

PsychoBlasphemy, Part One

by Marvin Fieldhouse

Preliminary Remarks by Martin & Deidre Bobgan

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

When Paul brought the Gospel—the Good News of salvation and new life in Jesus—people believed, received, and began to live the new life. Paul had declared: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:16-17). Indeed, that was true then and it continues to be true today. Many of the early Christians who found new life in Christ and lived their new lives in Christ had suffered deeply: deprivation of all kinds, beatings and scourgings, sexual and physical abuse. Many had been slaves and treated like animals. And yet, Paul did not give them the words or philosophies of men (early precursors of psychotherapy). He gave them the living Word of God and they thrived in Christ. They testified about the amazing Gospel and the church grew. They believed that Christ had died in their place, bringing forgiveness, redemption, justification, and new life. They relied on the words of life to deal with the trials, tribulations, and troubles they had suffered and would continue to suffer. They had begun the adventure of living by their new life in Christ and were experiencing the relief they found in the very words of God.

However, the enemy of our souls opposed God’s miraculous work of delivering souls from “the power of darkness” and translating them “into the kingdom of his dear Son” (Col. 1:13) by sending

deceivers into the flock with heretical alternatives. Such deception does not go away. It only increases.

One of the most deceptive and devastating alternatives to the Gospel, new life in Christ, Word of God, and the inner work of the Holy Spirit is made up of man-devised psychological means and methods of studying the soul and dealing with problems of living and human suffering. It is the leaven of psychology. What is this insidious leaven and why would pastors, church leaders, and others who truly care for their flocks be promoting this leaven in the church? This leaven is counseling psychology. Psychological leaven consists of secular theories and techniques which are according to “the tradition of men” (Col. 2:8). They are man-made ideas which offer substitutes for salvation and sanctification. When we speak of the leaven of psychology, **we are not referring to the entire field of psychological study**. Instead, we are referring to that part of psychology which deals with the nature of man, how he should live, and how he can change. It involves ethics, values, attitudes, and behavior.

Psychology is a broad field that covers many disciplines. The American Psychological Association (APA) has over fifty divisions. When we say “psychology,” we are referring to those divisions of the APA that include **psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies**. This also includes personality theories and tests. Psychotherapy is conducted by psychotherapists, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, marriage and family counselors, and social workers.

The apostles and the early church would be horrified to see what is replacing the pure work of God through His Word and the Holy Spirit throughout the church today. They would wonder if Christians have forgotten the great promises of God and the blessed truths of their present inheritance. They would wonder if the Holy Spirit has been shoved into a corner and ignored in the daily course of Christians’ lives. Even today, some believers are dismayed to see this horrid leaven of man’s wisdom running rampant and permeating churches, parachurch organizations, Bible colleges, Christian schools and universities, seminaries, and mission agencies.

Blasphemy

To uncover this largely unrecognized deception, we need to start with a definition of *blasphemy*:

Blasphemy. In general the word means simply slander or insult and includes any action (e.g., a gesture) as well as any word that devalues another person or being, living or dead. This general secular idea was made more specific in religious contexts, where blasphemy means to insult, mock, or doubt the power of a god.

In the OT it is always this religious use that is intended. Blasphemy is the direct or indirect detracting from the glory and honor of God and therefore the opposite of praising or blessing God....

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Letters

from  our Readers

Greetings from Brazil!

I praise the Lord for your ministry. I've been learning a lot from you for many years now, and it is being very helpful in my discipling brothers and sisters here in Brazil. I'm also looking forward to reading your new book (*S.H.A.M.E!*). Oh, how we need Christians that uphold the sufficiency of the Scriptures like you do. What an encouragement you give us by your great work! May our Lord Jesus Christ continue to bless you and give you health and strength to continue your valuable task. Thank you (Obrigado!). Brazil

Dear Bobgans:

As I am getting into your *S.H.A.M.E!* book, I thought I would like to let you know how this affects me personally. We occasionally have visitors to our Church that are wearing the "Fashions by See More Thighs." It is very embarrassing and humiliating. You are focusing on God and His commandments then you are suddenly hit with this. Even worse if you are ushering or serving communion because you are exposed to it repeatedly. It also happens in businesses and other public places. Wyoming

