

DOCTRINE OF DEFENSE MECHANISMS

By Pastor Robert R. McLaughlin

One of the main principles of the spiritual life is found in the spiritual transformation which cleans out the garbage in the Soul. In fact, one of the many benefits of living the spiritual life that God has provided just for you is to rid your soul of the garbage it has stored up throughout the years. All of us have stored or accumulated garbage in our soul, especially in the subconscious.

The subconscious is the location for garbage, known in psychology as dissociation or repressed thoughts and emotions which are also related to arrogance and other complexes of sins. It is garbage in soul that causes insecurity, doubts, fears, instability, uncertainty and anxiety.

It all begins with no mental strength or a loss of mental strength. It could be from too much pressure at one time in your life. It could be because of a traumatic experience such as child abuse! The point is that whenever the mental strength which holds the mind and the heart together becomes deficient from things like fatigue, stress, or shock, it results in psychoneurosis.

Psychoneurosis is an emotional or mental conflict in which an impulse that has been blocked seeks expression in a disguised response or symptom. When the conscience cannot handle traumatic experiences, they are automatically placed in the subconscious. This becomes the basis for defense mechanisms for stress, hysteria, etc. In fact, there are certain mental processes which go on into the subconscious without ever even knowing about it.

The biblical language for the right lobe of the soul is called the heart. The heart has two parts: the stream of consciousness with its seven compartments which is basically the following:

1. The Frame of Reference.
2. The Memory Center.
3. Vocabulary Storage.
4. The Categorical Storage.
5. The Conscience.
6. The Momentum Department.
7. The Wisdom Department.

On the other hand, the subconscious is the location for garbage.

We will see the leak from the subconscious into the

conscious mind and the fact that garbage is developed in the conscious mind and has a definite effect upon metabolized doctrine previously in that area. This is why God wants your heart because it is the beginning of giving you the opportunity to live the spiritual life.

PRO 4:23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it {flow} the springs of life.

Today the reason why we have such a small pivot and believers are not glorifying God is because of 2Ti 3:5, they are ***"holding to a superficial form of the spiritual life, but they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these"*** How is it possible for a believer to be constantly exposed to accurate teaching of Bible doctrine and experience no growth, no advance in his spiritual life?

- (a) Failure to metabolize doctrine.
- (b) Failure to make Bible doctrine number one priority in the life.

(c) Failure to learn and apply the ten problem solving devices resulting in the prevention of outside pressures of adversity becoming the inside pressure of stress in the soul.

(d) Stress in the soul or sin nature control of the soul as the major source of garbage in the soul.

(e) Garbage in the subconscious developed before salvation or after salvation does not remain in the subconscious, but bleeds into the stream of consciousness when there is no spiritual strength from metabolized doctrine.

How does garbage accumulate in the soul, in the subconscious and in the conscious mind? Garbage in the subconscious is described by psychologists under the term "**defense mechanisms.**" Defense mechanisms are designed to hide or to relieve the conflicts and stresses in the soul that cause anxiety, hysteria, fear, worry, or other categories of the emotional complex of sins, the worst being guilt.

Defense mechanisms are designed to bury any

reaction you might have, any lack of esteem, any explanation for impulsive behavior or failure on your part. And there are many defense mechanisms that people use. For example, consider the following:

(1) Acting-out is a defense mechanism in which a person acts without regard for negative consequences. They're going to do what they want and they don't care what the consequences are. They feel totally justified in doing what they're doing. And if they happen to hurt innocent people along the way....well, that's "too bad." It's not their fault....they think! This is a manifestation of overt bitterness due to a problem in the soul from the existence of garbage.

EPH 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

EPH 4:19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Problem solving devices like Grace orientation and Doctrinal orientation would handle this problem.

(2) Autistic fantasy is a defense mechanism in which a person substitutes excessive day dreaming for the pursuit

of social relationships. In fact, soap operas really feed this need in people!

Social interaction through day dreaming is much easier than direct and effective social intercourse and the use of the problem solving devices.

Problem solving devices #6, A personal sense of destiny would handle this problem.

JUD 1:8 describes them, ***Yet in the same manner these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh,***

(3) Denial is a defense mechanism in which a person fails to acknowledge some aspect of external reality that is obvious and apparent to others. Denial is a false perception of reality. This false perception of reality is necessary for some people because they must be good, they must be self-righteous, they can never be wrong.....they must always be right. Therefore, they are very strong on self-justification and self righteousness.

PRO 30:12 *There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes, Yet is not washed from his filthiness.*

Problem solving devices #1, the Rebound Technique would handle this along with PSD #4, Grace orientation.

