Pharisees would thicken and their wickedness would grow. The Lord Jesus Christ cast out devils by the Spirit of God, who bound the “*strong man*” and brought transformational change of the heart. Likewise, only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can change the heart of man; all other forms of self-righteousness, morality, and behavioral modification do not address the core issue – the heart relationship with Christ.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal behavior in a fallen world that fears another and the potential of future chaos, pain, and hurt. Proverbs 29:25 reveals, “*The fear of man bringeth a snare: But whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*” While anxiety can be impairing, each individual has the choice to address the fear or to circumnavigate it. The individual that does not turn to Christ and His word to be “*Quickened*” (Ps.119:25, 37, 40) will enter into the vicious cycle of fear and avoidance that can perpetually cast the individual into their own solitary confinement. The helpless individual trusts their wickedly deceptive heart and incorporates self-reliance to face the future, which reliably fails each time (Ps.119:25; Prov.3:5-6).

Proverbs 12:25 states, “*Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: But a good word maketh it glad.*” Proverbs 12:24-28 contrasts diligence and laziness - verse 25 deals with the paralyzing effects of anxiety/depression that leads to idleness. Heaviness, anxiety, and fear make the heart/spirit depressed, and this verse brings out the anxiety/depression cycle. Anxiety is fear of the future and depression is sadness over past events in a fallen world. The Hebrew word behind “stoop” is שָׁחָה (shachah) is only found twice, and it means to bow down in submission like a prisoner to a captor. Anxiety and depression enslave the heart and makes it bow down in submission to fear and sadness. The paralyzing effects of fear and sadness lead to laziness or idleness.

However, a good word makes it glad. The good word is the Truth of God’s Word that provides guidance for all areas of life centered on Christ. If the Word of God is not central in one’s life, then the normal anxieties and fears of a fallen world will drown them. David declared in Psalm 119:25, “*My soul cleaveth unto the dust: Quicken thou me according to thy word.*” Ultimately, the good word of Truth teaches individuals to be “*Complete in Him.*” Christ is the only One who can meet the needs of comfort, security, love, and respect.

Depression and Bipolar Disorder

Depression

Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, they were struck with guilt and sorrow that would pass onto mankind; Genesis 3:7-13 reveals “*eyes were opened,*” “*hid themselves,*” “*afraid,*” and “*naked.*” Furthermore, men would suffer the turmoil of work and women would suffer the sorrow of childbirth. Ecclesiastes 2:23 summarizes the fate of mankind, “*For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.*”²² Sorrow, grief, sadness, and depression are to be expected in this fallen world; not only is depression to be expected, but it abounds in various degrees to those that do not hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. Proverbs 14:13 indicates, “*Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; And the end of that mirth is heaviness.*” Temporary pleasure and joy outside of Christ will leave one empty and sorrowful.

Proverbs 18:14 reveals the paralyzing effects of depression, “*The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; But a wounded spirit who can bear?*” Foremost, Solomon provides a Biblical anthropology in that depression and sorrow are a spiritual issue, not a physical pathology. Solomon denotes that the spirit of man is able to abide and sustain physical infirmity; however, once the spirit is afflicted and cast down the entire soul (physical and spiritual) cannot be lifted up (“bear” – נָשָׂא, *nasa* – to lift up).

²²The Hebrew root word behind “sorrow” is מָכַו (makov) that is found sixteen times in the MT; it is rendered as “sorrow,” “pain,” and “grief.”

Proverbs 17:22 reveals that the spiritual state of an individual will effect the physical state, “*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: But a broken spirit drieth the bones.*” The materialistic theory of chemical imbalance of the brain postulates that depression and other mental illnesses are caused by hormone imbalances (Dopamine, Serotonin); however, scripture reveals the spiritual effects the physical as already revealed in Genesis 3.²³ Deuteronomy 28:65 reveals some of the spiritual curses of disobedience, “*a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.*” Nevertheless, there are physical ramifications of a broken spirit such as aches, pains, gastrointestinal disturbances, weakened immune systems, and increased blood pressure.

Ecclesiastes emphasizes that mankind follows *False hope* (Eccl.2:1-10) until they find out they are still *Hopeless* (Eccl.2:11); ultimately, it reveals the *True Hope*, which is to “*fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man*” (Eccl.12:13). Mankind is in a continuous cycle of pursuing false hope (false religion, Gnosticism, money, morality, hedonism, etc.), which always results in “*vanity and vexation of spirit.*” The LORD uses the consequences of sin to get mankind’s attention so that they would turn to Him with the supreme purpose of Psalm 33:8, “*Let all the earth fear the LORD: Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*” Once man turns to Christ (Wisdom), they can have favor and peace with Jehovah God. The Old Testament saints had this truth in Proverbs 8:35-36, “*For whoso findeth me findeth life, And shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: All they that hate me love death.*” Likewise, New Testament saints understand Romans 5:1, “*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Man can have positional/eternal peace with God through Christ, and practical peace by obeying His Word.