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bobgan,

Thanks for the book *S.H.A.M.E!* What a topic. This is needed. Sadly, too many people probably just won't "get it." And, if any male mentions it, he may possibly be suspected for being lustful. So, this is another topic in a long list of issues considered "dead" by most churches. So, our blessed Lord is speaking to your hearts to continue ministering to the body of Christ. Thanks again

for the newsletter you wrote months ago on June Hunt. Missouri

Dear Martin and Deidre,

Thank you for your latest book, *S.H.A.M.E!* I am impressed with how many years you continue to do quality ministry and bless the body of Christ. You are role models for those of us who hope to continue in ministry into our later years and finish well. I appreciate you and thank God for you. Minnesota

Dear Bobgans,

Thank you deeply for the book *SHAME!* This is a book that needs to be in the hands of every teen in this world. Why teen? Because, although the problem lands on every age, it's a lot bigger with the teens and the 20-year-olds.

A quick testimony: After reading the book, I carried it in my hands as I went to work. A female officer who wears her uniform very tight stopped me and asked what I was reading. I quickly explained. She didn't like the subject, for it hit home. But in the end, she admitted the scales are unbalanced and needed to be balanced. I will be sharing the book with others. Prisoner

Dear Martin & Deidre,

I thank the Lord for your commitment to this extremely important message/ministry for so many years; I believe you have been and remain vital "watchmen" for the Body of Christ....

I responded to God's call to pursue college-level studies, believing the Lord had a ministry calling for me that included primarily counseling services. I subsequently completed undergrad and graduate studies (psychology & clinical counseling) by 1982, while also receiving ordination through the S. Baptist Church. I was seduced by humanism during my years of graduate school and completed my studies with a practical specialization in clinical hypnotherapy. Over the next nearly 40 years I practiced

in secular clinical settings and have provided limited counseling services within a few churches using eclectic methods as so many are inclined to do; I did renounce hypnotherapy many years ago.

Although actively licensed by my home state, I will be allowing the clinical counselor license to expire without renewal in a few months. God has increasingly laid it upon my heart to fully reject clinical psychological methods/licensing authority and exclusively embrace Biblical guidelines for counseling, which, of course, includes the necessary leadership of the Holy Spirit... North Carolina

Dear Martin and Deidre,

We really appreciate your faithfulness to God and your adherence to His Word. We also appreciate your boldness in proclaiming God's truth and your efforts to inform Christians, and all who will listen, about the dangers and consequences of psychoheresy. Your ministry is such a blessing to us and to many others. Oklahoma



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In the NT blasphemy occurs in its wider Greek meaning as well as its specifically religious sense, for people are slandered, not just God (Rom. 3:8, 1 Cor. 10:30; Eph 4:31; Titus 3:2). In fact, such slander and abusive language was a danger to Christians; it had been their preconversion habit and was the example of their culture. They were tempted to use it when falling back into old habits of speech.... The most common form of blasphemy in the NT, however, is blasphemy of God.¹

Whenever people choose to believe men rather than, or in addition to God, regarding the soul and spirit and the behavior that follows, they are committing blasphemy against God and His Word. Choosing to follow the wisdom of men, rather than to faithfully believe and follow what God has said about the new life in Christ blasphemes God by demeaning His Word and His promises about the new life in Christ.

“The Blasphemy of the Religious Psychologist”

In his book *And Tender Blasphemies*, Marvin Fieldhouse, a former missionary to Japan, discusses subtle types of blasphemy that do not shout obvious, defiant contempt for God. Instead, it blasphemes Him “by implication and innuendo, showing Christ our contempt for Him by setting up over His truth or His person or His righteousness a rival, superior authority, another alternative or point of loyalty... forsaking God by following our own cunningly devised replacements of His truth and wisdom.”²

One of the chapters is titled “The Blasphemy of the Religious Psychologist.” Fieldhouse’s use of the term “religious psychologist” fits exactly what such people do in using the wisdom of men to treat the soul. It is a religious

alternative for people to try to find out about themselves and get help for their problems, as we have clearly shown in past writing, e.g., “Psychotherapy is Religion.”³

Fieldhouse wrote this book in 1972, which was near the beginning of this gigantic take-over. During the ensuing years, this blasphemy has swallowed up society and the church. Now more than ever before, Christians are choosing the ways of the world and the talk of the flesh in the many deceptive forms of psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies. Rather than, or in addition to looking at Jesus through the Word of God and believing and following Him, they look to psychological experts with their psychological therapies to improve their lives.

