

Christian Psychology

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Our subject is Christian psychology. Many people today are deeply interested in the subject of psychology. I think a broad definition of psychology is the study of the mind, the study of personality traits and how to regulate and train the personality in proper and balanced human conduct. The world of course, has its own ideas of what a balanced personality should be like and their psychology reflects those ideas.

Christian psychology, our psychology is contained in the truth of God's Word. In the Word of truth we find the naming of the traits of character which are disapproved by God. These are called "filthiness of the spirit"—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1) These elements of the "filthiness of the spirit" are specifically named for us in Eph. 4:31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." The traits of character that are disapproved of God are further named in Gal. 5:19-21, and they are dubbed "the works of the flesh"—"fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in the past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

And in our Christian psychology, the Word of truth, we find the names of those characteristics which are approved of God—Gal. 5:22 and 23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." The approved characteristics are further described by James in Jas. 3:17, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

We are in the time spoken of by Daniel the prophet, when "knowledge shall be increased." It is quite natural as men's minds have been stimulated to think, and knowledge has been increased along so many lines, that the human mind and human conduct should be studied carefully. As a result we have a regular torrent of articles and books on the subject of human psychology. This is particularly true in the higher schools of learning. Some writers have been accepted as authorities. It is an interesting fact, however, that these so-called authorities differ with one another in important respects, and their basic premises and resultant conclusions are under attack by rival authorities. Really there is a battle royal on the part of these rival psychologists. Some of the conclusions and suggestions of certain psychologists are in good harmony with the

principles of good conduct as taught in the Bible, and we can have respect for these authorities. On the other hand, some psychologists offer suggestions that are positively repulsive and these are rejected by the better class of psychologists.

While we can appreciate the efforts of the better class of psychologists, we as Christians are not dependent upon them for anything in the way of guidance or instruction. We note the wholesome objects of good psychologists for the improvement of human conduct, and we believe if we stop to analyze these objects we can find these same objects in our Christian psychology—in the truth; and everything desirable that good psychologists are advocating are in the truth in our possession, and our psychology in the truth is much stronger and based upon the solid foundation of recognition of God as our rightful guide and the selection of God’s Son as our rightful Master—guide, teacher. In the truth, we have a perfect psychology, based upon the proper foundation—reverence for God. And we note what the wise man says about reverence for God—it is the beginning of knowledge and it is the beginning of wisdom. Let us note what the wise man really does say: Prov. 1:7, “The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; ...” and Prov. 9:10, “The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

Now what are some of the things that are advocated by good psychologists? —things that we also desire and have in a more potent form in the word of truth? Well, they offer suggestions as to how to overcome fear; how to be more reliant; how to overcome the feelings of depression; how to be more successful in life; how to influence people to like you. And there are other things that are desirable too that are touched upon by good psychologists. We think we have in the word of truth instructions, exhortations and powerful promises that act as deterrents to evil, encouragements to do good and inspirations to great efforts to win great rewards. From the influences of the word of truth, the power which God supplies, we learn how to overcome fear, how to become courageous, how to overcome feelings of depression, how to make a success in life as a Christian, how to influence people to like you—people such as God, such as Christ, such as our brethren in Christ, and such of the world who might be naturally noble minded.

I find it interesting to think back on my own experience in being drawn and influenced by the Truth of God’s Word. You may have had a similar sentiment to my own. I can remember when a small boy, I had a longing for perfection. I saw so many things around me that were not happifying—so many things that were annoying, so many things that were ugly, so much trouble in this life. People were not nice to one another; people were sick; there were conflicts in society, in economics, in religion and the earth itself was ugly in many ways—old rotting stumps of trees, streets were anything but beautiful, run down fences, heaps of tin cans rusting away along with rotting discarded clothing and rags. There was economic insecurity, fear of illness, and I felt that it was not possible to expect friendly interest on the part of my fellow man. And last, but more important than all, I had a longing for the fatherly love of our Creator. I wanted to know what our

Creator had in mind concerning us, and how he would straighten out all the ugly and imperfect things surrounding us, and when he intended to do this for us. All this is what I mean, when I say I had a longing for perfection. Jesus said, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matt. 5:4) Yes I was “mourning” and praise God, in God’s own time in my life, I was “comforted.”