(For the remainder of this book PSD will be used to mean = Problem Solving Devices).

(4) Dissociation or withdrawal is a mechanism which is employed when a person doesn't want to deal with a situation. So they run away and withdraw from those in the situation. This is strongly characterized in the last days as noted in 1Ti 4:1 where there is a dissociation from "The faith".

1TI 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

Problem solving devices #1 The Rebound Technique, PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind, would solve this problem. One of the many benefits of living the spiritual life that God has provided just for you is to rid your soul of the garbage it has stored up throughout the years. All of us have stored or accumulated garbage in our soul, especially in the subconscious. The subconscious is that part of our soul where we are not wholly or fully conscious of all the things that are there. And that means that ***many people have garbage in their soul and don't even know it.***

There are many changes which take place when we're living the spiritual life that God has provided without us even knowing about it!

In fact, there are certain transformations which take place that we are not fully aware of. You might see the manifestation after years of doctrine and living the spiritual life that God has provided **but** you don't really know that changes are taken place in the soul when they are.

And there is a change that takes place in a believer's life that causes the believer to become strengthened mentally.

ROM 12:2 says ***And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed*** [present-passive -imperative] ***by the renewing of your mind,***

The present tense speaks of your Positive volition toward doctrine. The passive voice of the verb "conformed" means that as you have your mind renewed or renovated, changes are taken place without you even knowing about it. This is why the imperative mood is given which makes this a command. The same word is used in 2CO 3:18.

2CO 3:18 ***But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed***

[pres-pass-ind] *into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

Notice, we are NOT transforming ourselves nor are we to change ourselves,.....we are *being* transformed or changed! Now, how does garbage accumulate in the soul, in the subconscious and in the conscious mind? Garbage in the subconscious is described by psychologists under the term defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are designed to hide or to relieve the conflicts and stresses in the soul that cause anxiety, hysteria, fear, worry, or other categories of the emotional complex of sins, the worst being guilt. Defense mechanisms are designed to bury any reaction you might have, any lack of esteem, any explanation for impulsive behavior or failure on your part.

2CO 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,

Our warfare in the spiritual life is neither physical nor fleshly; it is spiritual and therefore in the mentality of our soul! And the Lord has provided information whereby we can use our thinking of divine viewpoint as a basis of

advancing in the spiritual life and handling any of the outside pressures that would come our way.

2Co 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare [spiritual] are not of the flesh [human attributes], but divinely powerful or attributes of power, for the destruction of fortresses.

Now, when it says that "***the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,***" it refers to the fact that our weapons are not based upon a system of human viewpoint like defense mechanisms. In fact, the word fortresses is the Greek noun ochuromaton which is a hapax legomena and it means arguments and reasonings one uses to defend themselves, that's why it's translated fortresses and therefore a perfect description of defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms can resist all attacks of human viewpoint, human ability, human power; but God has provided in grace divine equipment and weapons to demolish these defense mechanisms in the soul.

What are these weapons that allow us to launch an attack against defense mechanisms in the soul?

Thoughts!

The greatest weapon we have in both spiritual warfare and life is what we think. No matter how you slice it, the factor that motivates, empowers and strengthens a believer is his thought pattern. If the believer is thinking human viewpoint, he is open to satanic infiltration. Furthermore, he is useless, miserable, and indistinguishable from the unbeliever. On the other hand, the believer with doctrine in the right lobe has divine viewpoint on the launching pad ready for application in order to assault any defense system in this intensified stage of the angelic conflict.

2Co 10:5 *We are* [is not found in the original so let's go back to verse 4 to see how it reads].

2Co 10:4 *For the weapons of our spiritual warfare are not of the flesh* [human attributes], *but divinely powerful or attributes of power, for the destruction of fortresses.*

2Co 10:5 *destroying or assaulting and demolishing with Bible doctrine speculations* [cosmic thinking or human viewpoint thinking] *and every obstacle of arrogance against the knowledge of God; and taking every thought or making a prisoner of every thought* [contrary to the will of God] *to the obedience of Christ;*

Any thoughts that you have which are not the

thoughts of our Lord Jesus Christ must be taken prisoner or captive and pushed aside. The reason why you are to take the thoughts captive or as a prisoner is simply because you are not to share these thoughts with others or allow these thoughts the freedom to go elsewhere. Even if the thoughts are sick thoughts.....that's not a problem when you understand that the Bible says that without God's thoughts, ***ISA 1:5-6, The whole head is sick, And the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it,***

We are to ***take every thought or making a prisoner of every thought*** [contrary to the will of God] to the obedience of Christ;

2Co 10:6 ***And we are ready to punish*** [this is the result of having metabolized doctrine as an instant reaction force in your soul] ***all disobedience*** or deviation from truth, ***whenever your obedience is complete....*** or when you continue in your perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine.

