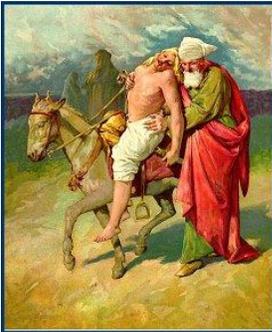


## New Horizons Newsletter



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*"May the Lord show you His favor and give you peace."*

(Nu. 6:26)

## MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR; BONDAGE OF THE SOUL

By Dr. Pierre J. Samaan

I am always saddened by individuals who refuse help. Often pride or fear of the unknown is so strong that it puts a person in bondage to doing what feels good instead of what will help them out of bondage of the soul. Sometimes, it can take an effort by family, friends, and clergy to help someone out of a destructive cycle of maladaptive behaviors.

Maladaptive behavior is when there is an impaired response in social, relational, occupational, or spiritual functioning. It is usually seen as an exaggerated or hyper-defensive response to what would be considered usual. Whether maladaptive behavior is self-destructive or aggressive, the Bible considers it sin. As a Christian, sins are only forgiven by an active belief in Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Because of the infilling of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God), the true Christian will be inner convicted and sorrowful for maladaptive behavior - sin, followed by an observable demonstration of change - repentance (Matthew 3:7-9).

*"Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living. Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy." (Romans 6:18-19 NLT)*

### **Forgiveness and Repentance**

As Christians, we are taught that with repentance there is forgiveness. This is not to say that we allow someone to hurt us over and over again. Forgiveness is saying I will not hold this sin against you. But, I will hold you accountable to taking responsibility for your actions (Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20b).

The Biblical way of saying you're sorry is with words and actions that demonstrate change over a period of time. *"...and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him." (Colossians 3:10 NASB)*

This type of change occurs when you have given yourself over to God (Romans 6:13). Unfortunately, most who say they're sorry are really saying that they're sorry they were caught. If consequences will help you to not repeat the sin, then I would expect a truly repentant heart would accept consequences (Ephesians 5:8-9).

*"Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you."* (Proverbs 1:23 NASB)

However, by worldly standards, some misbehaviors (sins) carry a greater weight of consequence. The natural consequence for a little white lie, for example, could be a cycle leading to chronic lying (the boy who cried wolf) which inevitably, brings troubles of its own (Colossians 3:8-10). Stealing or murder, on the other hand, would be more severely punished by worldly standards. But, to God, both are considered sins of equal consequence of eternal abandonment if there is not the expiation of sins through an active belief in Jesus Christ.

God set into motion both spiritual and human laws to protect us from sin (maladaptive behavior) and its consequences. Closely following the "Teacher" keeps us from losing direction.

*"24-26 Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?"* (Matthew 16:24-26 MSG)

### **Steps To Healthy Thoughts And Behaviors**

What can you do to help your loved one who is stuck in a vicious cycle of destructive behavior? Here are some suggestions:<sup>1</sup>

- Unconditional love with confrontation in love
- Give consequences when necessary
- Compassion and forgiveness
- Reaffirm healthy boundaries
- Support of friendship
- Intercessory prayer

That is a good start, but it is only a start if the problem is not resolved. When help is needed, you may need to turn to the professionals. Clinical Christian Counselors or Clinical Pastoral Counselors can begin an intensive process of Christ-centered treatment to the spirit, soul, and body. If referrals are needed to see a Psychiatrist or other professionals, the professional Christian Counselor will give the recommendations. Sometimes, a youth or adult will need more extensive help that only a hospital, residential or outpatient treatment programs can give.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Sandford, Paula, (1988) *Healing Victims of Sexual Abuse*. pp 135-136. Victory House Pub., Tulsa, OK.

### What If There Is No Cooperation?

It takes years to train up a child in the way he should go (Proverbs 22:6). In the same way, it can take years to retrain a youth or adult. During retraining - soul renewal, some faulty beliefs and misbehavior are so deeply rooted, a change of environment may be necessary. It's like replanting a tree in the same soil from which it did not previously thrive. You will only get the same negative results, no fruit (Matthew 7:16-18).