How was I “comforted”? Well, the Divine Plan of the Ages came into my possession through my mother. I read this book and I then learned of the lovingkindness of our Creator through Christ, and that a plan was devised to administer this lovingkindness. I can well remember the relief and joy that came into my life as a result of reading God’s blueprint for perfection. I use the word blueprint advisedly, for merely reading about, and coming to a knowledge of God’s plan does not bring God’s perfection into our lives or into the world. Reading the blueprint is merely the starting point. I remember too, at this same time, the Photo Drama was shown in our area and this increased the effect of the knowledge of God’s blueprint for perfection.

God had a plan! Wasn’t that a wonderful thing to find out about our Creator?! And evil was permitted for a purpose! What seemed like utter chaos in the world was merely the permission of evil for man’s benefit. And in time God would do away with evil, and in its place perfection in everything would become a reality! The chapter in Volume I entitled THE PERMISSION OF EVIL AND ITS RELATION TO HIS PLAN is and was a masterpiece of Christian logic.

And when the time came for full consecration, it was really the point of “no return,” and life was different from then on. One is then literally a new creature. It is as though one has been transferred to a different country, and as far as mental outlook is concerned, this is true. Then our Christian psychology takes hold—the truth starts to work in us in earnest—all dependent, of course, upon our cooperation and zeal.

Now let us go back to our thinking about psychology and see how the truth accomplishes certain wonderful effects in our lives. How is fear overcome? We find three texts that express the idea of fear—two of them refer to fear in the sense of alarm or fright, and the third one means timidity—easily alarmed. Let us take 1 John 4:18 first, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” Here the word fear is used three times, and feareth once, and they all have the same root meaning—alarm or fright. The apostle says that fear hath torment, and we know that is painfully true; and he also says that he that feareth is not made perfect in love. Then the apostle says that there is no fear in love and that perfect love casteth out fear. This love is agape, and perfect love means love that is fully grown or developed.

I think we should turn now to 2 Tim. 1:7 to find out how to understand 1 John 4:18, for in 2 Tim. 1:7 the apostle Paul says that “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Here we are told that God has not given us a spirit of fear. And in this use of the word fear, the meaning is timidity—easily alarmed—God has not given us a spirit of timidity, the attitude that would be easily alarmed. No, Paul says that God has given us the spirit of power and of love, and of a sound mind. If Paul says that God has given us a spirit of love, and if John says that love casteth out fear, then we must see how the power of the truth accomplishes this spirit of love in our hearts.

When we learn about our Heavenly Father, we come to see how kind and loving he is to his human creation. He permits evil for a time for a good purpose, and he also loves the human family so intensely that he provides his son to redeem the race from Adamic condemnation—“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) When we get the full force of this into our hearts, the effect is gratitude and as John tells us in 1 John 4:19, “We love him, because he first loved us.” Then the spirit of love roots out the spirit of fear in our hearts—for why should we have fear in our hearts when we know the loving character of God? We can trust him and we are freed of the spirit of timidity. As our love grows and is gradually perfected, the spirit of fear is cast out of our hearts, and we are freed of all torment which is associated with fear. We come to have a spirit of power—energy and courage and the spirit of a sound mind. We come to see that our God would do nothing wrong or hurt us in any way. A “sound mind” would say that a God of love is to be fully trusted and there is nothing to fear even though the time is long and it is necessary for us to go through a long hard period of testing in this life. We come to have the courageous and intelligent sentiment as expressed in Rom. 8:28, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Psychologists have their suggestions on how to overcome fear, how to be courageous and how to overcome feelings of depression. We have a mighty power in our lives by receiving the spirit of love toward God, and we are no longer fearful, but are courageous and free of feelings of depression. Incidentally, we might say that there are times when we do feel somewhat depressed. For instance there may be certain days that we do feel somewhat depressed or perhaps we will wake up in the morning, and, for no apparent reason, we feel depressed. Why is this? Well this has nothing to do with Christian character—this is no indication that we have lost some of the spirit of love and power. Rather it is caused by our physical condition. The body is subject to ill feelings at times caused by indigestion, tiredness or lack of sleep, or some other body malfunction. Apropos to this I would like to refer you to a few remarks by Donald A. Laird of Colgate University. He said that “To most people, moods are eternal puzzles, inscrutable and inexplicable.” But he explained that “Science has recently discovered that our periods of gloom and despair, on the one hand, and our periods of enthusiasm, are by no means