Bipolar Disorder

Depression = “A morbid preoccupation with ‘me’”

Mania = High opinion of oneself, self-dependence to escape sadness

Bipolar disorder is a term that encapsulates the cycle of pursuing satisfaction through self and other means, finding it empty, followed by sadness, and then vigorously pursuing another route of satisfaction. The difference from depression is that bipolar disorder has shorter bouts of depression that are followed by a self-inflated and manic pursuits of satisfaction through false hope. In essence, the individual with bipolar disorder manifests both blatant sadness and pride-full mania. Mania is an extreme pursuit of euphoria and exhilaration fueled by pride and self-deception. Ecclesiastes 2:1a reveals the deceptively proud credo of mania, “*I said in mine heart, go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure...*” The Hebrew root word behind “*prove*” is נָסָה (*nasah*), which is a *Piel* imperfect verb that means “to intensely test, try, or prove.” Solomon revealed that he attempted to satisfy his deceptively wicked heart with mirth and pleasure through a variety of routes. Of note, Solomon sought satisfaction by his own hand as the wisest and wealthiest man of his time.

Dr. Richard Bentall explains that mania is a chronic attitude toward escaping intrinsic sadness and pursuing happiness and pleasure:

²³See breakthrough study that reveals the insufficient evidence of this theory: Moncrieff, J., Cooper, R., Stockmann, T., Amendola, S., Hengartner, M., and Horowitz, M. “The Serotonin Theory of Depression: A Systematic Umbrella Review of the Evidence.” *Molecular Psychiatry*. July 2022.

“People tend to react to being depressed in different ways. Some people ruminate about their feelings, others launch into attempts to solve the problems that they believe have led to their depression, some try to distract themselves and a few indulge in dangerous activities.”²⁴

The manic element of bipolar disorder is defined by the secular *DSM* as:

“Believing that one is superior to others and deserves special treatment; self-centeredness; feelings of entitlement; condescension toward others. Grandiosity is a facet of the broad personality trait domain; antagonism.”²⁵

Alfred Adler explains the pursuit to escape depression through personal triumph:

“Mania, in common with melancholia and severer neuroses, is a barricade erected by the patient to block his own approach to the real business of life, and it is sometimes preliminary to the establishment of psychosis. The most formidable phase of the disorder, as we have seen, occurs when some urgent problem presses for solution and the patient has lost courage. In mania there is an effort to overcome this cowardice, and the patient pushes himself forward, exaggerates his actions, and talks and laughs with needless excitement. He is high spirited and irritable, has great projects, is very superior and boastful of his power, and displays strong sexual inclinations.”²⁶

Concisely, the manic phase of bipolarity is underlined by the willful pride and self-deception to rescue oneself by projecting confidence, success, and undertaking a multitude of pursuits. As evidenced by Lucifer, pride leads to delusion and over-estimation of one’s abilities (e.g., Is.14:14, *“I will be like the most High”*). Proverbs 16:18 reveals the result of manic pride, *“Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall.”* Unfortunately, the proud individual repeats the cycle after they recover from their proud fall ad nauseum until repentance or destruction.

The LORD uses the consequences of our sin nature and fallen world to get our attention with the ultimate purpose that we turn to Him. Ecclesiastes 7:2-4 reveals, *“It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.”* The vanity and sorrow of the world is meant to push mankind to the One True Hope – the Lord Jesus Christ!

Secular psychology has appropriately categorized the sinful manifestation of man’s heart and proud pursuit; however, they have pushed dependence on anti-depressants, which only mask the root problem and provide temporary numbness to one’s sorrowful condition. Furthermore, the informal cultural remedy is alcohol (which is not scripturally banned by most pastors). The issue with these “solutions” are 1) they mask the root issue of sin and impede the need for repentance, 2) they create varying degrees of dependence, and 3) they control the body and not the Holy Spirit (Eph.5:18).

²⁴Berger, D. *Mental Illness: Volume Four - The Influence of Nurture*. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2016, p.120.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

The Biblical solution is to turn to Christ. Isaiah 53:4-5 reveal, “*Surely he hath borne our griefs, And carried our sorrows: Yet we did esteem him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him; And with his stripes we are healed.*” Christ carried the sorrow, grief, and sin of mankind to provide a way of salvation; He was sent “*to heal the brokenhearted*” (Lk.4:18). The Lord Jesus Christ is the only solution for sorrowful mankind.

ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a catch all label to describe the effects of normal hyperactivity and attention challenges in a child; specifically, classification is based on two broad categories: inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity. Secular psychology and education “experts” created a list of eighteen undesirable behaviors in children; a child that exhibits some or all of the behaviors for a period of time is provided the label. The key issue is that there are no biological markers, and the diagnostic criteria is subjectively left to a parent or teacher to determine that the behavior is undesirable in the construct of the American educational system. Some conservative secularists have postulated that this diagnosis is anti-male in that it pre-dominantly seeks to subdue the overactive male biology. Ultimately, the reality of inattention is in all children, and the need for training children to pay attention is found in Proverbs 4:20-27; in this passage, Solomon reveals the need to train the ears, eyes, heart, mouth, and feet to listen to Wisdom.

Former Harvard Psychologist, Dr. Jerome Kagan, notes:

“ADHD is an invention. Every child who’s not doing well in school is sent to see a pediatrician, and the pediatricians says: ‘Its ADHD; here’s Ritalin. In fact, 90 percent of these 5.4 million kids don’t have an abnormal dopamine metabolism. The problem is, if a drug is available to doctors, they’ll make the corresponding diagnosis.’”²⁷

Each child is created with different giftedness, energy levels, physical attributes, and personalities; however, the subjectivity of “*Normal*” has caused angst over personalities that differ from the parent or schools’ perspective of normal. Consequently, some parents fall into the trap of wanting a “normal” child by secular standards and proceed with medicating the child with hopes of conformity. In a fallen world where each child carries the curse of sin this label could technically be applied to every child that is “*Left to himself*” (Prov.29:15). The point – all children require boundaries, instruction, and training in a customized and loving approach that a parent is best suited to provide. Biblically, every single child needs to be taught the ways of wisdom, understanding, justice, judgment, equity, subtilty, knowledge, and discretion from the Word of God (Prov.1:1-6). Solomon emphasized the basics of training children as follows: children are to fear the LORD, listen to parents, and avoid sinful influences (Prov.1:7-10). The secular construct provides a diagnostic label that does appropriately define sinful behavior of an untrained child; however, it does not address the child’s sin nature and need for Biblical wisdom and training.

²⁷Kagan, Jerome. “What about tutoring instead of pills?” *Spiegel Online* (August 2, 2012): <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/child-psychologist-jerome-kagan-on-overprescribing-drugs-to-children-a-847500.html>: accessed October 26, 2022.

The DSM describes ADHD as a constellation of eighteen abnormal behaviors under the two categories of inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity. The secular construct struggles to differentiate diagnostic labels of ADHD from so called normal behavior of a sin-cursed child. The Word of God reveals that normal behavior of an unregenerated individual that rejects Biblical wisdom is folly, shame, and destruction, whereas normal behavior of a Christian stems from a regenerated heart that walks in the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. Proverbs 20:11 reveals that a child's behavior will reveal training or a lack thereof, *"Even a child is known by his doings, Whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."*

Ultimately, the ADHD label describes behavior of an untrained child. Proverbs 29:15 and 17 reveal the contrasting effects of training a child or neglecting their soul, *"The rod and reproof give wisdom: But a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; Yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."* The loving parent that seeks to train their child must understand the Biblical principle of spiritual gifts that are existence pre-salvation and energized upon salvation. Naturally, a parent seeks to force their giftedness and perspective onto their child; however, unless that child has the same gift of the parent, friction and confusion can occur. Recognition of the child's gift and subsequent perspective can guide the parent in their approach to training and discipline. The deployment of Wisdom and exercising of the rod should not be negated, but accompanied with a precision approach based the perceived gift of the child.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Job 5:7 states, *"Yet man is born unto trouble, As the sparks fly upward."* Job summarized the experience of all mankind, which was echoed by Paul in Romans 8:22, *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."* The construct of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a label that describes a traumatic event that imprints an individual with perpetual stress; furthermore, trauma can either be something that occurred to an individual or rooted in guilt from something an individual did to another. All mankind is subject to varying types of impairing events that can lead to chronic forms of stress; however, an individual's response to impairing events determines whether or not they receive the label from a secular perspective.

