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6: FIND YOUR TRUE SELF

In the beginning, God made humans and he made them "very good". The problem is that He did not provide each person with an owner's manual when they were born. As a result, we do not know the True Self that God created, but rather have come to accept who we are by learning from the world around us. Unfortunately, what the person learns is often a distortion of the True Self, which creates confusion and an inability to hear the truth. Sin and guilt add to the darkness and as Eugene O'Neill says in his play *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* - "None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it. And once they're done, they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever."

My belief is that health and wholeness is about the process of removing the distortions, the lies, the false messages and the result of sin so that the person can know their True Self and function out of their True Self. This process is described by Paul in Romans 12:2 when he says, "be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The Renewal of the mind is described in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." God has designed each person to be free; as it says in Galatians 5:1 "It is for freedom that I have set you free." Freedom only comes when you invite Jesus into your thoughts and emotions.

There are three areas that need to be addressed in helping people. The first is the medical component which relates to the chemistry of the mind. The other two components relate to Christian Counselling and Inner Healing which include: emotional/cognitive restructuring and spiritual freedom. The medical component needs to be addressed by doctors, however the emotional/cognitive and spiritual components are the domain of pastors, Christian counsellors and the church community. Our role as therapists in coming along side a hurting person is to help the individual invite Jesus into the thoughts and emotions where the person is suffering. This is how a person achieves freedom and God has designed each person to be free.

When a person has mental strongholds they suffer from distorted thinking. Examples of distorted thinking include:

- ***Sin and the guilt from sin*** which often generate self-punishing, self-hating and depressive thinking;

Articles

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- ***Unforgiveness and vengeful thinking*** which often create bitterness, anger, hate and strong emotional feelings;
- ***Lies which create destructive feelings*** that produce fear, anxiety, insecurity, and anger; and mental agreements which tend to produce inflexible mental structures that inhibit growth.

Together these thoughts, when not taken captive to Jesus, produce a false view of the self that produces destructive behavior and feelings. But, in John 8:32 it says, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." In addition, he says in 8:36, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Therefore, Jesus is central to this process of renewing the mind and understanding truth.

When a person has a chemical imbalance mood disorder, it is very hard to control one's thoughts. The value of medication is that it helps you to think more clearly. Consequently, it is often beneficial to involve a doctor early in the process, so that you are able to think as clearly as possible. Then, one needs to address the following areas where thoughts are not surrendered to Christ:

- 1) **Sin**
- 2) **Unforgiveness**
- 3) **Lies that block the person from knowing the truth**
- 4) **Mental agreements that are against the knowledge of God**

When the mind suffers from these four obstacles, spirits of darkness are able to use these thoughts as footholds to create further confusion and turmoil. Hence the need for spiritual freedom.

We are told in **Galatians 5:13**, "*You were called to be free. But, do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather serve one another in love.*"

It is interesting when I work with people, I find that after the Lord heals their thoughts with truth, they very often say two things "I want to worship God more", and "I want to help others more". I believe that when a person is functioning out of the True Self, which God created, they want to naturally do the two commandments of the new covenant to love God and love others. Isn't this a reason for our churches to become actively involved in the healing and wholeness of the members of our congregations?

If you allow God to renew your mind and reveal your True Self you will find joy in your love for God, others, and finally, yourself.
