

## **Mental illness and the last days, 1 of 4. Enticing**

Hi all,

I've long been curious about where the brain's chemical and electrical systems end, and the demonic begins. This series is about that point where human thoughts and emotions end and the demonic starts, and the thought processes that lead to emotional and mental illness.

Emotional and mental illnesses are listed as one of the signs of the last days, though the writers don't use our modern terms - but they describe it perfectly.

### **Bi-polar?**

Consider King Saul, having rejected God's instructions one too many times and been told by God that his family line would not continue on the throne, had fits of unpredictable rage. Today we might diagnosis him with a condition and prescribe a medication to level his moods, but the Bible says a demon was also involved.

In I Samuel 18:8-12 Saul becomes jealous when the people give David honor for killing Goliath. Saul is jealous and angry. After David ministered before him in song, Saul threw a spear at him to try to kill him. What would we call going from calm to rage in a second? Bi-polar? Intermittent Explosive Disorder? (Rage out of proportion to a situation, like road rage)

Why was a demonic spirit involved in this case, and how did the spirit become involved? Saul clearly opened the door through jealousy and anger, but at what point did a demon become involved?

### **Basic Bible interpretation:**

The King James and most other versions say in v10 'an evil spirit from the Lord' came upon Saul, though the Hebrew is written in the permissive rather than the causative. The Hebrew literally says: "Saul upon distressing from God the spirit that came on the next day..." Some translations say Saul 'prophesied' though the Hebrew isn't talking about godly prophesying, but I like the Revised Version that state Saul 'raved' under the influence of the demon - he went crazy talking nonsense, is one way to understand the passage.

Besides this, a foundational Bible interpretation rule is that we understand the OT through the eyes of the New Testament. That means because James 1:13 says that God does not tempt, test, or try anyone with evil for He is not tempted, tested or tried with evil, we dismiss the mistranslation for what it is - a mistranslation. There are many other OT passages that agree with James 1:13, like Job 37:23 'the Almighty does not afflict' and the whole of Ezekiel 18.

This presents Saul's jealousy and the emotional distress it caused, with anger, as opening the door for a spirit, God allowing it because Saul had left walking with God.

### **Where do Saul's emotions of jealousy and anger meet with the demonic?**

In James 1:2 he writes for us to 'count it all joy when you fall (stumble) into trials, tests and temptations'. (The Greek word here is used to express all 3 of those).

Joy is a fruit of the spirit/Spirit, so he isn't saying to be happy, he is saying to walk with the Lord and let His joy flow out of your spirit while you endure trials, tests, and temptations. He then encourages us to be focus on the Lord, not double minded as we seek His wisdom.

Then in v13 he wants to be perfectly understood as to where those trials, tests and temptations are coming from: "Let no man say when he is tempted, tested, or tried, that God is doing it to him. For God is not tested, tried, or tempted with evil, neither does He test, try, or tempt anyone with evil."

(If you have that understanding, combined with Jesus being the physical expression of the Father, then you'll understand the Old Testament through the eyes of the New, and it will all make sense.)

### **Here is where the thoughts and the demonic meet**

"But, everyone is drawn away when of his own longings/strong desire/lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it births sin. And when sin is complete (Literally, fully grown, matures), it brings forth (breeds, brings to completion, ends in) death."

THAT is where the desire for sin - lust meaning any desire for sin - and enticing combine to conceive sin in one's life.

### **This is what the demonic does**

The desire for sin is in each of us. The enticing is the demonic. The word 'entice' here is 'deleazo', from 'delear' meaning 'to bait' (a trap). In first century use, it meant "to lure or entice a victim into a moral trap, luring them by their own selfish impulses."

The situation with King Saul was that he cowardly refused to face Goliath, but let a shepherd boy take him down. The honor and adulation from the people he craved went to David. He was angry, perhaps with himself first, and then focused on David.

By refusing to 'get his heart right' when the emotions and thoughts of jealousy and anger first rose, he gave in to them, which opened the door for the demonic. When lust and enticing conceive James wrote, what it conceives is sin.