Materialists declare that impaired individuals are subject to a form of physical dysfunction or imbalance; however, the label of PTSD has generated much controversy through its subjectivity. Berger aptly states, *"One of the most blatant ways which the APA has taken normal response to human life and subjectively turned them into abnormalities is through the label of PTSD."*²⁸

Anemona Hartocollis notes:

"Almost no other psychiatric diagnosis has generated as much controversy, according to Dr. Robert L. Spitzer, a retired psychiatry professor from Columbia and an expert in mental

²⁸Berger, D. *Mental Illness: the Necessity for Dependence*, vol.5. Taylors, SC. Alethia International Publications, 2016, p.193.

disorder classifications. It has become so vague that stressed-out college students and people who watched horror movies could fit the profile.”²⁹

The subjectivity of PTSD varies among types of impairing events and each individual; however, the response of the individual is what distinguishes those that succumb to chronic stress compared to those that move forward. As Job and Paul revealed previously, all mankind are subject to trauma, and PTSD is a normal response. Heman the Ezrahite reveals a proper response to the trauma of life in Psalm 88:1-3, “*O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee: Let my prayer come before thee: Incline thine ear unto my cry; For my soul is full of troubles: And my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*” Trauma is painful and bitter; however, Heman provided instruction (“*Maschil*”) through his example of bringing his bitter cry to the “*LORD God of my salvation.*” Heman would grapple with the LORD as he brought his personal anguish to his Savior in prayer.

The modern psychological construct seeks to utilize anti-depressants to blunt the reality of the horrific trauma experienced, which is viewed as a merciful act. Unfortunately, the reality of the event awaits the individual as the effects of medication wear off and other avenues are pursued. As well, traumatic events can cause an individual to isolate despite their desire for help because they feel they cannot relate with those who have not experienced their pain. Furthermore, guilt is often a key element among those that initiated a traumatic event that effected another individual. It is important to sift through feelings of guilt since guilt can either be rooted in fact or in self-deception. While the label of PTSD can help organize the process and types of feelings after an impairing event, it can mislead and paralyze individuals from the reality that trauma and shock are normal aspects of life that ultimately force individuals to find a type of savior.

Romans 8:1-2 declares the freedom in Christ to overcome the enslavement to an event, “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*” Joel 2:12-13 reveals that the LORD used the traumatic events of a locust plague to get the people to turn to Him in repentance, “*Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, And with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, And turn unto the LORD your God: For he is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness, And repenteth him of the evil.*”

Schizophrenia

The self-deceptive heart of an individual produces false-fixed beliefs to escape or dissociate from their painful reality (aka dissociative disorders). The impetus for the cycle of chaos includes one’s own sin and the reception of sin from another. Simply, being hurt and hurting another both cause the deceptive heart to create a false reality in order to escape pain and the responsibility for the pain they caused. The root issue from a Biblical perspective of what is known as schizophrenia is a deceptive and wicked heart. The individual is deceived in their thinking about themselves, their circumstances, and others; presumably, the deceptive thinking protects themselves as the victim. This deception is further complicated by spiritual warfare and substance use. Jeremiah 17:9 reveals, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” Daniel Berger provides a sound explanation:

²⁹Hartocollis, A. “*10 years and a diagnosis later, 9/11 Demons haunt thousands.*” *New York Times*, August 9, 2011.

“Scripture provides clear explanation for all degrees of deception and provides three specific reasons why people think and behave in the way described as “psychosis.” The Bible sets forth three causes of psychosis: (1) the naturally deceptive and destructive heart of each person, (2) the deceptive and destructive words and actions of others that evoke a deceptive response, and (3) the deceptive and destructive influence of demons.”³⁰

The secular determinist claims the cause of schizophrenia to be genetics and chemical imbalances (nature); however, there is no objective or empirical evidence to denote biological markers of physical disease. Others claim negative relationships and experiences to be the cause (nurture), which gets closer to the issue. However, it is key to note the major difference between influence and causation of negative experiences. No doubt, negative relationships, destructive words, and traumatic experiences influence an individual; nevertheless, it can not be said that negative experiences cause schizophrenia because that would remove the individual’s choice to respond in a Christ-like manner. Cohorts of certain demographics (childhood trauma; verbal and physical abuse) usually respond in the same deceptive manner commonly known as schizophrenia.

The wicked heart deceives to protect one’s pride of the identity they desire to have in order to escape the horrors of what was done to them or what they did. It is a natural and normal response to desire escape from one’s situation of trauma. David’s gifted use of imagery portrayed this natural response, *“And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest.”* Ultimately, self-deception prevents one from repentance and/or running to the LORD for deliverance.