*"1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith."* (Romans 12:1-3 NASB)

Behaviors that are harmful to self and/or others may need a change of environment while undergoing a regimen of change to their spirit, soul, and body. Sometimes, this may mean that a youth or adult may benefit most by being away from family and friends. This is the purpose of Christian residential treatment programs; to provide a safe and secure environment for a youth or adult, to trim off the sinful behavior while enclosing them in a safe Christ-centered environment in which they can thrive in the way God intended.

If maladaptive behavior leads to breaking civil or federal laws, the consequences may include incarceration. Hopefully, this will lead some into hitting a final bottom and a repentant heart. Unfortunately, imprisonment for crimes (sin) is, often times, not a deterrent for the unrepentant. For the unrepentant, detention centers, jails, or prisons are like schools for training in antisocial/sociopathic behaviors. Among criminal sociopaths - no guilt or remorse - the recidivism rate is as high as 80% (Matthew 7:22-24; Ephesians 4:18-19). For sociopaths/psychopaths, imprisonment is the only way to keep them away from doing more harm to the innocent. *"These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead."* (1 Timothy 4:2 NLT)

If there is hope for someone to change for the good, turn to Christ-centered counseling with an Ordained/Licensed clergy who is a professional Christian Counselor.

#### **Individual Clinical Christian Counseling will include:**

1. Help to identify and stabilize the Christian's spiritual/emotional symptoms with sound Biblical knowledge and wisdom that apply to the situation (Psalm 33:11).
2. Full confession of his/her present sins (James 5:16). This should include asking forgiveness from the victim, the family, and others who have been injured by his/her actions. It should also include a clear message to the victim that he/she assumes full responsibility for the offense. The victim is not the guilty party.
3. Discovery and healing of the root causes of his/her problems (Ephesians 5:13, Luke 6:43-45). These are soul related, conscious and/or unconscious originating

- events for emotional and behavioral problems. Inner healing prayer ministry helps in identifying and healing the root of faulty thinking.
4. Choosing to forgive those who wounded him/her from childhood on (Matthew 6:4, 15; Mark 11:25).
  5. Repentance for his/her negative - sinful - reactions (e.g. rebellion, bitterness...) to those hurts, asking forgiveness for his/her responses. Repentance is both sorrowfulness and change (Romans 6:18-20).
  6. Assurances of forgiveness (1 John 1:9, John 20:23).
  7. Prayers (aloud, with him/her) for the healing of his/her wounded spirit (2 Corinthians 1:3-7).
  8. Prayer (aloud, with him/her) for the creation of a new and right spirit within him/her (Ezekiel 36:26, Psalm 51).
  9. Prayers (aloud, with him/her) for the bringing to death of the old habit structures in the "old man" (Colossians 3, Ephesians 4:20-32, Romans 8:13).
  10. Disciplines to walk in the new way (Romans 6:11-14, 2 Timothy 1:7).
  11. Teaching - discipleship, concerning the laws of God, the sanctity of marriage, the holiness of sex, the functions of a father and mother's love, the blessings of self-sacrifice, the meaning of relationship, family, church fellowship, understanding of their God given Temperaments, etc.
  12. Prayers that the Lord will set him/her free to receive teaching and nurture, that he/she may grow up inside to become a mature person.
  13. Discernment on the part of the Christian Counselor to determine when the client has come to real repentance, and is capable of living a new life, which produces the fruit of repentance, season after season.
  14. Returning into good standing with his/her local church community and activities.
  15. Even after a full recovery, maintain monthly Clinical Christian Counseling.<sup>2</sup>

We are helping them to understand how the maladaptive behaviors (sin) adversely affected their spirit, soul, and body. We must help them understand how negative thoughts, emotions, and behaviors ultimately lead to negative consequences that have and will continue to damage their life and family.