That sin is birthed the grammar indicates, after a gestation period, like a pregnancy. When it is fully birthed, sin will produce death - literal death, or the death of a relationship, marriage, job, or life. The end result of sin is death in any of its many forms.

But before that birthing process that brings it out into the open, the lust and enticing develop within a person's mind and imagination. That is the gestation period we might say, when the desire to sin combine with the demonic enticing, resulting in a swirl of thoughts and feelings.

### **This is what Cain faced in Genesis 4:3-16.**

Verses 3-4 tell us Abel offered a blood sacrifice, having learned from his parents how the Lord God made the first blood sacrifice and clothed his parents to cover their unrighteousness. Abel was righteous and accepted the Lord's way of a blood sacrifice for the covering of sins.

Cain did not. Of his own efforts Cain offered vegetables in an offering, rather than submitting to the rightful blood sacrifice. When his anger was still within his heart, the Lord God started dealing with him in v6-7: "Why are you angry?" (No answer). The Lord was trying to get Cain to deal with his feelings and thoughts of anger. The first step is why are you angry (It is without cause).

"Why has your expression changed?" (No answer) "If you do right, won't it be accepted?" (No answer, and even here the Lord offers him a chance to do right with the promise his right offering will be accepted.) If you don't do right, sin is at the door at it desires to overpower you. But you must master it." (No answer) Four questions the Lord put to Cain in an effort to get him to deal with his feelings - but instead, Cain kept thinking those thoughts and feeling those feelings.

Things haven't changed - the process is the same for us. All along the way the Lord was trying to stop Cain from the consequences of his unjustified anger. By dwelling on anger his thoughts developed into murder. Sin mastered him rather than him learning to control his thoughts, emotions and anger.

King Saul and Cain should have dealt with their emotions and thoughts, not letting them get out of control. In our world more than at any other time, we are seeing people who haven't been taught to process and think through things. Common sense isn't common anymore.

Pop culture is full of people who talk whatever thought enters their mind, and if they feel it, then to them that feeling is truth. When a culture accepts what is presented to them, whether it be lust or moral issues or political statements, without thinking these things through, we are left with an epidemic of emotional and mental illness.

It is that processing of thoughts, taking some captive to the obedience of Christ and others we ignore, that enable us to make wise decisions, logic with thought supported by strong moral convictions that lead to a successful life.

More about those processes next time. Until then, blessings,  
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## **Mental illness and the last days, 2 of 4**

Hi all,

The writers of the Bible didn't use modern terms like 'mental illness' or 'emotional illness'. However, if we define what emotional and mental illness is, then we can look for these symptoms and find numerous examples throughout the Bible.

### **Good mental and emotional health has 3 main characteristics:**

Productive activities like work, school, care giving. Second, healthy relationships, and three, the ability to change and cope with adversity.

Mental or emotional illness involves significant departures from these three, in thinking, emotions, or behavior. I've seen statistics that say about 20% of Americans have some form of emotional or mental illness.

Mental and emotional illness involve a disorganization to one's emotions, personality, or mind which impair normal function in life. It is a disfunction of normal thinking, feeling, mood, behavior, personal interactions. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Perhaps not surprisingly, some of those symptoms are described as being one of the signs as the time of the Lord nears. We are looking at the link between thoughts and feelings and the demonic.

### **II Timothy 3:1 says in the last days...**

...some of the signs will be emotional and mental illness, while not using those words. Symptoms include: Lovers of self, liars, false accusers, no self-control, violent, despising good and people who are good, sexual perversion, unthankful and purposely unholy.

And in v4, "savage, traitors, violent". Also, "wrapped up in themselves." In v7: "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." These are the intellectually dishonest, who when presented with facts refuse to admit 'I was wrong', as a way of life. Usually their friends are on social media as this unbalance leaves them unable to be a success in close interpersonal relationships like in marriage or real, in person friends.

### **I want to interject this**

The Greek word 'wrapped up in themselves' is 'tuphoo' where we get 'typhoon', which is what hurricanes in the Pacific Ocean are called. The Greek word means to 'wrap oneself in smoke', meaning this person presents a smoke screen swirling around them, a persona, and they blow in and blow out like a storm. That describes pride and narcissism, life is all about them.