Without schizophrenia, modern psychiatry would be extinct. Prior generations understood anxiety and depression as normal experiences of life that demanded a change since those generations had less of a cushion for paralysis. Furthermore, out of control children were labeled as misbehaved and products of parents that did not train or discipline, not ADHD. Hence, psychiatry focused on the truly bizarre behaviors of Schizophrenia. In the 1940’s and 50’s, the Germans definition of schizophrenia became wildly popular in America, where the label was applied to a wide array of diseases (encephalitis, dementia, etc.). The broad use of the term kept psychiatry in business unto Robert Spitzer extended the DSM to include normal experiences of life as billable diagnostic labels (Anxiety, depression, bipolar, etc), which created the current construct that gives patients a diagnostic label in exchange for insurance reimbursement. Currently, psychiatry can diagnose and bill for anything in the DSM-5, which is comprised of normal experiences of life that require a Biblical response.

It is important to note that the term schizophrenia has been used to mean many different things over the last two centuries. Kraepelin and the early German psychiatrist primarily focused on the bizarre behaviors of odd speech patterns, facial tics, hallucinations, and odd walking patterns and called the disease *Dementia Praecox*, which some suggest to actually have been the results of the physiological disease of encephalitis or dementia. The French psychiatrist Paul Bleuler coined the term *Schizophrenia* (split mind); however, his definition of the disease process was not the same as Kraepelin. Bleuler actually spent time observing patients, whereas Kraepelin only read patient charts. Bleuler noted that the mind of the afflicted was split between reality and fantasy. Modern psychiatry focuses on the hallucinations and delusions, which are derived from the brain-dysfunction theory or

³⁰Ibid, p.48.

genetic disorder.³¹ The symptoms are categorized as positive (hallucinations, delusions, disorganized speech, bizarre behavior) and negative (flat affect, no joy, no social interaction).

Former Harvard Psychiatrist Dr. Peter Breggin notes the following about schizophrenia:

“Is there such a thing as schizophrenia? Yes and no. yes, there are people who think irrationally at times and who attribute their problems to seemingly inappropriate causes, such as extraterrestrials or voices in the air. Yes, there are people who think they are God or the devil and repeat the claim no matter how much trouble it gets them into. But no, these people are not biologically defective or inherently different from the rest of us. They are not afflicted with brain disorder or disease.”

Demon Activity

The role of demonic activity is often attributed to schizophrenia despite the refutation of modern psychiatry. Subsequently, the secular construct of psychiatry built upon determinism recognizes it is in the minority when it comes to issue of demonic activity.

“The belief in demonic control is universal across cultures and enduring through time because it makes so much sense to most people; it taps into something basic in human psychology and explains a large part of human experience in a simple and plausible way. The battle against demons appeals to the theological mind; cures most of the symptoms that ail us; ministers to the soul; and binds the tribe. Demons are a completely logical, if prescientific, way of understanding the changes caused by psychiatric and medical illness...it appears silly only to us children of the Enlightenment who believe in biological causes of strange behavior.”³²

Scripture reveals the voluntary and involuntary aspects of summoning demons, demon oppression, and demon possession. The Gnostic and occult realm have openly been involved in the summoning of demons behind idols and gods through macabre ritual worship (I Kgs.18:28). Likewise, there are numerous examples in the unsaved realm of voluntary and involuntary demon possession (Lk.22:3; Jn.13:27). Furthermore, scripture reveals that believers can be oppressed by the demonic realm (Eph.6:10-18; Rev.12:19). In combination with a self-deceptive heart and substance use, demonic activity is a varied contributor to the myriad of symptoms in the construct of schizophrenia.

Hallucinations

Neurologist, Dr. Oliver Sacks, defines hallucinations as *“Percepts arising in the absence of any external reality – seeing things or hearing things that are not there.”³³* Hallucinations and delusions are the result of both valid neurological disease and/or spiritual turmoil. In the physical realm, disorders such as Charles Bonnet Syndrome can cause visual hallucinations as the individuals vision begins to deteriorate. The physical element

³¹Ibid, p. 47

³²Frances, A. *Saving Normal: An Insider's Revolt against Out-of-Control Psychiatric Diagnosis, DSM-5, Big Pharma, and the medicalization of Ordinary Life*. New York: harper Collins, 2013, p.119.

³³Sacks, O. *Hallucinations*. New York, Random House LLC, 2012, p.1.

behind the syndrome is the relationship between the brain and the eyes; seemingly, as the vision deteriorates the brain fills in the gaps with images or patterns. Other physical causes of hallucinations include sensory deprivation, Parkinson's, Visual Migraines, Narcolepsy, and phantom pains in amputees.

As a Neurologist, Dr. Sacks indicates that hallucinations related to schizophrenia are intimately related to the individual's "*Altered inner life and life circumstances.*"³⁴ Dr. Sacks reveals the key distinction between hallucinations of biological origin compared to that of spiritual origin is the "*preservation of insight.*"³⁵ In short, the individual with hallucinations of physical origin can be reminded that the images are not real and will not persistently believe the false image. Whereas hallucinations of spiritual origin lose insight and are much more challenging to confront because of the deceptive nature of the heart.

