

The Bible & Mental Health (1)

Our World of Emotional Problems

INTRODUCTION:

A. Mark 5:1-15.

1. Christ and his disciples crossed to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee and found a man who was possessed with demons.
2. This man lived among the tombs. Men tried to bind him with chains but were unable to do so because he would break the chains. This possessed man roamed among the tombs and mountains, crying out and cutting himself with stones.
3. When Jesus met this man, Jesus cast out the unclean spirits (demons). All of the demons asked to be allowed to enter into a herd of swine feeding nearby. When the demons entered into the herd of swine, the herd ran down a steep hill into the sea and was choked.
4. The men who had been taking care of the swine went into town and told the people there what had happened. Naturally, the people were curious and went out to see what had happened.
5. The people found Jesus sitting with the man, who was now "**in his right mind.**" Instead of being awed by the power of Jesus' miracle, the people asked Jesus to leave. Many people today have foolishly deprived themselves of blessings by not allowing Jesus in their lives.
6. But we should not overlook an interesting point – when the demoniac found Jesus, he regained his sanity. **There is soundness of mind in being with the Son of God!**

TROUBLESOME AND DIFFICULT TIMES.

A. Mental illness is one of the major health problems in our society.

1. It has been estimated that at least half of those persons in hospital beds are there for no organic reason, but because they have emotional problems.

2. Dr. S. I. McCmillen, author of *"None of These Diseases,"* has made the statement that "medical science recognizes that emotions such as fear, sorrow, envy, resentment and hatred are responsible for the majority of our sickness. Estimates vary from 60 percent to nearly 100 percent."
3. The Yellow Pages of the telephone directory in any large city are filled with listing for psychiatrists and psychologists.

B. Psychologists suggest that, mentally, people fall into three general classes.

1. **NORMAL** – These people experience their share of daily problems, get tired, are angry on occasion, and have their ups and downs.
 - a. Average folk
 - b. Daily problems
 - c. Have bills to pay
 - d. Get tired
 - e. Sometimes get angry
 - f. May be lonely
 - g. May be frustrated
 - h. Carry on daily business with a degree of regularity.
 - i. Can be lonely or frustrated
 - j. Have ups and downs
2. **NEUROTIC** – He is able to live in society and work around other people. However, these people often experience anxiety. These people may be hypochondriacs and imagine they are seriously ill.
3. **PSYCHOTIC** – this person has an emotional disorder that is so severe he requires custodial care. He has lost touch with reality and may be subject to delusions or hallucinations. He sometimes completely withdraws from society and does not respond to others around him. He tends to live in a world of his own.

CAUSES OF EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

A. Sometimes the origin of these disturbances is

1. Organic
2. Hormonal
3. Chemical.

Note: Persons affected in this manner need medical attention.

B. Genetic defects, degenerative changes that accompany advanced age, the use of alcohol and other drugs can precipitate physical alterations in the brain that manifest themselves in emotional trauma. As with the first group, these people often require medical attention.

C. However, not all mental problems are genetic or organic in origin. People's

emotional problems are often times spiritual problems that have been allowed to go unresolved. They have been allowed to escalate to the point where these people simply cannot enjoy a happy, fulfilled life. These people become a misery to themselves and to those around them. Persons who suffer from emotional problems caused by spiritual problems do not need the advice of modern psychologists or psychiatrists nor do they need drug treatment.

D. Sin places an enormous emotional toll on those who sin. Consider the following:

1. Sin **SEPARATES** a person from a being of absolute purity, God (Isaiah 59:1-2). No one can enjoy true happiness as long as he is separated from his Creator.
2. Sin **SADDENS**. The prodigal son was in a state of depression until he "came to himself" and was reunited with his father (Luke 15:11).
3. Sin **SCARS**. Even when a person knows he has been forgiven of his sin, he may continue to carry the burden of his sin. Long after his conversion, Paul referred to himself as the "chief of sinners" (I Timothy 1:15).
4. Sin **SOURS**. Carrying the burden of sin can cause a person to become negative and critical – "misdirected hostility."
5. Sin **SICKENS**. Sin can produce heart problems, ulcers, and emotional difficulties.
6. Sin **SEARS**. When sin is left uncorrected it allows the heart to become hardened. Paul spoke of those who were "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19).

SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS HAVE SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS

A. Modern psychiatry is often unable to deal with man's problems.

1. Modern psychiatry is often atheistic and thus humanistic, viewing man as a mere animal.
2. Modern psychiatry often strives to be morally neutral and refuses to make judgments concerning values.

B. There is only one solution to those emotional problems that are spiritually caused.

1. That solution is God's word – 2 Peter 1:3 – "May grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."
2. The Bible is the best psychology textbook in the world. The Bible not only diagnoses humanity's weaknesses . . . It also provides the cure.

CONCLUSION:

1. Just as Jesus restored (through the miraculous) soundness of mind to the demoniac, he can restore soundness of mind (through his word) to those who have emotional problems due to spiritual lapses.

PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

First - *Christian counseling accepts the Bible as an authority base.*

Second - *Christian counseling depends upon the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit and not only upon one's own willpower to be responsible and to conquer problems.*

Third - *Christian counseling accepts as true that a Christian person has with a basic sinful component but also has a much stronger Godly component. (Examples are in Romans 7:23 and I Corinthians 2:14.)*

Fourth - *Christian counseling offers a way to deal with the past as well as the present and provides hope for the future.*

Fifth - *Christian counseling is based on God's love (and grace.)*

Sixth - *Christian counseling is universal and can be applied to all people regardless of genetic, social, educational, or cultural backgrounds. (Matthew 6:37)*

Seventh - *Christian counseling attempts to deal with the whole person: physical, emotional, and spiritual.*