The word in v4 translated as 'traitors' in some versions, or 'savage' is 'prodotai', which means to drive someone to the point of surrender. Some Bible versions translate it as 'treacherous', trying to bring out the meaning these people won't give up until you surrender, as a part of their betrayal.

In I Timothy 4:1-3 Paul writes that in the last days 'seducing spirits and teachings from demons' will cause some to depart from the faith. He says they will speak lies while being hypocrites for their conscience is seared.

### **The Greek word for 'seducing spirits'**

It is 'planois' and means a 'roving deceiver', thus seducer, which means a process of seduction. It is a gradual seduction until the person may wake up after having been used and wonder, 'How did I let this happen?' They were spiritually seduced as part of a process of deception and unhealthy teaching, emotions, and thoughts.

He says their conscience is 'seared', which is exactly what the Greek states - they are past feeling, unable to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit any longer for they have departed from Truth and the balance the Spirit of Truth brings into one's life.

### **Starting down the path of imbalance**

In II Corinthians 1:8-11 Paul shares how he came to the depths of complete hopelessness, in deep despair of life, and how he came out of his depression and state of mind.

The first thing he says in v8 is: "I don't want you to be uninformed of the troubles we experienced in Asia (modern south-central Turkey)."

This is often overlooked, that Paul wants people to know what they went through. He states this in the opening verses of his letter, meaning that informing them of what they had just been through was very important to him.

### **Letting people know what we are going through...**

Or have been through, is a key to restoring mental and emotional health. Depression tends to turn a person inward, keeping things to themselves. When a person commits suicide, their loved ones are often shocked to discover that person had been thinking of taking their life for quite some time, often with well planned steps to bring them to that point.

The question arises: "Why didn't they let someone know they were thinking this way?" is common. Here, we see a healthy attribute - Paul wants them to know, and in great detail as we shall soon see, what he was going through.

Most translations will write this part of v8: "troubles we experienced" or "affliction we went through". The Greek word for 'trouble' is 'thlipsis', and means 'great pressure'. In Paul's day it was used to describe the sense of being surrounded, with no escape, a narrowing of life around a person to the point they saw no way out. Confined, constricted, leading to hopelessness.

Paul continues: "...how we were utterly and excessively weighed down beyond our power so that we despaired of life."

The term Paul uses to describe his emotions and thoughts, of being 'weighed down' and 'beyond our power' is that of olives being crushed by a great weight so their oil, their life juices were being squeezed out of them. This describes a person in the depths of despair, without hope, and feeling all alone.

The word 'power' is correct, a form of 'dunamis', where we get dynamite - power. Paul had no power to get out of the situation. It isn't conveying a lack of personal strength as much as a lack of power to change the circumstance. He was trapped with no ability to change his life.

In fact when he says 'excessively beyond our power', the word 'excessively' is hyperbolen, meaning he felt like no one else had ever been through what he was going through. It literally means 'a throwing beyond others'.

Today we use the word 'hyperbole' which is the same word, but used differently in our day. Today it means excessive and is dismissed. We say a person is 'hyper' meaning super active or excited beyond what they need to be or should be. A politician may use exaggerated expressions to make a point, that are so extreme it is called hyperbole, and are dismissed as exaggerations.

In Paul's day it meant he was suffering a pressure that no one could understand, so far beyond others that he alone could understand - that was his state of mind at the time. Right

or wrong is immaterial, he is writing transparently of the way he felt at the time: That what he was going through was greater than anyone could understand - that is unhealthy thought and emotions.

His life juices were being squeezed out of him. He felt surrounded by circumstance. He saw death as the only way out. There isn't any indication a demon was involved, this was just what Paul felt and thought at the time. Thankfully he continues to write and tell them how he came out of it.

Next week I'll share how he recovered, living another 10 years during which he wrote the bulk of the New Testament. We will also look at where the demonic enters into one's thoughts and feelings. Until then, blessings,

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### **Mental illness and the last days, Controlling emotions, 3 of 4**

Hi all,

We left Paul in II Corinthians 1, writing about his feelings. He wrote of a recent time when there was no way out, that his life juices were being squeezed out of him. He wanted his friends in Corinth to know that he had felt that pressured and in such hopelessness. He was not in a good place emotionally and mentally.