You can only capture erroneous thinking and supersede it with correct thinking by metabolizing Bible doctrine.

(5) The next defense mechanism that people use is idealization, which is a defense mechanism in which a person attributes exaggerated positive qualities to self or to others. When others are idealized, we call that role model arrogance. When self is idealized, we call that self-righteous arrogance or making a role model out of self. This mechanism of idealization usually makes hypocrites of people.

ROM 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

These people enter into abstract thinking so that they do not deal with who they really are.

PSD #3, The faith-rest drill, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, PSD #10, Occupation with Christ as the priority solution to life, would handle this problem.

(6) Intellectualization is a defense mechanism in which a person engages in excessive abstract thinking to avoid reality or experiencing some very disturbing feelings about self.

This mechanism only serves to complicate their problems. To the church at Corinth, the apostle Paul warns of this.

1CO 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise.

1CO 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness";

1CO 3:20 and again, "The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless."

1CO 3:21 So then let no one boast in men.

PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #9, +H or sharing the happiness of God.

(7) Isolation is a defense mechanism in which a person is unable to experience what is really happening around them or in their life. They feel isolated from their

problems because they cannot deal with their problems so they must dump part of it into the *garbage can* of the subconscious to isolate it from the rest of their soul. Isaiah talked about this in ISA 44:20 when he said *He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"* They don't even realize that they have problems!

PSD #3, The faith-rest drill and PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, would handle this problem.

(8) Projection is a defense mechanism by which a person takes their own flaws, sins and failures and assigns or projects them to others. Many times they are not even consciously aware of doing so because their arrogance has blinded them! In assigning their flaws to someone else they rid themselves of their own failures and they elevate themselves. This creates a problem in the soul which keeps out metabolized doctrine on the one hand and destroys metabolized doctrine on the other hand.

We saw Joseph's brothers doing this in *GEN 50:15*
When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph should bear a grudge against us and pay us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!"

PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind, would solve this problem.

(9) Rationalization is a defense mechanism which devises reassuring or self-serving but erroneous explanations for one's behavior. This is rationalizing an action which the believer knows is not biblical but they feel they have the right to be as they are or decide as they do. In this mechanism the person becomes offended easily because they do not love the Word of God as Psa 119:165 says *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*

PSD #1 Rebound technique, PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD # 5, Doctrinal orientation, would solve this problem.

(10) Repression is a defense mechanism in which the believer is unable to remember or to be aware of disturbing lusts, wishes, or feelings, or thoughts, or experiences related to sin. It is the unconscious exclusion of painful impulses, desires or fears from the conscious mind.

This happened to Abraham in Gen 15 where the Lord had to speak to him in a dream to deliver him from repressed fears.

PSD #2, The filling of the Spirit, PSD #3, The faith-rest

drill,
PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation,
would solve this problem.

(11) Suppression is a defense mechanism in which the believer intentionally avoids thinking about disturbing thoughts, problems, experiences, or feelings. A lot of unbelievers do this when it comes to thinking about the fact that God exists.

ROM 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father and PSD #10, Occupation with Christ as the priority solution to life would solve this problem.

(12) Altruism is when a person engages in gratifying service to others because they want to be liked and so try to earn approval.

JOH 12:43 for they loved the approval of men rather

than the approval of God.

PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny, PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, PSD #9, +H or sharing the happiness of God,
PSD #10, Occupation with Christ as the priority solution to life would solve this problem. This type of person ends up on a works program and cares too much about what others think.

(13) Controlling is when a person attempts to excessively manage or regulate events, objects, or people in their environment. This is the domineering mother or the bully. An example of this is found in Luk 10:38-42 where Martha tries to control Mary.

PSD #3, The faith-rest drill, PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny,
PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, would solve this problem.

(14) Devaluation is a defense mechanism where the person attributes exaggerated negative qualities to self and others. This type of person is always putting self and or others down...otherwise known as a pessimist.

PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind would solve this problem.

(15) Displacement is a defense mechanism which attaches to a neutral object mental contents which were originally attached to someone or something else. This is when a person starts falling in love with their boat or their car or their animals because they were hurt by someone else!

PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny, would solve this problem.

(16) Hypochondria is a defense mechanism where the person becomes preoccupied with physical symptoms disproportionate to any actual physical disturbance. The pain can even be very real to these people. A lot of people use this when they're simply tired and do not want to function socially.....so they fake sick!

PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny,
PSD #7, Personal love for God the Father, PSD #10,

Occupation with Christ as the priority solution to life would solve this problem.

(17) Direct attack which is a defense mechanism in which anger is used as a solution to the problems and frustrations of life. This type solves problems by such things like temper tantrums. When they make wrong decisions and are caught in the act, instead of admitting their wrong, they begin to attack others to try and switch the blame. They get on the offensive and attack because they don't know how to handle their mistakes. This is a total state of irresponsibility by refusing to take responsibility for one's problems and failures.

Direct attack has three objectives.

a. The satisfaction of approbation lust by focusing attention on self.

This is when an individual who is not being recognized will attack someone who is.

b. The second objective of direct attack is the satisfaction of power lust by controlling the people in your vicinity.

This is the abuse of authority and taking advantage of those who are inferior, or in your opinion, stupid!

c. The third objective is the gratification of inferior feelings by getting even under revenge.

Many believer's end up in direct attack because they have revenge motivation. They hate! The interesting thing is that they hate in their mental attitude. They may not reveal their hatred with words or actions, but their hatred is in the mental attitude of their soul. Remember that you are not always what you appear to be on the surface. For mankind can hide his thoughts and become a master at the practice of hypocrisy. Therefore, the real you is the thought content of your soul.

Pro 23:7 "As he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, 'eat and drink,' but in his right lobe [heart referring to his thinking] he is not with you."

This verse uses hypocrisy as an illustration of the fact that we are what we think, not what we do, and not necessarily what we say. A person who hates will end up somehow causing strife;

Pro 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions.

A person who hates also will lie about the object of their

hatred;

Pro 10:18 He who conceals hatred {has} lying lips, and he who spreads slander is a fool.

PSD #4, Grace orientation, PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation, PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny and PSD #8, Impersonal love for all mankind would solve this problem. I hope you realize that the first two problem solving devices are involved in all of these because the PSD 8-10 cannot function without rebound and the filling of the Spirit.

(18) Sublimation is the human viewpoint thinking of finding a new outlet, hobby, system of entertainment, etc., as a new drive or outlet for one's frustration. This mechanism is employed in the place of dealing with one's problems. The key word here is always something "NEW".

PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny, PSD #9, +H or sharing the happiness of God would solve this problem.

(19) Subjectivity is the defense mechanism which involves self-pity in that you assume no-one loves you and you feel left out and depressed, for example, Elijah in 1Ki 19:3-4.

This type of believer has no capacity for life, love and happiness and so sublimates by becoming a slave to some detail of life, thereby ending up a loser! They're always feeling sorry for themselves and feel like the weight of the world is upon their shoulders.

PSD #3, The faith-rest drill, PSD #4, Grace orientation PSD #5, Doctrinal orientation and PSD #6, A personal sense of destiny would solve this problem.

(20) Undoing is a defense mechanism in which the person engages in behavior designed to symbolically make amends for or negate previous thoughts, feelings or actions. This is the "I'll make it up" game.

God does not want you to make it up.....He wants to you to rebound and recover.

PSD #1, Rebound technique, PSD #2, The filling of the Spirit would solve this problem.

The point is that all of these defense mechanisms are the function of human volition or your own free will choosing to use them. They cannot and they will not be able to solve your problems. The spiritual life that God has provided just for you has all the solutions to every single problem you will ever face. Solutions that are not only designed to solve your problems but to make you a better person as well!

When you are involved in the plan of God and the living spiritual life that God has provided, you will have all kinds of afflictions and difficulties to deal with. If it's just you, you'll have to deal with these things personally. If your marriage is based on doctrine, you'll have to deal with these things in your marriage. If your family is involved in doctrine, you'll have to deal with these things as a family. If your church is teaching doctrine, you'll have to deal with these things as a church. But the fact of the matter is, if you use the problem solving devices instead of defense mechanisms, you will prosper and be a better person for it!

It's like the children of Israel in ***EXO 1:12*** ***But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out,***

This is what the apostle Paul meant when he said in ***2CO 1:3*** ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus***

Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort;

2CO 1:4 who comforts us in all our affliction [He provides for us everything we need in the invisible assets and the problem solving devices] so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort [the same assets we have available to us] with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2CO 1:5 For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort [such as the problem solving devices] is abundant through Christ.

2CO 1:6 But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;

2CO 1:7 and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings [because of living the spiritual life that God has provided], so also you are sharers of our comfort [problem solving devices that God has provided].