As we present parts of Fieldhouse’s chapter “The Blasphemy of the Religious Psychologist,”⁴ we will comment along the way. **Our comments will be indicated by double editorial brackets as [[]. Therefore, all bracketed comments are ours and should be noted as such.**

“THE BLASPHEMY OF THE RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGIST”

by Marvin Fieldhouse⁵

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” (Col. 2:8-10.)

There may be no more rabid—yet unrecognized—blasphemy in all of Christendom today than this one of religious psychology; that is to say, not

only the science of human psychology is essentially evil (which is the study of and dealing with mental processes, feelings, desires and behaviour), but also the mixing in of this humanism with the Biblical, as an aid to righteousness; nay, verily, the actual substitution for the very Word of God of this human method of dealing with Mansoul under colour of aiding and abetting the Scriptures.

[[Colossians is a clear description of the blasphemy of those who give deceptive alternatives to Christians, who are already complete in Christ even in their spiritual infancy. The deception especially appeals to those who place science on par with or even above God’s Word. However, psychology is not even a true science. It is a collection of worldly ideas of what it is to be human and how to help a person change. Christ gives new life, His life, to every born-again believer; all this kind of psychology does is try to fix “old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (Eph. 4:23). When Christians add psychotherapeutic ideas and techniques to the very Word of God and to the unique, unsurpassing work of the Holy Spirit, they are indeed blaspheming God and drawing fellow believers into the deception and the blasphemy.]]

Stating the Case

I will first state the case simply, later, more fully. If you claim to be a child of God at all, then at least you owe it to yourself and your ministry to consider the matter with all caution and prayerfulness: Never before in world history has man declared himself more boldly and confidently as absolutely fit to meet man’s moral and spiritual needs than he has today. Man understands man, so go to man, and he will solve your unsolvable problems. Stated simply that is the

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Ψ Psych Notes

Psych Notes are selected from numerous articles from professional journals and other publications. The ones used are chosen for their possible interest to readers, but not necessarily because this ministry recommends them.

Deep Sleep: Deep Clean

“Why sleep has restorative—or damaging—effects on cognition and brain health has been an enduring mystery in biology. Researchers think cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) may flush toxic waste out, ‘cleaning’ the brain, and studies have shown that garbage clearance is hugely improved during sleep. They were not sure exactly how all this works, however, or why it should be so enhanced during sleep.

“One aspect of sleep that is well understood is how the slow electrical oscillations (or ‘slow waves’) that characterize deep, non-REM sleep contribute to memory consolidation, the process whereby new memories are transferred into long-term storage. Now a study, from a team led by neuroscientist Laura Lewis of Boston University, gives insight into what drives CSF flow through the brain, suggesting that the same slow waves that coordinate memory consolidation drive oscillations in blood flow and CSF in the brain.

“The work has implications for understanding the relations between sleep disturbance and psychiatric and neurodegenerative conditions and may even point to new approaches to diagnosis and treatment. ‘We’ve discovered there are really large waves of CSF that appear in the brain only during sleep,’ Lewis says. ‘This effect is really striking, and we’re also interested in what it means for maintaining brain health, especially in disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease.’...

“‘Maybe the most important take home message is that sleep is a serious thing,’ [Maiken] Nedergaard says. ‘You really need to sleep to keep a healthy brain because it links electrical activity to a practical housekeeping function’” (excerpted from Simon Makin, “Deep Sleep Gives Your Brain a Deep Clean,” *Scientific American Mind*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp 12-14).

