

August 31, 2007

From Your Pastor's Heart



Psychological Labels that Disguise Sin

Let's just admit it: taking a pill is easier than submitting to the Holy Spirit

It does not surprise me that the mental health industry continues to create and propagate new labels for human behavior that minimize personal responsibility. Human nature has always practiced blameshifting (Gen. 3:12-13). It also does not surprise me that pharmaceutical companies continue to create expensive new drugs to treat this ever-growing list of disorders. Human nature has always been covetous (Ps. 10:3). But what *does* amaze me is how many Christians swallow psychological poison on a daily basis through the media and even use their labels in everyday language as if they depict life as God sees it. Therefore, it is time to expose more of the devil's deception. Consider five of the hundreds of examples present in our disordered world.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LABEL From the "Experts" in Human Behavior: the Mental Health Industry	BIBLICAL DIAGNOSIS From the Expert on Human Behavior: God
<p>Bipolar Disorder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symptoms: recurrent episodes of mania (excitability, irritability, anxiety) and depression, many times both in the same day; given to extremes ➤ Treatment: mood-stabilizing drugs plus an anti-depressant 	<p>Sinner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Root problem: the indwelling sin nature demonstrating itself by inner conflict and sometimes what appears to be out-of-control behavior; emotions in charge of the will; possibly unconfessed sin (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 7:14-25; 2 Pet. 2:14; Ps. 32) ➤ Solution: repentance, redemption, self-control, choosing to trust God not self, obedience, walking in the Spirit, taking personal responsibility for one's behavior (Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6; Ps 56:3; Matt. 7:24; 10:28; Rom. 14:12)
<p>Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD) Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symptoms: often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities; often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks; often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly; often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions); often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities; often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework); often loses things necessary for tasks or activities; is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli; often forgetful. ➤ Treatment: drugs such as Ritalin, Prozac, Luvox, and Paxil. 	<p>Undisciplined Behavior/Foolishness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Root problem: the indwelling sin nature demonstrating itself by an infatuation with self (self-esteem); disrespect toward others, foolishness, laziness, stubbornness, and a lack of self-discipline (2 Tim. 3:2; Prov. 1:7; 24:30-31; Neh. 9:29) ➤ Solution: repentance, redemption, self-discipline produced through firm and consistent discipline from faithful parents, learning to be faithful with one's responsibilities, others-esteem, taking personal responsibility for one's behavior (Prov. 13:24; Eph. 6:4; Phil. 2:3; Luke 16:10; Rom. 14:12) <p><i>Note:</i> Ritalin is the most common drug used to treat this supposed "disorder" and is a powerful stimulant comparable to cocaine and is one of the most dangerously addictive drugs used in medicine.</p>
<p>Panic Disorder (Anxiety Attacks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symptoms: fear accompanied by symptoms such as palpitations, sweating, trembling, shortness of breath, sensations of choking or smothering, chest pain, nausea or gastrointestinal distress, dizziness, tingling sensations, and chills or blushing and "hot flashes." ➤ Treatment: drugs such as benzodiazepines, anti-depressants, mild tranquilizers, beta blockers, and others. 	<p>Fear/Misplaced Trust/Anxiety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Root problem: the indwelling sin nature demonstrating itself by lack of trust in God, which is usually trust that is misplaced in self; the pride of self-sufficiency; worry (Jer. 17:5; Matt. 6:33-34; Psa 118:8) ➤ Solution: repentance, redemption, replacing fear of man with fear of God; practicing prayer; submitting emotions to the will; taking personal responsibility for one's behavior (Phil. 4:6-7; Matt. 10:28; 1 Pet. 5:6-7; Rom. 14:12)

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Oppositional Defiant Disorder

- **Symptoms:** A childhood disorder described as a pattern of negativistic, hostile, and defiant behavior lasting at least 6 months, during which four (or more) of the following are present: loss of temper, arguing with adults, active defiance or refusal to comply with adult’s requests or rules, deliberately annoying people, blaming others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior, being easily annoyed by others, often angry and resentful, and often spiteful or vindictive, 75% of children continue to display symptoms in adulthood.
- **Treatment:** stimulant drugs, individual psychotherapy, family therapy

Rebellion

- **Root problem:** the indwelling sin nature demonstrating itself by pride, rebellion, disrespect, anger, and blameshifting (Prov. 12:15; 15:5; 17:10; 25:28; 1 Sam. 15:23; Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:10;-18; Gen. 3:12-13)
- **Solution:** repentance, redemption, humility, submission to authority, self-control, obedience, firm and consistent discipline from faithful parents, forgiveness, taking personal responsibility for one’s behavior (1 Pet. 5:5; Eph. 6:1-3; Rom. 13:1-7; Prov. 13:24; 26:3; Eph 4:31; Rom. 14:12)

Alcohol Dependence (Alcoholism)

- **Symptoms:** repeated alcohol use, a pattern of compulsive alcohol use, and (sometimes) physiological dependence on alcohol (i.e., tolerance and/or symptoms of withdrawal). “Alcohol Abuse” defined as “a destructive pattern of alcohol use, leading to significant social, occupational, or medical impairment.”
- **Treatment:** a treatment program designed for people who have the “disease” of Alcoholism.

Voluntary Bondage to Sinful Desires

- **Root problem:** the indwelling sin nature demonstrating itself by selfishness, avoiding responsibility, foolishness, and being controlled by the lusts of the flesh (Prov. 23:31-35; Gal. 5:21; James 4:1-3; 1 Pet. 4:3)
- **Solution:** repentance, redemption, self-control, others-esteem, spiritual sobriety, taking personal responsibility for one’s behavior, (Gal. 5:23; 1 Pet. 5:8; Phil. 2:3; 1 Cor. 5:11; Rom. 14:12)

Note: The disease model is everywhere, but is nowhere more present than in the area of alcohol abuse. This is due in great part to the influence of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and its founder, Bill Wilson who first popularized it.

Turn from the Deception of Psychology

O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.

1 Timothy 6:20-21

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Colossians 2:8

But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:3

Turn to the Truth of God and His Word

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

2 Peter 1:2-3

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

Proverbs 29:25

Rather than falling prey to a false, “my chemical imbalance made me do it,” philosophy of life, believers in Jesus Christ have the indwelling Spirit of God and the all-sufficient Word of God to deal with the conflict of indwelling sin and the trouble of living in a sinful world. As simplistic as they may sound, the words of the old hymn still ring true: *Trust and obey, for there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

Calling you back to the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ,

Pastor Paul