#### **Controlling your feelings**

He completed his point in v9: "We felt we had received a death sentence, and thought we would die. This (was allowed) to happen so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God (Father), the one who raises the dead."

He wasn't blaming God that He allowed the persecution to come, for persecution went with the call of his life. Persecution is allowed as it was in the life of Jesus. As Jesus said in Mark 13:13, 'You'll be hated in all nations because of me.'

Paul made the choice to view his circumstances as a teaching moment, so that he could decide to trust the One who raises the dead. We too must make that choice, to use whatever life or the devil throw at us as a teaching moment, a step to greater maturity.

Paul faced intense persecution which could have all gone away if he would renounce Jesus. If he had said he wasn't a Christian, that he was returning to his Jewish roots, his life would have returned to that of any normal Jewish man in the first century Roman Empire.

#### **Paul made a choice**

A choice to take control of his feelings and thoughts, and started telling himself what he would feel and what he would think. When he decided to trust the Father who had already raised Jesus from the dead, and with whom he knew he would be in heaven, he started down the path towards emotional health.

#### **Culture purposely promotes living by feelings.**

Culture purposely promotes emotional decision making. The Bible teaches taking authority over our bodies, our thoughts, and our feelings to serve God. You aren't to live subject to your feelings, they must be subject to you.

Consider the exchange between Jesus and the scribe in Mark 12:29-31, where Jesus answers the question of which commandments are most important: "Hear or Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength. This is the greatest commandment. And the second, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

The Greek words for 'heart' is, 'kardias', and means 'thoughts, feelings, the middle part of a person.' The word 'mind' is 'dianoias' and means 'deep thought', 'exercising deep thoughts.'

The word 'soul' is 'psyches' and means 'spirit' or 'breath'. The word strength, which refers to our physical bodies, is 'ischyos' and means 'personal power, effort, force, ability.'

**You can see this most important of commandments,**

from which every other command is derived, requires our love of the Lord be to such intensity we live by controlling our thoughts and emotions. The command is to love Him with your feelings. Love Him with your thoughts. That is why Paul wrote in II Corinthians 5 which is derived from the greatest command above, and what he had learned as told in chapter 1. In 5:3-6:

"We don't go to war in the flesh, but we war. We bring every argument captive to Christ, pulling down strongholds and anything that exalts itself against what we know in Christ, and bringing captive as a prisoner of war every thought to the obedience of Christ. And being ready to avenge disobedient (thoughts/feelings) once you've come into full obedience."

It is a war Paul said - a war within ourselves. But every Christian must fight and win this war. It is a life-long struggle, but it gets easier, for those little victories that change your thoughts and feelings pile up. Soon you notice you think and feel differently about this and that in your past. You battle and change how you feel about this or that person now in your life.

These victories pile up and a momentum of righteousness and peace starts to be felt and seen in your emotions and thoughts. Soon you are walking in a whole new life of peace with the Father and the Lord.

**We bring our feelings and thoughts under control of God's thoughts and feelings for us.**

He doesn't just love you, He likes you. Every Christian learns to control their thoughts and feelings if they want to grow in Christ.

You cannot walk in Philippians 4:11-13 if you cannot do this:"I have learned in whatever condition I am, how to be independent of the circumstance. I know how to be abased, I know how to abound. I can be hungry, I can be full. In all things I have learned and entered a new dimension, that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Paul wrote that 10 years AFTER his 2nd letter to the Corinthians writing of how he once was pressured to the point of death, losing hope of life. But he made a decision in his mind and emotions that he would trust the Father who raises the dead.

**There is no other way for a person emotionally or mentally struggling to come out of it.**

If a demon is involved, Jesus said to cast out demons. They do the enticing, but each person must take control of his or her own emotions, his or her own feelings, and control them. You are not subject to the enticing, we are told to cast out demons in the name of Jesus. There is no prayer to take demons away; we must obey Jesus for we have been given the authority to command them away from us. It's that simple.