Social Distance Hunger

“The loneliness of the ‘Social Distancer’ triggers brain cravings akin to hunger. A study on isolation’s neural underpinnings implies many may feel literally ‘starved’ for contact amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Loneliness hurts. It is psychologically distressing and so physically unhealthy that being lonely increases the likelihood of an earlier death by 26 percent. But the feeling may serve a purpose. Psychologists theorize that it hurts so much because, like hunger and thirst, loneliness acts as a biological alarm bell. The ache of it drives us to seek out social connection just as hunger pangs urge us to eat. The idea is intuitively satisfying, yet it has long proved difficult to test in humans.

“On March 26, however, just as the COVID-19 pandemic gripped the world, researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology posted a preliminary report on bioRxiv. It was the first study in humans to show that both loneliness and hunger share signals deep in a part of the brain that governs very basic impulses for reward and motivation. The findings point to one telling conclusion: our need to connect is apparently as fundamental as our need to eat.

“The extraordinary scientific timing of the paper’s release—just as tens of millions of people were suddenly starved for contact—was far from intentional. When they began the work three years ago, neuroscientists Livia Tomova

and Rebecca Saxe and their colleagues wanted to demonstrate how loneliness operates in the brain....

“Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, an obvious next question for the work was whether different forms of social media could satisfy the need for social connection. Saxe and Tomova were never able to get funding for such a study. It seems likely they will now. Tomova is already working with researchers at the University of Cambridge... to see if social media use during the pandemic might be remediating feelings of loneliness. ‘Twenty years from now,’ Saxe says, ‘we will know what all the effects were of this experience we are having’” (excerpted from Lydia Denworth, “News,” *Scientific American Mind*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 2020, pp 4-5).

Social Connectedness

“Social connectedness is top modifiable factor in preventing depression. Maintaining relationships with friends and family is also critical to healthy memory and thinking skills.

“Depression is a complicated mental disorder that can be affected by brain chemistry, hormones, inherited traits, and life events. And while some risk factors are unchangeable—such as having a blood relative with depression—many potential contributing factors are often within your grasp to control.

“In a Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) study, published recently in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, researchers identified social connectedness as the most protective factor for depression. The researchers also identified some common behaviors that may raise your risk of a mood disorder that affects millions of adults and youths in the United States every year....

“As part of the study, MGH researchers examined the health records and profiles of more than 100,000 adults. From a field of more than 100 possible factors
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for depression, social connectivity was identified as the single biggest modifiable factor for depression. ‘Far and away the most prominent of these factors was the frequency of confiding in others, but also visits with family and friends, all of which highlighted the important protective effect of social connection and social cohesion,’ says Jordan Smoller, MD, ScD, associate chief of research in the MGH Department of Psychiatry and senior author of the paper. ‘These factors are more relevant now than ever at a time of social distancing and separation from friends and family’” (excerpted from “MGH Study: Social Connectedness Is Top Modifiable Factor in Preventing Depression,” *Mind, Mood, & Memory*, Vol. 16, No. 11, p. 6).

“Faster Mental Decline for Boomers”

“Boomers may be seeing a declining level of cognitive functioning compared with previous generations, which could put them at greater risk of dementia than their parents and grandparents, a new study found.

“The research, published in the *Journals of Gerontology*, used data from 30,191 participants who took part in the University of Michigan’s ‘Health and Retirement Study’ between 1996 and 2014. People were asked to do things like count down by sevens and remember a group of words. This allowed researchers to measure cognitive function in those from the greatest generation (who came to age during World War II) to boomers. It turns out that cognitive functioning improved in those born between 1890 and 1923 to those born between 1942 and 1947, but declined significantly among boomers. In fact, many boomers started to show lower cognitive functioning as early as ages 50 to 54” (excerpted from “Faster

Mental Decline for Boomers?” *AARP Bulletin*, Vol. 61, No. 8, p. 6).

Gum Health for Brain

“Preserving Gum Health May Help Protect Against MCI [mild cognitive impairment] and Dementia. Gum disease is linked to many medical conditions that seem unrelated to dental health, including heart disease, diabetes and stroke. In a study published recently in *Neurology*, the journal of the American Academy of Neurology, researchers suggest that irreversible gum disease also may be associated with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia 20 years later.