matters of chance or circumstance... On the contrary, they grow within us, independent of the outside world, and as a direct result of the rise and fall of our emotional energy. It also has been proved that our bodies and minds produce, store up and spend our emotional energy in regular cycles” (notice that—“regular cycles”). “The average cycle runs somewhere between 4 and 5 weeks.” I thought that was very interesting, and a valuable piece of information to assist us as Christians, to understand that there are times when we feel depressed and other times we feel exalted to the skies, and this is something we do not need to worry about as far as our characters are concerned, but something to endure as long as they last, and try to rise above them. These are body feelings and have nothing to do with character. Of course, as Christians, we would want to keep ourselves under control in the spirit of love to those around us, so they would not have to suffer because we might feel depressed or sour for a few hours, or days, in regular cycles possibly.

Writers on psychology have a lot to say about feelings of guilt and they offer suggestions as to how to overcome these feelings. Some of these suggestions are anything but wholesome. In this field, we who have Christian psychology for our instruction can eradicate feelings of guilt completely, because in the word of God we find the true basis for eradication. Faith in the shed blood of the Redeemer is the basis for eradication of all feelings of guilt. Let us see what the Scriptures say about the eradication of the feeling of guilt as far as Adamic sin is concerned. We note the words of Paul in Eph. 1:7, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Now there is no psychologist that can say anything like that. We know from these words of Paul that we are free of this condemnation because we believe what the word of God says, that through the blood of Jesus we have forgiveness of sins. What about personal sins? We know that we are imperfect and come short all the time. How are feelings of guilt for our imperfections provided for? We turn now to 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We note the little word “confess” and it is important if we are to experience eradication of feelings of guilt. No psychologist can offer anything like this: although some do acknowledge the word of God does teach this and that it is basic to true peace of mind.

When it comes to doing something wrong to others, the Scriptures are very particular to point out that there is something for us to do in addition to our asking forgiveness of God. We note the words of Jesus in Matt. 5:23 and 24, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” We can see our Christian psychology is very wholesome indeed, requiring us to have a good working conscience as to the righting of any wrongs that we might have committed against others. This is important if we are to eradicate feelings of guilt.

Another point is important too. In Matt. 6:14 and 15 Jesus said, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” So we must not expect forgiveness from God if we are hard toward others and do not forgive them when they want forgiveness. Truly our Christian psychology creates a wholesome and balanced character that promotes peace and tranquility of soul.

As a final note we would like to draw on the sentiments of Isa. 57:15, “For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” How many times do some of the Lord’s people feel downcast because they feel they are so imperfect! Such have a very sensitive conscience and they feel they should not approach God who is holy and perfect. But the words just quoted from Isaiah are for the very purpose of appealing to those who do have a tender conscience and to encourage such, aye urge such to approach God. Even though God is indeed “the lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy,” yet he also dwelleth with those who have a contrite and humble spirit. And why does he dwell with such? “To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Aren’t these words sufficient? We surely think so; and if one has “a contrite and humble spirit” he may know that God will accept him, yea “DWELL” with him.

Another popular subject with psychologists is to teach people how to make others like them. Well that is important and surely desirable—we all enjoy having people like us—to have their approval. Do we have anything along this line in our Christian psychology? Yes, we do, and in a big way. We have some very important personages in our lives—God for example, and Christ our Beloved Lord and Master, and our fellow-Christians. Can we do things to win their love and approval? Yes, indeed! Let us see what Jesus has to say on the subject of winning the love of God and of Christ for ourselves. In John 14:15 Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” And the Apostle John says in 1 John 5:3, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” Fine—if we keep the commandments, then we are showing that we love God and Christ. Then what happens? Now we read some thrilling words of Jesus in John 14:21, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” And the 23rd verse—“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM.” Think of that!—“Make our abode with him.”