It is a totally new concept for many that the Bible teaches us to control our feelings and thoughts. But those same Christians who say they love God, disobey the most basic and important command: Love the Lord your God with all your thoughts, feelings, deep thoughts, breath and physical strength. We must grow into that.

When Paul wrote Romans 12:1-3 he wrote from personal experience:"Make your bodies a living sacrifice, which is only right, and undergo a metamorphosis in your thinking, and then you'll be able to walk it out, proving the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God."

That metamorphosis - which is the word in the Greek - only happens with efforts to control our feelings and thoughts, and is the only way presented in scripture to change our lives in Christ.

Next week: The world purposely causes an identity crisis, leading to emotional illness. And, what do we do with 'Christians' who say they are g\*y?'

Until then, blessings,

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## **Mental Illness and the last days, Identity Crisis, 4 of 6**

Hi all,

There is a difference between a believer in Jesus and a disciple of Jesus. By definition the word disciple means 'learner' or 'student'. Not everyone who believes in Jesus is a disciple of Jesus.

**Disciple:** "Someone who believes in the ideas of someone *AND* tries to live the way that person does or did." Cambridge Dictionary. (emphasis mine)

A believer simply believes but isn't necessarily trying to live as Jesus commanded. All Christians start as believers and in the best case, we all become disciples. But in today's culture, some 'believers' embrace sins as a lifestyle, to the point their thinking and emotions are off-balance. Their idea of Jesus is that He accepts all because He loves everyone.

To paraphrase Jude v4, they have turned the grace of God into a license for sin. That is wrong thinking. It can lead to emotional illness, to twist the very character of Christ into one who licenses their sin. In fact, the grace of God empowers us to live holy and godly lives, but some turn it into a license for sin.

James 1:22 urges us to be doers of the Word and not just hearers only, for one who hears only but doesn't do, is self-deceived. That's what we see all around us today for 'believers' who aren't actually disciples.

We are told in the Great Commission to make disciples, not believers. "Teaching them to observe and to do all things I commanded you." A disciple will eventually get rid of wrong thinking and feeling as they grow in Christ, in exchange for right thinking and feeling.

### **Identity crisis; Gender or temperament?**

God has a plan and purpose for every person ever born. He made us male or female. There is now great confusion in society over gender and temperament. A male may be in temperament more feminine, but he is still a man. A female may be in temperament more masculine, but she is still a woman. Popular culture confuses temperament with gender, and some Christians do too.

Popular culture would say 'I was born this gender, but I identify as the other gender.' That is confusion of temperament. It is confusion in thinking and in feelings. Feeling or thinking a certain way emotionally doesn't change gender. You may identify as a butterfly, but you weren't born a butterfly. Also, I'm not obligated to participate in your emotional or mental condition. Yet in today's society that kind of thinking is pushed in nearly every form of media.

### **In this day and age of the Internet and instant global information**

People who identify as butterflies can find each other through the Internet. Group identity takes over individual identity. By identifying with a particular group of similarly confused people, it gives credibility to and supports the confusion to the extent they don't know they are confused. They believe a lie that the rest of society is confused about them. They all identify as butterflies therefore their feelings must be valid. So they seek validation from the rest of society.

They have lost their personal identification, which is absorbed by the larger group identity. It becomes mob mentality, a tribe at war with anyone who doesn't agree with their confusion. Emotional reasoning takes over: I feel this way therefore I am.

Even believers, not disciples, but believers get wrong thoughts and feelings, not realizing they can control their thoughts and feelings, and find God's plan for their temperament. Satan tries to confuse people's identities as early in life as possible.

Satan did that to Eve: "If you eat you will be like God..." The Lord made them one way, but Satan offered a different identity. Satan tries to prevent people from knowing God's plan, purpose, and grace for their life by confusing their thinking. If he can confuse them, even as children, by getting them to think they should have been born a butterfly, he can keep them from learning the Father's purpose and plan for them.

### **In Christ, individual identity comes first, then group.**

Individually we decide for Christ, and individually we stand before Him to give account. When we sin, we admit it to Him - that is individual accountability. Everything else flows from that truth, that we individually stand before Him to give account.

After individually identifying with Christ, we identify with a group of similar people called Christians. This is healthy.