“Researchers examined the dental health of more than 4,500 adults over a period of about 18 years. They found that individuals with intermediate or severe gum disease had a 20 percent greater risk of developing dementia compared to those who had no gum disease at the start of the study. Researchers also found that older adults with mild gum disease were no more likely to develop dementia than their peers with no dental problems. While the observational study did not find a causal link between gum disease and MCI or dementia, researchers believe that the bacteria that cause gum disease may trigger inflammation that causes dementia. Daily brushing and flossing, as well as regular dentist visits, can help prevent gum disease, also known as periodontitis. If you have already been diagnosed with gum disease, working with your dentist and periodontist, if necessary, may help prevent a worsening of gum disease and the loss of teeth and other health problems that may result” (“Preserving Gum Health May Help Protect Against MCI and Dementia,” *Mind, Mood & Memory*, Massachusetts General Hospital, Vol. 16, No. 10, p. 6, used with permission).



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guess what is going on in a person’s soul. Their view is limited and faulty. God’s way is perfect. He is the One who has provided the way for people to live to the fullest in relationship with Him. Any other way is in enmity with the Creator and ultimately harms the creation. We have continually affirmed the following: The Bible is sufficient to minister to the personal, marital, and family problems of living normally taken to a psychotherapist. Christians who use psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies are not only choosing something less than God intended, they are insulting Him and demeaning His Word. That is blasphemy!]]

To be continued.

(Endnotes)

- 1 Walter A. Elwell, ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1984, 2001, p. 174.
- 2 Marvin J. Fieldhouse. *And Tender Blasphemies*. Japan: Biblia Books, 1972; reprinted by Bethel Baptist Print Ministry, London, Ontario, Canada, www.bethelbaptist.ca, pp. 5-6.
- 3 Martin & Deidre Bobgan. *PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, Revised and Expanded. Santa Barbara, CA: EastGate Publishers, 1987, 2012, Chapter 7.
- 4 Fieldhouse, *And Tender Blasphemies*, “The Blasphemy of the Religious Psychologist,” *op. cit.*
- 5 *Ibid.*



Books by Marvin Fieldhouse are available from Bethel Baptist Church, www.bethelbaptist.ca. Click “Bookstore” and then click “PDF Catalog.” Toll-free phone number: 1-866-295-4143.

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case in a nutshell—but of course minus the blasphemy! As usual the blasphemy is voiced with a vengeance that even a deaf man could not mistake: The Word of God in the hands of the Holy Ghost is inadequate, insufficient in Itself to do the perfect, satisfying work which our Christian psychologist can do!

Now we are touching a very serious matter indeed, and a very powerful one, what is more; one which has evolved into a complicated influential system world-wide. Some ten thousand overwrought evangelical pastors make annual visits to psychologists, some more than once a year, for mental and even moral adjustments. And encouraged by their mission leaders, missionaries from every field are returning back on furlough to take courses in psychology for the purpose of “better equipping” themselves for God’s service. Christian people are encouraged by their pastors to see a psychologist when the Word of God “fails” to meet their need. These general facts in themselves are a broad cross-section of Christendom today, and they bespeak horrible blasphemy in that when so-called evangelical leadership will politely bow down and kiss the foot of an outlandish moral or mental or spiritual authority on the needs of mankind, then in plain terms this means that to them the Word of God has become a second or third rate power. And all of this implies by wicked innuendo that God is a liar, that His Word is grossly overstated, highly exaggerated and suspicious throughout.

[[The numbers of devotees of these man-made psychological systems have increased exponentially from their beginning to now and will continue to increase as long as the economy and insurance plans keep psychotherapy alive. This dreadful situation of blaspheming God through psychological

means and methods has even overtaken Bible believing Christians and churches, that proclaim and preach the Word of God, but nevertheless imbibe the psychological ways of the world. They are blind to this horrid deception. Yet, the Bible is clear on this point! These man-devised psychological means and methods of help are NOT the way of the Cross; they are NOT evidence of the crucified life (Gal. 2:20). They are NOT even the old covenant of works. They are, indeed, another way, the author of which is the same one who asked Eve, “Yea, hath God said?”]]