So this is the way we win the love of God and of Christ. How do we win the love of the brethren for ourselves? Well that also requires action on our part—we have to do

something to win the love of our brethren in Christ. Peter says in 1 Pet. 1:22, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” In Matt. 20:25 and 26 we find the words of Jesus recorded, “But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.” And also the words of Jesus in John 13:34, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” Now if we love one another with a pure heart fervently, as Peter exhorts, and if we have the spirit of service as Jesus says, and if we obey the “new commandment” then surely we would win the love of the brethren for ourselves. Those having the right spirit, with thankfulness in their hearts, would surely love us spontaneously and automatically.

Incidentally we have noticed that many good psychologists have discovered the wholesome principle that if we are to overcome the tendency to be self-centered, we must take an unselfish interest in some person or persons. This is one of the most important principles of good character-balance for us as Christians.

Can we do things to make those around us love us—those who are still of the world? Yes and no—not so much in this life. But let us note the sentiment of 1 Pet. 2:12, “Having your conversation [i.e. conduct] honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” What a thought is here—that we go right on doing the Lord’s will whether we have the approval of the world or not; whether they speak of us as evildoers or not—“in the day of visitation” they will glorify God. When they come back in the next life, when God is visiting the earth with his spirit through The Christ, then they will understand our actions and will glorify God by rendering willing obedience; and will they not love us then? Surely! So our Christian psychology enables us to carry on, and in the end we will have the love of everybody who is in the right condition of heart. Isn’t that something worthwhile to live for?—yes indeed!

It is a well known fact in business or any other special activity, if you are going to make a success of something, you must not divide your powers, but you must concentrate upon the special object you are wanting to attain. Paul was a good example of putting this principle into practice in his Christian life—“this one thing I do.” He did not attempt to make a grand success of himself in some earthly or worldly pursuit, but he made his Christian calling the chief business in life. This was his vocation. There could be no stronger statement of this principle than is expressed in 2 Cor. 10:5, “and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

And constancy is another principle that psychologists are well acquainted with. Do we have this in our Christian psychology? Yes, in a big way. Patient endurance is a characteristic that is emphasized a great deal by the apostles. Paul touches upon this in Heb. 10:36, “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” And Heb. 12:1, “... and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” And James 1:4, “But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

Do psychologists have anything to say about the encouragement and inspiration we might receive from studying and observing the lives of those who have achieved great things in life? Yes, they do. Do we have any of this in Christian psychology? Yes, indeed. We note the words of Paul in Heb. 12:2 and 3, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” This is the perfect ideal for us, and we do get encouragement and great inspiration from the life of Jesus as he endured the contradiction to his course of action by those surrounding him. This helps us to not get weary or faint in our minds. James reminds us of the marvelous examples of the prophets, “who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience.” (Jas. 5:10) And in the next verse he speaks of the patience of Job—“though he slay me, yet will I trust him.” (Job 13:15) And we know the example of Joseph has been a great inspiration to the Lord’s people.

And in our Christian psychology we note how our thinking is guided into the highest and purest of channels—“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Phil. 4:8.

Our Christian psychology instructs us how to protect ourselves from evil—“Make straight paths for your feet” as Paul exhorts us in Heb. 12:13. The words following this exhortation are important to observe—“lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.” We notice this word “lame” is from the Greek word #5560 in Strong’s concordance and is the same word used to describe people who were healed by Jesus—they were physically lame. And it is the same word that is translated “cripple” in Acts 14:8—a man “impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother’s womb, who never had walked.” We can be confident that Paul is not referring to physical lameness or physical healing, but he must be talking about weaknesses of character that we might have; or to put it in reverse form, he must be talking about strong tendencies of the flesh that need to be recognized for what they are and guarded against.