We see in Acts 11:26, where after Paul and Barnabas had met for a year with the same group of people in Antioch, teaching them of Jesus, that group became known as Christians. This should be a healthy network of relationships which bring a person further into maturity in Christ.

Human nature doesn't want to stand before anyone to give account. Right from the start Adam blamed Eve; "The woman which you gave me did it..." (Genesis 3:12) It is human nature to avoid accountability because that requires taking responsibility for our actions and consequences.

If one goes far enough away from a sense of accountability to God, then to our fellow man, they think they are only accountable to their mob, their tribe. They think they are only accountable to their group who identify as butterflies.

### **Notice the struggle for a personal identity**

Much of Paul's writings address identity confusion. In I Corinthians 6:9-10 Paul lists sins common in the culture of Greece and Rome, including "Neither....fornicators, adulterers, the effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind...will enter the kingdom of heaven."

In the very next verse, v11, he continues: "And such were some of you. But **now** you are washed. **now** you are sanctified (set aside for God's use), **now** you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with and through the Holy Spirit."

Such were some of you - who do you identify with? Your past, or your present? When a person 'accepts Jesus' or 'believes in Jesus' or 'makes a decision for Jesus', they are changing kingdom citizenship\*. They are renouncing their citizenship in one kingdom, the kingdom of darkness, in order to be translated into the kingdom of the Father's Son. Water baptism is among other things, a declaration of identity. \*Colossians 1:12-13

As the darkness gets darker, society will see increasing mental and emotional illness. The differences between healthy, functional Christians who are disciples of Jesus, and those who are not, will become increasingly clear.

Helping people regain healthy emotions and thoughts that will start to rearrange their lives, will become one of the main ways people come to the Lord. I will have some final thoughts next week on how to help someone regain balanced emotions and right thinking.

Until then, blessings,

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### **Next to last thoughts on mental ill (5of6): Christians with demons?**

Hi all,

Wrong thinking and wrong emotions don't always develop into emotional illness, but we are seeing a rise in emotional illness in around the world. It starts with a wrong thought, then a focus on that wrong thought leads to an imbalance in one's life. That imbalance is closely tied to emotional illness.



### **Christians with demons?**

In John 8:44 Jesus said when the devil speaks a lie he is all alone. He is in the spirit realm ruling his kingdom of darkness, so he is outside our realm of the physical world, but seeks entry. He looks for people to agree with him, which legally allows him into their lives.

If they agree with him, his authority is extended to that person and expands his kingdom and it's influence. He is confined within 'chains of darkness' - but if people allow his kingdom into their lives, the influence of his kingdom expands.

While a Christian's spirit cannot have any spirit other than the Holy Spirit, one's mind and body can entertain and even offer a home to an evil spirit. Satan wants influence in the natural world.

### **The spirit realm touches the natural realm at the point of thought.**

I've seen demons sitting on people's shoulders, then hop into their minds. Others report seeing the same thing when in the Spirit and allowed to observe how an obsessive thought happens.

In my experience, it has been those obsessive thoughts that dominate a person's thought life that signify an emotional or mental issue. Where an obsessive thought and a demon meet depends on each situation and person.

I've noticed that a person who is off balance in their thinking and feelings feels threatened if they interact with someone who challenges what they believe. The ability to argue a point and still have the same good feelings about that other person is a sign of maturity and emotional health. If a difference of doctrine or opinion on anything ruins what one thinks of the other, it is a sign of immaturity and possible emotional off-balance.

And that 1 factor right there, means such a person is often single, unable to sustain several long term relationships, because when challenged they cannot separate an idea from an emotion, and their opinion of that person is ruined. That's off-balance. Take to an extreme, it can become emotional illness.

An example from recent US history would include the prophecies from so called prophets that during President Biden's inauguration President Trump was going to come with the army to arrest Biden. It seemed like millions of Christians were caught up in that lie, following so called prophets who banded together and whose 'words' were confirmed only among themselves.