Disorganized Speech

Disorganized speech includes word salad (words and concepts have no logical flow), loose associations (irrelevant word associations), clang association (words connected by the way they sound), and neologisms (made up words). However, this type of speech reflects metaphors that seek to disassociate from reality. In essence, the self-deceived heart that rejects reality manifests in metaphorical speech that seeks a false reality.

The Secular Need to Medicate Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia

Hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized speech are sometimes innocent, but most of the time they are dark, wicked, and murderous. From a public health perspective, it makes sense to chemically lobotomize the hoards of lost individuals that are compelled by hallucinations to murder others or harm themselves (potentially hurting others). While lobotomized individuals can no longer harm themselves or others, they lose the ability to hear the gospel and repent. Dr. Peter Breggin notes the effectiveness of the questionably unethical medication use:

*"The thought processes that get labeled schizophrenia require higher mental function and therefore a relatively intact brain. No matter how bizarre the ideas may seem, they necessitate symbolic and often abstract thinking. That's why lobotomy "works": the damage to the higher mental centers smashes the capacity to express existential pain and anguish. As we'll find out, its also why the most potent psychiatric drugs and shock treatment have their effect."*³⁶

The Department of Public Health cannot solve the root issues of schizophrenia, which is rooted in desperately wicked hearts; however, local churches can do their part presenting the Gospel that confronts their self-deception with the Truth of Jesus Christ.

³⁴Ibid, p.13.

³⁵Ibid, p.39.

³⁶Berger, D. *Mental Illness: Volume 4*, p.100.

Pharmacotherapy Basics for Christians

Overview of Psychopharmacology

In a world plagued by anxiety, depression, emptiness, madness, and self-deception there is a desperate market willing to take medication from eager manufacturers to “cure” spiritual issues. The surge to take medication to heal spiritual issues is based on the normalization of the erroneous brain-dysfunction theory and chemical imbalance theory. Meanwhile, the Christian approach to solve spiritual issues with scripture, prayer, and faith in Christ is deemed as trite and ineffective. Dr. Daniel Berger III succinctly states, “*The overwhelming need to find a solution for deception, guilt, painful memories, sorrow, anxiety, and the reality of death makes people desperate to find a cure for their impaired and depraved minds...what we choose to depend on to heal our minds, however, reveals our truth faith.*”³⁷

Indeed, what we choose reveals our faith, especially in light of the truth that medication cannot heal spiritual issues. As previously detailed, the materialistic and deterministic theories of mental illness reject the Biblical makeup of a soul to include a body and spirit; subsequently, determinists declare that mental illness is a physical problem related to genetic deficiencies and chemical imbalances, which are erroneous claims that have no empirical evidence or Biblical backing. The Biblicist Christian must not ignore the basic truth of Genesis 2:7 by treating the spiritual issues of the heart with medicine that directly effects the physical elements of the central nervous system. The greater issue for the Christian is that they develop a low-dose dependence on a pill that masks their heart issues for a period instead of reliance on the LORD (Eph.5:18); nevertheless, *without fail* the spiritual problems await the individual when the stimulant or depressant wears off (Pr.12:25, 29:25).

Drug Type:	Treatment for:	Examples:
Antidepressants	Depression	Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil
Antiobsessionals	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	Anafranil, Zoloft
Antipsychotics	Schizophrenia, hallucinations, delusions	Thorazine, Haldol, Zyprexa
Anxiolytics	Anxiety/fear	Valium, Ativan, Xanax
Hypnotics	Insomnia	Ambien, Lunesta
Mood Stabilizers	Bipolar Disorder	Lithium, Depakote
Psychostimulants	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	Ritalin, Dexedrine, Adderall

Neurotransmitters

Neurotransmitters and hormones are used to elicit varying responses in the central and peripheral nervous system. These transmitters are used for a vast number of processes within the human body. The brain can regulate an increase or decrease, which produces a particular response. The most common is the fight or flight response when a person encounters danger; subsequently, the body will release epinephrine (adrenalin) that will stimulate the alpha and beta receptors to increase heart rate, heart contractility, and cause bronchodilation to allow an individual to fight or flee for the self-preservation of life.

³⁷Ibid, p.1.