#### **Help them to identify...**

1. Help them identify what their families were like.
2. Help them identify and strengthen the boundary violations committed against them.
3. Help them identify how the rules were verbally and non-verbally communicated?
4. Help them identify and change what maladaptive - sinful - behaviors were present (e.g. addiction) and how they were modeled.
5. Help them identify and strengthen their survival reactions for each event.
6. Help them to learn how to replace their unhealthy survival reactions with healthy Christ-centered choices, leading to personal and spiritual empowerment. Jesus Christ led the twelve disciples to spiritual empowerment through discipleship.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. (1988); (list has been edited to conform to this article)

Bondage of the soul responds best to Christ-centered healing and recovery which is a process of Christian discipleship: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord... To comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve... to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair... The counsel of the Lord will stand forever."* (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61:1-3; Psalm 33:11)

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*\*YOU CAN READ OR DOWNLOAD PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS IN THE "ARTICLES" SECTION OF OUR WEB SITE.*

"Seeking True Recovery to Replace Pain With Healing Peace."

*Clinical Christian Counseling/Clinical Pastoral Counseling is crisis intervention and strengthening of Christian character and values, which is Discipleship. Our Ordained and Professional Clinical Christian Counselors are committed to the welfare of the Christian. Clients are encouraged to take advantage of their own church programs as part of their Christian Counseling Treatment Plan. We are credentialed professionals who must follow state confidentiality guidelines. **This is not church Lay Counseling in which your confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.***

*Professional Clinical Christian Counseling will help the client, couple, or family move beyond tolerable existence into genuine inner healing, renewal, and wholeness through the work of God's Holy Spirit in the counseling.\**

*Tolerable recovery is the process of getting better. True recovery says, "I made it!" This is when I can look at the source of my pain - which has become a stronghold - and realize it has been replaced with God's healing peace - Replacing the source pain with God's Truth.*

**\*Clinical Christian Counselors are exempt from Florida State Licensing, Statute 491.014. All Christian counselors at New Horizons Institute of Counseling are Ordained Clergy, Board Certified**

& Licensed by the National Board of Examiners of the National Christian Counselors Association.  
We serve under the authorities of our licensing boards and the Pastor and Board of the UB church.

## NEW RESEARCH FINDINGS

### **Sex Differences In Mental Illness: Men More Likely To Develop Substance Abuse, Antisocial Problems, Women More Likely To Develop Anxiety, Depression**

Read article at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/08/110818101733.htm>

### **When Stressed, Men Charge Ahead, Women More Careful, Study Finds**

Read article at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/06/110603125103.htm>

### **Mouse Model Shows Effect of Prenatal Stress Passed Across Generations**

Sons of male mice exposed to prenatal stress are more sensitive to stress as adults, according to a study in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. These findings suggest experiences in the womb can lead to individual differences in stress response that may be passed across generations. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/232961.php>

### **The Consequences of Co-Worker Rudeness Have Far-Reaching Consequences**

A co-worker's rudeness can have a great impact on relationships far beyond the workplace, according to a Baylor University study published online in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. Findings suggest that stress created by incivility can be so intense that, at the end of the day, it is taken home by the worker and impacts the well-being of the worker's family and partner, who in turn takes the stress to his/her workplace. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/232894.php>

### **Workload Recovery Influenced By Housework And Leisure Activity Balance**

Male and female spouses' recovery from the burdens of work may be influenced by how they balance their housework and leisure activity time, researchers from the University of Southern California report in the *Journal of Family Psychology*. 52% of households with married couples have both spouses out in full time jobs, the authors explain. Is the winner simply the one who gets the most help with housework? Yes, but it is not as simple as that.

Read article at: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/226100.php>

### **Study Identifies Fish Oil's Impact On Cognition And Brain Structure**

Researchers at Rhode Island Hospital's Alzheimer's Disease and Memory Disorders Center have found positive associations between fish oil supplements and cognitive functioning as well as differences in brain structure between users and non-users of fish oil supplements. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/232952.php>

**\*To read the full article, click or copy and paste the URL. The articles are for informational & educational use only. The released studies are not necessarily a reflection of beliefs of this ministry.**