I challenged that idea as of a wrong spirit and NOT the Spirit of God to a few 'friends' on social media, saying that wasn't God and they needed to run from those so called prophets. I got unfriended or otherwise cut off from contact. Their response was anger, so 'unfriend' was the reaction. They couldn't justify it, explain the mechanisms exactly of what that take over and arrest would look like. One 'prophet' even said the Father personally appeared to them to tell them it was going to happen - and false words to that effect.

Look at the emotional off-balance and perhaps illness: The loss of common sense, logic, understanding the mechanics of how things work. The unhealthy focus on 1 thing, 1 topic that drew them in. The shutting out of friends. The inability to deal with challenges to their beliefs. The insistence to hear only those who supported what they said. The certainty they had higher knowledge than others on the 'outside'. That they felt better informed what the Spirit was saying and others would just have to trust them - all point to off-balance and perhaps outright illness.

### **But look at those same symptoms in the world.**

The same emotion, the same withdrawal from anyone who doesn't believe as they do. The anger, the leaving of healthy relationships to join only those who believe as they do, the feeling of being threatened if someone asks them to defend their point of view - we see it in every segment of society - Christian or non-Christian alike. How do those obsessive thoughts begin?

### **Before Satan brought sin to Adam and Eve, he presented a lie**

Consider that statement. A lie comes before a sin. Satan questioned them about God, told them God had lied to them, that He told them wrong, and he (Satan) was right. Even a half truth is a whole lie. Eve believed the lie which caused her to sin.

An adolescent boy finds adult web sites, and sees lies of how s\*x is. That's the lie that leads him into s\*xual sin as an adult and unhappiness with women in his life. A girl believes she is ugly, so she starts hating herself. Or maybe seeks 'that one' man who will fill her emptiness. A child is abused, so grows up with the lie that they deserved it or they were different, which leads them into sin...and on it goes. Before sin entered the world, a lie came 1st.

Or on the lighter side, 'Just one more piece of cake won't hurt', lol, we know that's a lie - so we sin against our body for the 2nd helping. "I'll quit (the habitual sin) next week..." What other lies do we tell ourselves before we sin?

Consider that a child or adult who believed lies now comes to the Lord and in their spirit finally feel clean and new again. But their mind is still filled with all those lies - they must un-believe the lies - one by one, situation by situation. They must reject the lies as they are seen for what they are, and start thinking God's thoughts about that situation.

People often rebuke the devil not realizing it is God bringing an event to their memory. He does so that they may say "I forgive them" or "I forgive myself" or "I've learned a lesson from that". Often it isn't the devil, but the Father trying to help us reconcile our past, bringing the memory, thoughts, and emotions related to the event to bring healing and subjection in Christ.

**You'll know He has done His healing work when the memory remains but the pain is gone.**

And I'll close it out with more about unbelieving lies, and more, next week. Until then, blessings,  
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## **Last thoughts, really, about mental illness, 6 of 6**

Hi all,

In part 4 I shared about the identity crisis Satan brought to Adam and Eve. That identity crisis was a lie, but they believed it. We could say they wanted to fit in to a group. Satan told them they would be like God - what a great group to be part of! So they ate.

They were willing to leave the identity of who they were individually for the chance to be part of the 'God group', to be like Him.

### **Belonging to or fitting in?**

Fitting in to a group is measuring people and figuring out how you can fit in. That's what Satan brought to Adam and Eve. They were asked to measure themselves, measure their current standing with God, and figure out how they could fit in with Satan by being 'like God to know good and evil'. Hmmm, what did they need to do to fit in? Eat the fruit. So they did.

When Satan offered a different identity by assuring them they could belong in the same class as God, to know good and evil - they left their God-given identity to make another identity and fit in with 'that crowd' (Satan's kingdom).

**If you belong to a group or person in a healthy way, you'll never be asked to change who you are.** Belonging actually celebrates who you are. Belonging requires you to be who you are.

Satan wasn't asking Adam and Eve to belong, he was asking them to fit in - to his plan, his lie, his larger agenda. That's what is diabolical about that part of emotional illness; it can offer a person what they want if they will only do what is needed to fit in. And that means changing who they are.

Satan wants to take away a person's individuality because individuality reveals each person's unique, God-given gifts. If he can get them to just fit in by giving up who they are individually, he can get them to identify with a larger dysfunctional group. Doing so can cover emotional or mental illness of that group. Group-think hides or masks emotional illness.

