

# PSYCHOLOGY

- I. Biblical references
  - A. There are no biblical references to "psychology"
  - B. English word "psychology"
    1. Derived from two Greek words
      - a. *psuche* = soul, life, person, self
      - b. *logos* = word, logic, study of, reasoning
    2. Both words used in the New Testament
  - C. Representative biblical references to "soul"
    1. Hebrew word *nephesh* - soul, being, creature, life, person (over 600 references in Old Testament)  
Gen. 1:20,21,24 - "living *creature*"  
Gen. 2:7 - "man became a living *being*"  
Ps. 119:81 - "my *soul* languishes for Thy salvation"  
Prov. 21:10 - "the *soul* of the wicked desires evil"
    2. Greek words *psuche* and *psuchikos*
      - a. *psuche* (105 references in New Testament)  
Matt. 10:28 - "do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the *soul*, but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both *soul* and body in hell."  
Matt. 16:25,26 - "whoever wishes to save his *life* shall lose it; but whoever loses his *life* for My sake shall find it. What will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his *soul*?"  
Mk. 14:34 - "My *soul* is deeply grieved to the point of death"  
Lk. 12:19,20,22 - "*Soul*, you have many goods... this night your *soul* is required of you....do not be anxious for your *life*..."  
Rom. 13:1 - "Let every *person* be in subjection to authorities"  
I Cor. 15:45 - ""first man, Adam, became a living *soul*"  
Eph. 6:6 - "doing the will of God from the *heart*"  
I Thess. 5:23 - "may your spirit and *soul* and body be preserved complete"  
Heb. 4:12 - "word of God...piercing as far as division of *soul* and spirit"  
James 1:21 - "word implanted, able to save your souls"  
I Pet. 1:9 - "outcome of your faith the salvation of your *souls*"  
I Pet. 3:20 - "eight *persons* brought safely through the water"  
Rev. 20:4 - "souls of those who had been beheaded"
      - b. *psuchikos*  
I Cor. 2:14 - "a *natural* man does not accept things of Spirit"  
James 3:15 - "wisdom that is earthly, *natural*, demonic..."  
Jude 19 - "cause division, *natural*, devoid of the Spirit"
- II. Brief history of man's attempts to understand the human "soul"
  - A. Man has always sought to understand himself and his behavior.  
Job 7:17 - "What is man, that Thou dost magnify him?"  
Ps. 8:4; 144:3 - "What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him?"
  - B. Search often merged with philosophy, theology, anthropology, physiology
  - C. Hippocrates (527-514 BC) identified differing behavior patterns (humours, temperaments) basing them on materialistic, physiological prevailing bodily fluids (blood, phlegm, black bile, yellow bile).