Psychiatric medications and alcohol work on the neurotransmitters and cause an effect on the nervous system in one way or another. It is key to note that increasing or decreasing neurotransmitters *does not* heal or fix anything; if anything, it causes low to high levels of dependence on the item that elicits the hormone release. Such is the case of Dopamine, which is the “*feel good*” hormone; drugs, food, sex, and acquisition release levels of dopamine that tells the brain “*I like that.*” Consequently, the brain desires that benchmark level of hormone and desires more. The LORD created these hormones; however, to be controlled by substances that release these hormones and effects goes against Ephesians 5:18, “*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*”

Neurotransmitter	Increase or Decrease	Effect	Med Class
Serotonin	↑	enhance feelings of euphoria (Ecstasy), hallucinations (LSD, Psilocin)	SSRI
	↓	apathy, docility	
Dopamine	↑	Increase pleasure, heart contraction; improve movement	Heroin
	↓	Indifference, docility, apathy - Risperdal - "Chemical lobotomy"	Antipsychotics
Epinephrine & Norepinephrine (Monoamines)	↑	Stimulates alpha and beta receptors, increase BP and HR, Focus	Cocaine, Tricyclic Antidepressants, Ritalin, Amphetamine
	↓	blocks receptors to decrease HR and BP	
Glutamate	↑	Memory, learning, excitatory mediator	
	↓		
GABA	↑	calms firing neurons in CNS, improve focus - inhibitory mediator	Benzodiazepines, Barbituates
	↓	excite neurons, cause anxiety symptoms	
Acetylcholine	↑	excites Nicotine receptors, stimulation, release of adrenaline	Atropine, Nicotine
	↓	stimulates Muscarinic receptors, bradycardia, hypersalivation	

Psychoactive Drugs Cannot Fix Spiritual Issues – They Can Cause Issues with Low-Dose Dependence

The lack of biological markers in pure forms of madness, unfettered by medical and physical ailments, challenges the need for medication; simply, physical medication cannot “fix” something that is not physically broken. Nevertheless, the spiritual turmoil of madness effects the physical state and causes pronounced external manifestations that something is wrong (profound shaking in fear, deep levels of despair, manic behavior, hallucinations, and disorganized speech). The solution provided is to remedy the central nervous system by chemical means (blocking normal neurotransmitters– alcohol, SSRI) and mind-altering substances (LSD, ecstasy, shrooms). Unquestionably, alteration of neurotransmitters produces effects in the brain and central nervous system that provide temporary relief, but with that relief comes low-dose dependence and Spirit-grieving (Eph.5:18).

The secular psychology community recognizes this and has boldly sought an unknown faulty gene to be the culprit of mental illness; however, genetic studies continue to come up short. Former APA president Jeffery Lieberman has admitted, “*It is virtually certain that no single gene alone is responsible for any particular mental illness;*”³⁸ nevertheless, genetic work is looking at patterns and networks of genes to prove the source of mental illness. Even still, the medical and psychiatric communities continue to push psychopharmacology to heal genetic defects. The fallacy of this logic is that true genetic defects such as down syndrome and cystic fibrosis are not treated with mind-altering substances or neurohormone alterations.

³⁸Lieberman, J. *Shrinks: The Untold Story of Psychiatry*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015, p.306.

The issue of low-dose dependence is an area of key concern for believers with all psychoactive drugs. The depressed need their SSRI to put them to sleep during daytime hours, virtually navigating life as a medicated zombie. Those with and without ADHD labels cling onto Ritalin for its stimulant attributes, which is widely referred to as “*Kiddie cocaine*” in the medical community. Psychedelics provide the ability to escape to a fantasy world of hallucinations and voices, which often increase in horrifying nature. Opioids have the most significant level of dependence that leads to overdose deaths; nevertheless, the attraction is the temporary sleep and removal of pain. Ultimately, the danger with low-dose dependence on a substance is decreasing dependence on the LORD, which leads to no sustainable change (Lk.11:21-22).

For the believer, who or what is controlling you? The Spirit or mind-altering substances? Should we sleep through the pain of this fallen world? Should we escape to an altered reality? David was tempted with temporal escapes from the horror that overwhelmed him so much that he desired “*Wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest*” (Ps.55:5-6). Nevertheless, he implored the LORD, “*Give ear to my prayer, O God*” (Ps.55:1). David concluded that the solution was the LORD, “*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved*” (Ps.55:22).

Practical Implications for Local Churches

Local Church Considerations

- Christ was sent to the brokenhearted, captives, blind, and bruised to provide physical and spiritual healing (Lk.4:18). Does your church?
- Christ appealed to the weak and weary to come to Him (Mt.11:28-30). Does your church?
- Does your church operate with the presupposition that all struggle to Walk in the Spirit (Rom.7:16-24) and to combat “*Vain thoughts*” (divided mind – Ps.119:113).
- Remind and instill the positional hope in Christ of the believer
 - Romans 5:2-3 “*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.*”
- Assembling in the “*Pillar and ground of Truth*” is essential to the weekly renewing of one’s mind (I Tim.3:15; Rom.12:2; II Cor.10:4-5).