God has made man in His own image, and He has therefore reserved to Himself alone the only perfect plumb line of man....

Setting the Tempo

Fellow believer, when you love God for what He says that He Himself is in His Word, and you find out first-hand from the Scriptures that He has spoken nothing but the absolute truth about Himself; and when you love God for what He says about your own desperate heart and you have found by faith and obedience that He both knows and can solve every personal riddle (every muddle into which you can get yourself), then these wicked and ugly blasphemies, though tender and subtle, these foul and deadly innuendoes against His nature get to you like a red-hot poker gets to the back of your neck! I mean precisely that if you do not react it is likely because you are just waiting to be put into a coffin!

[[The extent of faith exhibited in these systems of psychological counseling certainly reveals that an overwhelming number of Christians are asleep or spiritually near death, and this includes

Christian pastors, leaders, and Christian college and seminary professors. They simply do not notice that anything is wrong with this kind of psychological help. A serious spiritual blindness prevents them from seeing what is in plain sight. Therefore, the church needs to hear and heed: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Eph. 5:14).]]

This sly system of psychology changes God’s order of man getting to know God by obeying His Word in all matters pertaining to this life and the next—changes this order into man getting to know himself and others by following a man-made system which eventually shuts God Himself, His will and His Inspired Word clean out of your life; leaving you of course with a greater skill in handling yourself among men and getting along with your neighbour, who like yourself is but another alien to God’s mind.

This is an abomination, a devilish evil: “I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me” (Psa. 101:3). I am angered to severe action over this matter; not just to state the evil of it, but from this point and onward to prove it utterly erroneous and to convince you mightily to have absolutely nothing whatever to do with it—no, not so much as to touch it with one of your little fingers, lest God judge you in That Day, when indeed He will arise and mete out to the entire blasphemous system the just deserts of its transgression.

As Touching the Scriptures

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jer. 17:9,10).

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“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether” (Psa. 139:1,2,4).

There are numbers of crystal clear teachings in the Scriptures, but perhaps none is more sparkling and open and prominent than this one: God has made man in His own image, and He has therefore reserved to Himself alone the only perfect plumb line of man, the only accurate method and means of measuring his glorious depths; and the sole right of meeting these deep needs of Mansoul—namely, by the blessed Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psa. 119:18). By asking God for His own illumination, the psalmist herein implies his utter horror for having some human eye-opening regarding valuable things. “Open *thou* mine eyes”: he knew that thereafter if man opened his eyes to anything important to God, he would forever be taken up only with things which were accounted as wondrous things by humans and then written down in some textbook to study. Certainly he would be cursed if he let man school him and teach him out of man’s law!

“Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law” (Psa. 94:8-12).

Man is fearfully and wonderfully made. The Bible not only declares and

proves this fact, but man himself has also demonstrated it for science and history to verify. And in saying that only God Himself properly can satisfy man, the Bible in principle rises up in waves of fiery protest against any and all who fain would assume any other standard, any other measuring tool for him, any other means of touching his spiritual vitals or in any way dealing with or controlling the depths of his innermost being.

Now a spiritual word for brother psychologist in all of this, because such a one as the psalmist does not just turn to God for His consoling, but he also turns away from every false consolation—and with a vengeance!

Before we go further in this most important direction, I remind us again that we are not herein discussing or dissecting the profanity of the profane, but rather we are analyzing more the suave of the temple priest—the sacrilege of Nadab and Abihu. Rude profanity will come right out and tell God *to mind His own business*, while the present tender blasphemy merely implies that God should quietly *go out of business*. Oh, yes, and this blasphemy has already schooled men who have invented systems and courses and scholarships to ensure the reality of its nice recommendations Godward and its purposes manward—*namely, and particularly, that there is now no further need for God to have any major say at all in His own business!* In the last analysis, there can be no more evil blasphemy and more destructive philosophy in all the world than the one which while claiming authority in providing a man with the correct answers to life’s important problems nevertheless quite unnoticeably removes that man from any direct encounter with the only Answer for all of his riddles. God Himself.