And we also have other warnings. For instance Eph. 6:12, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” In the same connection Paul advises us how to protect ourselves—not by the use of proud self-assurance, but by putting on the whole armour of God, that we may be “able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” And then in the context following he gives us a list of the various pieces of armour—truth to gird our loins, breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and finally the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

We are warned against the wiles of the devil, for “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” (2 Cor. 11:14) Yes, he appears as an angel of light—pretending to preach light, while all the while he is promoting darkness, error. And we are warned against the wiles of evil men in the church too, who “will speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them”—“grievous wolves entering in among you, not sparing the flock.” (Acts 20:30, 39) Paul says that some “by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.” (Rom. 16:18) He tells us in the same connection that we should “mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” (Rom. 16:17) We must not be “simple” as the apostle says and allow ourselves to be deceived by “good words and fair speeches.” In looking up this word “simple” in Strong’s concordance we find the meaning to be “unsuspecting.” And this same Greek word is used in Heb. 7:26, but in this case it is translated “harmless”—“For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” In looking up the word “simple” in Young’s concordance, we find it defined as “harmless, without evil.” And the word “harmless” as applied to Jesus, is defined by Young as “not bad.” So we would conclude that the Lord’s people who are to be naturally harmless, not bad and unsuspecting, are to be set on their guard and realize that there are grasping and scheming individuals in the church who try to get their way by using “good words and fair speeches,” to throw the brethren off their guard. We are truly to be harmless and unsuspecting in the sense that we will not do evil and in the sense that we will not be constantly suspicious. But we are not to be unsuspecting and allow ourselves to be deceived by those who are trying to teach error and grasp power for themselves. We want to use caution and reason and see what is behind “good words and fair speeches.” As the saying is, “not all that glitters is gold.”

There is a line of thought in 1 Cor. 6:19 and 20 that is very potent in its effect upon us, and psychologists, even good psychologists know nothing about it. Here is how it is worded, “Ye are not your own. For ye are—bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God’s.” As we consider these two verses carefully, we experience a powerful effect that we would not get in any book written by a man of the world. Jesus Christ, by the eternal spirit offered himself without spot and

purchased us with his precious blood. To think that Jesus Christ actually poured out his life blood, or permitted his life blood to be poured out, that he might do something of vital importance for members of the Adamic race—he did this knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily!—this thought has a tremendous effect upon us. We were indeed under condemnation and on the way to death, extinction, and the sacrifice of Jesus makes it possible for us to be delivered from the sentence of death. This is not merely scriptural rhetoric, but has a literal meaning to us. In realizing all this we drink deeply of this word of truth and bow our heads in awe at the love and strength of character of our Redeemer—that he would voluntarily do such a thing! We have been literally purchased with a price and we are to recognize that we are a possession of Christ; and therefore we are to “glorify God in our body and in our spirit.”

This scripture that we have been just considering is found in the Jan. 2nd Manna. Our Manna book containing texts of scripture and comments by our Pastor is one of the most powerful books of our Christian psychology. Sometimes we pause to give special attention to a text and comment and we are deeply moved by the sentiments that are there. Truly it is heavenly manna and truly it is a daily inspiration, affecting us powerfully.

There is another sentiment in our Christian psychology that worldly psychologists know nothing about. It is found in Psalm 27:14, “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say on the Lord.” “Wait on the Lord”—yes, do not act hastily, but take the necessary time to watch the Lord’s leadings. “Be of good courage”—have confidence in God’s power and wisdom and love. By so doing our hearts are strengthened. We believe that we are the Lord’s and that he will work out our lives to our very best interests, and in believing this we have our hearts strengthened. If we become impulsive and impatient and want to force a decision, the result is that we will merely follow our own will in the matter, and we might have to pay a stiff price for our willfulness.

Hebrews 12:7 expresses another powerful thought that worldly psychologists know nothing about—“If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?” So many psychologists are urging their readers to rebel against everything and give full liberty to all their fleshly impulses. Quite likely many psychologists are evolutionists and do not recognize any standard of conduct or any future judgment of human conduct. With us however, we have trials and hard experiences explained to us—there is a reason for all these things—we are educated to understand that we are given trials on purpose to test us and prepare us for usefulness in this life, and especially in the next life. And we are inspired to endure with a great reward in mind too.