- D. Plato (427-347 BC), *Phaedo*, and Aristotle (384-322 BC), *On the Soul*, considered the human soul in more rationalistic, spiritualist sense.
  - E. Abundant Christian literature through the centuries (thousands of books)
    - 1. Tertullian (155-220), *On the Soul*.
    - 2. Gregory of Nyssa (335-394), *Concerning the Soul and Resurrection*
    - 3. Augustine (354-430), *The Soul and Its Origin*.
    - 4. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), *Treatises on Religious Affection; Freedom of Will*.
    - 5. Franz Delitzsch - *A System of Biblical Psychology* (1855).
  - F. Secular psychology - aka naturalistic, scientific, humanistic
    - 1. Developed in last half of nineteenth century (1850-1900) as separate educational discipline.
    - 2. Scientific emphasis on empirical observation. Naturalistic premises. Social sciences.
    - 3. Various and numerous perspectives
      - a. reductionism - Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)
      - b. determinism - B.F. Skinner
      - c. collectivism - Carl Jung (1875-1961)
    - 4. Humanistic and naturalistic premises left God out of study
      - a. religious blamed as primary cause of maladjustment
      - b. anti-religious, anti-Christian orientation
    - 5. Psychology of religion
      - a. religious phenomena from psychological analysis
      - b. Jonathan Edwards - *Treatise on Religious Affections*
      - c. William James - *Varieties of Religious Experience*.
  - G. Defensive evangelical backlash to secular psychology
    - 1. Prior to 1960 uneasy coexistence of theology and psychology
    - 2. Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (1970) eschewed all eclecticism
    - 3. Backlash of antagonism to secular psychology
    - 4. Aversion to the use of the word "psychology"
    - 5. Psychology regarded as detrimental to Christians; antithetical to everything biblical, theological and spiritual; diabolic
    - 6. A few authors (ex. Tournier, Narramore, Collins) still sought integration of theology and psychology.
- III. Considerations in the study of the soul.
- A. Constitution or function?
    - 1. Greek dualism regarded "soul imprisoned in body."
    - 2. Early Christian writers accepted three parts: spirit, soul, body
      - a. Called trichotomous or tripartite constitution
      - b. Based on I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12
    - 3. Later, in reaction to Apollinarius (310-391), Christian teaching reverted to two-part model.
      - a. Called dichotomous constitution
      - b. Body and soul/spirit
    - 4. Should not be conceived as entities, substances or organs, whether tangible or intangible
    - 5. Should not be conceived as compartments, parts, or partitions
    - 6. Best considered as categories of function
    - 7. Should avoid
      - a. holistic monism
      - b. separated dualism
      - c. mystical idealism
      - d. substantive materialism

- B. Soul and spirit - synonymous or distinct?
1. Both refer to "inner man" - Eph. 3:16
    - a. spirit - Rom. 7:22
    - b. soul - II Cor. 4:16
  2. Both refer to "heart" - I Pet. 3:4; Rom. 10:1; Eph. 3:17
    - a. spirit - Heb. 8:10; 10:16
    - b. soul - Matt. 5:28; Jn. 16:22; Rom. 1:24; II Cor. 9:7; Col. 3:15
  3. Both yielded up in death -
    - a. spirit - Jn. 19:30; James 2:26
    - b. soul - Gen. 35:18
  4. Both refer to dead persons
    - a. spirits - I Pet. 3:19
    - b. souls - Rev. 6:9; 20:4
  5. Both have experiential or emotive reference
    - a. spirit - Jn. 11:33; 13:21
    - b. soul - Matt. 26:38; Jn. 12:27
  6. Distinction of spirit and soul - I Thess 5:23; Heb. 4:12;
  7. Contemporary Christian teaching regards soul and spirit as synonymous, for the most part.
  8. Emergence of modern secular psychology has amplified need to differentiate between psychological and spiritual function.

C. Origin of the soul

1. Created by God in Adam - Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4; I Cor. 15:45
  - a. Not an emanation of Godness or divinity
  - b. Not physiological extension
  - c. Not pre-existent, eternal or immortal
2. Derivation of soul in each individual
  - a. Created by God in each individual
    - (1) Creationism
    - (2) problem of individuation
  - b. Derived from parents
    - (1) Traducianism
    - (2) problem of determinism

D. Function of the soul

1. Seat of personality, individuality, mobilization of behavior
2. Mental, emotional and volitional function; mind, emotion, will; thoughts, affections, choices.
3. Desires, drives, needs - Rom. 1:24; Eph. 2:3

IV. Conclusions

- A. Psychology will always be a legitimate field of study for man.
- B. Must recognize and accept varying approaches to psychology.
  1. Secular psychology - naturalistic, humanistic, scientific
    - a. empirical observation
    - b. naturalistic presuppositions
  2. Psychology of religion
    - a. much of religion is psychologically induced
    - b. exposes pseudo-Christian religious practices
  3. Theological psychology - biblical, spiritual, Christian
    - a. recognizing spiritual source of character in behavior
    - b. recognizing derivative man
    - c. recognizing self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ
    - d. recognizing the restoration of divine intent for human function in Jesus Christ; Christocentric
    - e. understanding the teleological purpose and destiny of man