Counseling Considerations

- Reorient all to their position at the Cross in the victim-sinner paradigm (i.e. Chiefest of sinners)
- Sympathy vs Empathy
 - Sympathy – “with feeling or suffering” – c.1570 - gives the idea of coming along side the one in pain. The exhorter provides the care from the Word; the victim must receive and obey.
 - Lifeguard throwing a lifesaver into the water, instructing the victim to grab on.
 - Empathy – “in feeling or suffering” – c.1900 – assimilate or infuse into the pain, become like the one in pain. The victim determines the care they receive.
 - Lifeguard jumping in the water to grab the victim. Lifeguard and victim both drown.
 - Empathy comes out of Freud’s Ethical relativism – “*morality is beholden to the expected and accepted norms of the current culture.*” Example – “don’t tell me anything I don’t want to hear”
- Beware of gaslighting the counselor – “*My problem is unfixable*” “*My problem is too big to be fixed*”

- Christ fixed the biggest sin problem on the cross. Is any problem bigger than God?

Walking Troubled Souls back to Faith

For the believer, the root issue of madness is turning away from the LORD and His Word in unbelief. The remedy is to compassionately walk them back to the place of faith in the Word of God. Solomon warned against the temptation to lean on one's own understanding (Prov.3:5-6; Jer.9:23). The Apostle Paul frequently reminded the churches he wrote to about the foundation of faith in one's personal life; II Corinthians 4:18 reveals, "*While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*" Likewise, II Corinthians 5:7 states, "*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*" Helping the troubled believer back to the life of faith is a paramount first step.

Reorient them to the Gospel

The false idea that individuals deserve better than they have is contrary the Gospel; if one is saved then they are doing better than they deserve (Ezra 9:6-8; Eph.2:1-4). Our proud hearts combined with secular psychology desire to roll in the mire of victimhood, and point the ire of our pain towards others. Taking a believer back to the cross to remind them that Holy "*God manifest in the flesh*" bore their sins on the cross is critical to helping one with the varied forms of madness. We were dead and helpless in our sins; furthermore, our sins put King Jesus on the cross. No matter the horrific trauma that one endures, they cannot escape their role of putting Jesus on the cross. The empathy-cultural relativism movement promote a false atonement through the horrors endured.

Turn to Christ and His Word

The beginning of relief for each human created in the image of God is to receive peace with the heavenly Father through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Pr.8:35-36; Rom.5:1). The LORD seeks all mankind to fear, respect, and obey Him; Psalm 33:8 states, "*Let all the earth fear the LORD: Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*" The Savior implores all that carry the heavy burden of sin in Matthew 11:28-30, "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*"

If not medicine, what is the solution for spiritual turmoil? John 2:24-25 reveal that the Lord Jesus Christ knew the motive and heart of man, "*But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.*" As the Savior encountered sinful mankind during His earthly ministry, He knew their hearts and that their greatest need was faith and repentance. In fulfilment of Isaiah 61:1-2, Christ read His mission statement in Luke 4:18, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*" The Lord Jesus Christ came to save sinners who suffered the physical and spiritual curse of sin (Rom.5:12); subsequently, Christ and His Word were and are the only solution for spiritual issues.

What is the solution for born again believers that suffer the various forms of spiritual turmoil? The account of Peter walking on the water exemplifies the ebb and flow of the faith versus sight battle that manifests as “*Strong in the LORD*” (Eph.6:10) or “*Horror hath taken hold upon me*” (Ps.119:53). Simply, as Peter focused in faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, he was able to walk on the surface of the water. Conversely, once Peter focused on the waves and storm around Him, he operated by sight and self-reliance, which caused him to sink (Mt.14:22-33). The believer that responds to the trials of life through sight and self-reliance will lack faith, stop assembling, lack Wisdom, and become spiritually unstable as they grow in self-reliance (Jms.1:1-16). Contrary to the universal church teaching, there is no scriptural backing for Christians floating in the big body untethered to a local church.

The believer must recall their special position as “*Children of God*” (Rom.8:16) and “*Firstfruits of his creatures*” (Jms.1:18) as they seek victory over their spiritual problems. II Peter 1:3-4 reveals that born-again believers have divine power to walk in the Spirit and have victory over the corruption in the world, “*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*” Furthermore, I John 5:4 declares, “*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*” The individual that places their faith in Christ and repents of sin can have divine power to overcome their self-deceptive heart that seeks self-reliance apart from the Word of God.

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