Proverbs 16:32 contains a thought or multiple thought that is very important in Christian development. Some psychologists recognize these principles and that is good. “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” These two thoughts give us good balance and perspective. It might be a temptation to our natural minds to flare up quickly when there is something to be angry about, or something that is not quite right. But the wise man is instructing us here to control ourselves and if we do then we are “better than the mighty.” Many of the mighty of the world do flare up quickly and cause no end of trouble by so doing. “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city.” How many times do people look with great admiration to warriors who win in a battle and take a city; but the wise man tells us that if we control our spirits—have good self control, then we are better, far better than any warrior who takes a city. It is important for us to have this as an ideal for our attainment all through life.

Another text that is a great inspiration to us is found in 2 Pet. 3:11, “seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.” This is another sentiment that worldly psychologists know nothing about whatsoever. What a mighty power this is in our lives—we have been well instructed in prophecy and the divine plan and we know the present order must be dissolved to bring in the rule of righteousness and peace. We know it is useless to take any interest in upholding the old order, and there is abundant evidence that the old order is crumbling and disintegrating. In view of what is transpiring, Peter is urging us to carefully follow the principles of holy conduct and reverence to God—piety. That reminds us of Rom. 13:12, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

We can think of another powerful influence in our lives that worldly psychologists cannot bring into the lives of their readers. We have in mind 1 Tim. 6:6, “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” There is so much in our lives to promote contentment. We are convinced of the fatherly love of our Creator, and of the love of our Redeemer in laying down his life for us, and in his constant care for the church, preparing us to be his Bride and confident. Everything is provided for us in temporal affairs and in spiritual matters. We are assured in the scriptures that our Heavenly Father is working in us to will and to do his good pleasure. And so our hearts are filled with thankfulness. Thankfulness as a state of mind is one of the most stabilizing elements that it is possible to have. When you have the time, would like to suggest that you go to the Reprint subject index and look up everything you can find under the heading of thankfulness and gratitude. You will find it one of the most rewarding studies that you have ever taken up. When I made such a study years ago, my cup was overflowing with joy and reverence. That makes me think of Psalm 63:5 and 6, “My mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.” What can worldly psychologists offer along this line? Nothing!

And when we do come to the end of our course, cannot we feel as our Redeemer did—absolute confidence that the Father’s power was sufficient to raise him from the dead—“Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” (Luke 23:46) Can a worldly psychologist offer us anything like this? We know it is not possible. And then too, to feel that we are living in the time when “blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth, for they shall rest from their labors and their works do follow them.” (Rev. 14:13) We shall not sleep but shall experience an immediate awakening—“in the twinkling of an eye.” Truly our Christian psychology is superior to all others! “They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels...” (Mal. 3:17) What joy of spirit this prospect gives us! “He that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” (Heb. 4:10) And we can look to that perfect rest beyond the veil.

Hope is another precious element of the Christian’s state of mind. No worldly psychologist can offer the same kind of hope that we have. “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.” We have a God of hope! Isn’t that a marvelous thought?! “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.” (Eph. 1:18) “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” (Heb. 6:19) Hope works in us mightily as John tells us in 1 John 3:3, “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” Hope is an ANCHOR TO OUR SOULS!

Can any worldly psychologist offer us anything that sounds like this?—listen! —“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” (Hab. 3:17, 18) And Psalm 16:11, “In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

How delightful the thought of Divine supervision and protection—Psalm 91:11 “He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways.” And Psalm 34:7, “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” And Heb. 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

As a supplementary and final thought in the consideration of our Christian psychology, we are impressed with the complete and perfect determination of our Lord to never entertain, even for a moment, any thought of dropping down from the level of his consecration vow to do God’s will. Let us turn to Matt. 16:21 to 23, “From that time

forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying Be it far from thee Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” We know we are on the right track when we reject any thought of our own or from anyone else that would be contrary to our consecration vows. It is good psychology for ourselves to follow the example of our Lord, and promptly say (in our own minds at least) “Get thee behind me Satan.”