Looking at Depths and Shallows

Psalm 139: 1-24 is one of several passages of Scripture which reveal to us some of the depths in man’s soul; and both the ability of God alone to plumb those depths and also the joy of man over the fact that the God who made him is, after all, the only one who correctly knows him: “O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it” (vss. 1-6).

The psalmist says that even to the thoughts behind the words yet unspoken in his tongue. these are known to God; and that this entire. complete and thorough knowledge by God of him is a wonderful and restful thing, deep and mysterious. He is known through and through, thought, word and deed, and this strikes great wonder to his heart.

Then in vss. 7-13 he goes on and speaks there of escaping from this omniscient, all-seeing God—as though he wants to do it or could do it or should even try doing it: “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast

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possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb."

Now in verse 14 a strange mood takes the psalmist, strange because different and hostile to our man-prompted, man-stimulated, psychological moods of today: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Thus does he praise and worship God *because of His minute knowledge of man*. God's knowledge of the man who loves Him does not strike terror to his heart, causing him to recoil and suspect and run from God as though He were a mortal enemy. The psalmist says, "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" but it is not at all the question of a vagabond who wants to flee in terror; rather, it is the query of a love slave, a servant whose only protection and security is in God's holy omniscience and omnipresence; and he is simply musing, therefore, at the ridiculous possibility of getting outside of the confines, the perimeter of God's love and care.

For those who count our God as foe,

No where to hide, no place to go;
But those who count Him friend
and guide.

His bosom is the place to hide.

Indeed so: those who are on Calvary terms with the Father know that real peace and rest is out there in the white light with God, glad that all is fully known, and therefore where God Himself is the supply of every one of the deep and dark and desperate needs of his soul. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned,

when as yet there was none of them" (vss. 15,16). Is it not wonderful to realize that God plans us and fashions us from the very beginning, even down to the finest fiber of temperament and emotional make-up?

Now take a look at vss. 17 and 18 of this same psalm: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." A man needs God like a flower needs sunshine. And when a man by the help of God gets a few clear glimpses of his own unfathomable depths and of how utterly futile it is either for himself or for others to plumb them and satisfy him, only then does he grow in zeal and holy dedication, turning in full faith and trust to the One Whose thoughts and plans and solvents and comforts are precious and without number!

Is it not wonderful to realize that God plans us and fashions us from the very beginning, even down to the finest fiber of temperament and emotional make-up?

Now a spiritual word for brother psychologist in all of this, because such a one as the psalmist does not just turn to God for His consoling, but he also turns away from every false consolation—and with a vengeance! "Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies" (vss. 19-22).

Could you not verily feel the jealousy of the psalmist? his holy insistence that no man tamper in the sacred works of

his soul, a place which God Himself is preparing for Himself as His own habitation through the Spirit? Clearly he is no tender blasphemer. He stoutly dismisses all human meddlers from this secret room of his real man. And in closing his psalm he plans, no, not for a moment, to commit himself to the shallow dealings, the surface medications, of men.

[[How easy it is to lose sight of the sacredness of the soul created by God for holy purposes. The inner sanctuary of an individual's soul is sacred territory and not something to be treated with the profane methods of extra-biblical notions of the soul and its inner workings, no matter how sensible and practical they may appear.]]

On the positive side of his jealousy notice his words of wisdom, victory and solid commitment: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (vss. 23,24).

This is one of those grand occasions when man seems to be commanding God after God's own interests. He is verily saying, "You search me, O God, and You know my heart: You try me, and You know my thoughts: and You see if there be any wicked way in me, and You lead me in the way everlasting." He clearly has the 20-20 vision of righteousness, knowing full well that if he or any other man takes over in these crucial points, he will be led off into the dark paths of some tender human blasphemy. "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments" (Psa. 119:73).

[[God created humankind. Only He knows the inner person, the soul, the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Humans can only observe and then

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