

## Why Won't People Stay Prayed Through?

Today we often see a “revolving door” in our churches—folks praying through and disappearing. These are often hurting, deeply disturbed human beings, but I believe the root cause can very well lie in the lack of a deep and true repentance.

And why should they repent? Over the years, psychology has given us a whole new vocabulary. One of these terms is “disease” instead of sin. If a person has a disease, there is no need to feel guilty, and repentance can be lacking in deep conviction. On some level, the new convert supposes he is not *really* forgiven because he did not truly repent, and discouragement sets in. Repentance needs to be taught. God's plan is so simple! How long does it take to repent? Some folks longer than others, but it is usually completed within a short span of time. How much does repentance cost in terms of money? It is a free gift from God. Counseling, on the other hand, can be a very expensive proposition, often spanning years in length.

Focus on self has replaced focus on God—self-love, self-esteem, self-forgiveness. None of these is scriptural. For example: the Bible speaks of two kinds of forgiveness—vertical and horizontal. God forgives us, and we humans are commanded to forgive one another. No mention is made of internal forgiveness, and to spend years seeking it only brings condemnation. I learned the hard way, after years of trying to “forgive myself” and failing. I was trying to do something God never asked of me. New converts who do not accept God's forgiveness feel the need to seek their own.

Is there a reason psychologists and psychiatrists began calling sinful practices and unethical behavior “sickness” or “diseases”? Is there a reason Christians involved in this area continue to work on “disease,” instead the cure of the person's soul?

For one thing, it gives them power, prestige and economical status. Many of our churches today revere the psychologist. He can write his own ticket. Also, insurance companies will not pay for treatment of sin. They will, however, pay for treatment of a “medical” diagnosis.

Why do you think the apostolic church is so willing to accept such designations? *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* (Hebrews 4:12) Swords can cut! Hurt! Too many seek an easier way. Those who are called upon to help, often try to make things more palatable rather than letting God have His way. Our way often seems more “loving and understanding.” If we offer the biblical diagnosis and correction of a person's pain, we can be labeled judgmental.

Only God and His Word can discern the thoughts and intents of our heart. We do not need a psychologically trained counselor or personality tests to tell us. Read Hebrews 4:13. Study that verse. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

In my past work in the field of psychology, I had a number of failures and an occasional success. If we look hard enough, we can find good in just about anything. But that does not make it scriptural. Since I left psychology and began to rely on the Word of God and His gifts, I have seen God work miracles in the lives of people others had called hopeless. When I sit down with such a person, I know that in myself I have no answers for them. I could reach into my bag of psychological techniques, but hard experience has taught me they just don't work. But I know the One who can heal. And such people as these, whom society and the church have given up on, were returned to the fold, healed and delivered. Not because of anything I did that might have been learned from years of training—*but because of Him!*

Time is too short. There are too many lost and hurting souls for us to waste time with the worldly ways of psychology. Because mark this, there is no such thing as "Christian psychology." It doesn't exist. We have Christians who practice psychology, but it is the same psychology that has oozed down from the author of it all: anti-God Sigmund Freud. Although many in the field have come to reject his blatant teachings, his thoughts are the underpinnings of what the psychologist does today. His sex-obsessed, atheistic thinking permeates everything a psychological counselor—"Christian" or otherwise—does. The same thing happens when one puts a drop of ink in a clear glass of water. It is so tempting to add psychology to God's Word, or vice-versa. We may think, well, if God's Word is this good, how much better it will be with some psychology thrown in. Or--conversely, we may reason, I don't really believe all this psychology-stuff, so I'll add in some Christian principles. This technique is called "integration." But, as we saw, one drop of ink dirtied the whole glass of clean water. Let's just stick with God, His Word, His Spirit, and His Gifts.