A healthy marriage will not ask a spouse to give up their personal identity, but celebrate 2 unique individuals learning to become one. Each will celebrate the other's uniqueness as they belong to each other, building a life together, committing to grow and change as human beings.

An unhealthy marriage, friendship, family or work relationship will remove one's individuality, so that a person doesn't know who they are anymore. At work they feel like they are a robot. In marriage a servant or just a partner. In a friendship the one who is always giving but the other friend can't reciprocate.

### **Helping people - how?**

Satan offered a different identity to Adam and Eve. He wanted them to do something to fit into a group who would be he said, like God, to know good and evil. He lied to them, showing that a lie comes before a sin. A person believes a lie first, the sin follows.

When we see people, Christians or not, with emotional or mental issues, the root is an identity crisis coupled with them having believed a lie. They don't know who they are as the Father created them. They don't know His plans for them. They don't know His great love for them. And they've believed an alternate identity of themselves.

They have chosen to identify with something else: Maybe it is self-hatred. Maybe it is narcissism. Maybe it is 8 hours a day on social media, thinking those are true 'friends'. Maybe it is focus on 1 doctrine about end times or conspiracy, UFO or little green men, to the near exclusion of true relationships and life.

### **Healthy patterns**

When a person believes a lie there is a certain amount of security in that. If a girl begins hating herself, she knows and is secure in what she hates and why. To un-believe the lie means stepping into the unfamiliar. "Love myself? I've never done that." As one example.

They need someone to show them their individual identity in Christ. How the Father created them and gave them amazing gifts (Ephesians 2:8-10). They need to know there is an answer. A person with wrong thoughts or unhealthy emotions who is also seeking answers, responds to someone they can 1, confide in, and 2, therefore trust.

It means helping someone who is off-balance emotionally or in their thoughts to show them how to restrain those unbalanced things in them. They need to be shown by that person how to think healthy thoughts and have healthy feelings.

### **Not always successful**

Earlier in the series I talked of how Paul wrote to the Corinthians about his unhealthy thoughts and feelings. But how he came out of it by turning to the One who raises the dead. He was able to do that in part because he had people in his life around him, and praying for him.

Some people may decide un-believing a lie is too hard, to scary. But there are also those desperately wanting to be healthy, and they need someone or a small group to walk along the journey with them. They need to know before they were even conceived, the Father was thinking about them and knew His plans for them. (Jeremiah 1:5, for instance)

Knowing the Father God is therefore the key to emotional and mental health. As mental illness and emotional illness become more common in societies, the need to know the Father God, and we can help them find Him. Doing so helps them find their true identity. Their true group who will celebrate who they are as an individual child of the Father.

### **Read, talk, listen**

Read Ephesians chapters 1 through 3. Everywhere it says 'God', insert Father, for that is who Paul is writing about: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father..." (1:2) So everywhere you read 'God' insert Father. Stop at each verse. The Father sends peace and grace. The Father has blessed you with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies - what does that mean to you day to day? That all blessings are already yours. You don't have to declare, confess, proclaim, fast, pray, give, participate or do anything - all blessings are already yours! Christ is already in you, there is nothing you can do to change or improve upon that.

Help that person see that - spend time in those first 3 chapters especially. Then talk to the Father: "This is eternal life, to know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." John 17:3. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and which His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. I John 1:3

Know the Father by talking to Him. Look for His involvement in your life by noticing the good things that happen to you through the day. Every good and perfect gift comes from Him, James 1:17 - look for the little coincidences, the favor, the grace, the timing in your life - then say 'Thank you Father' - involve Him in your life, thank Him, then be silent for a little bit, shifting attention to your spirit down inside you - sense that peace? Sense that 'you're welcome'? That's Him.

Helping people to know their Father completes them, fills that hole in their heart, for He alone can fill that....skip the symptom and go right to the heart of the matter. Lead them to the Father, show them His involvement in your life, and lead them. John 6:45: "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to me." Help them hear and learn from the Father, and they will come to Jesus.

New subject next week, a bit lighter one, until then, blessings,  
John Fenn

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