A very important principle emerges which is then fact that choosing to use any defense mechanism is volition going in the opposite direction from your spiritual life. Defense mechanisms are the function of your volition

when you are living outside of your spiritual life. There is a tremendous conflict between defense mechanisms and metabolized doctrine. This is one of the great battles fought in the soul of the believer. A major soul conflict exists in the life of every believer between defense mechanisms and metabolized doctrine at any stage of growth. This is the battle of application. So, defense mechanisms are no substitute for the function of the ten problem solving devices in the spiritual life that God has provided just for you.

If ever there is to be recovery, it has to begin with problem solving device number 1, the rebound technique. On the other hand, if you are on a self-righteous kick, you are involved with some type of defense mechanism which equals pseudo tranquility. And as this continues with no rebound, it ruins your spiritual life. This is one of the things that causes a believer to be a loser. They can never metabolize doctrine and live the spiritual life because they are still clinging to the defense mechanisms and have not replaced them with problem solving devices.

They need to metabolize doctrine so that the spiritual transformation which we noted on Sunday will take place in their soul.

I would like to reveal and to show you how true this spiritual transformation is by having you look at a couple of very familiar verses in Hebrews 4. The Bible is a book that is not filled with dull thoughts! It is a book that is alive and active! And not only that it is said to be sharp.....in fact, sharper than any two-edged sword.

HEB 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword,

Our Lord said it another way in ***JOH 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.***

Now, as a result of the word of God being living and active, it does two things and it works for two reasons. If you look closely at verse 12 you will see the things that it does and then in verse 13, why it works!

First, what does it do?

HEB 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing

First, it pierces. The word means to cut through! It cuts through the garbage. It cuts through the fog. It cuts through the excuses! It cuts through the rationalization. It cuts through the tradition. It cuts through the defense mechanisms.

HEB 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing [notice how far it pierces] as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow,

This means to the innermost intimacies of man's being! It's very difficult for us to try to differentiate between the soul and the human spirit at all times but it's difficult for the Bible.

The second thing that God's word does, it judges!

HEB 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge.

We get the word critic from the Greek word kritikos translated judge. The word means to critique, to judge, to discern, or to evaluate.

Therefore it is said to be ***able to judge the thoughts and***

the intentions or motivations of the heart.

Why does it work so well?

What is it about God's word that regardless of culture, age, sex, or circumstance, when it is learned and believed, it works?

What is the reason for that?

HEB 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight,

It works, first of all, because it is universal in scope.....no one is hidden from God's sight. He knows everything about us including our innermost secrets and all the skeletons in our closet. In fact, it goes on to say ***HEB 4:13.....all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.***

When God deals with a subject, all things are exposed. Therefore, the word of God works because it is **universal in scope and secondly, it is limitless in exposure!**

all things are open means all things are uncovered.

And, ***laid bare*** means to be totally and completely

exposed. God's two edged sword reveals the thoughts of your heart and the intentions of your actions. It is able to go beyond the action to the motive into the thought life so that He is able to expose and reveal to us the true meaning behind our thoughts, our words and our actions.....if we would simply listen to His truths.

Now, that means that He will expose to us those areas of our life where we may still be relying on defense mechanisms rather than the problem solving devices. When God deals with a subject, all things are exposed. This means that He will expose to us those areas of our life where we may still be relying on defense mechanisms rather than the problem solving devices. If a believer does not learn the problem solving devices and put them on the FLOT line of the soul, it is inevitable that he is going to lean on defense mechanisms.

What do we mean by the FLOT line of the soul?

FLOT is a military acronym for the Forward Line of Troops.

Even if a believer learns the problem solving devices, he still might have to make a choice between defense mechanisms and the problem solving devices.

It's like the Lord said to Moses in *DEU 11:26* **"See, I**

*am setting before you today a blessing and a curse:
DEU 11:27 the blessing, if you listen to the commands
of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you
today;*

*DEU 11:28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the
commands of the Lord your God, but turn aside from
the way which I am commanding you today [which by
application for us would be to live the spiritual life that
God has provided], by following other gods which you
have not known.*

*Or go forward to DEU 30:15 "See, I have set before
you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;*

*DEU 30:16 in that I command you today to love the
Lord your God, to walk in His ways [PPOG] and to keep
His commands and His statutes and His judgments
[Bible doctrine], that you may live and multiply, and that
the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you
are entering to possess it.*

*DEU 30:17 "But if your [right lobe] heart turns away
and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship
other gods and serve them,*

*DEU 30:18 I declare to you today that you shall surely
perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land*

where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.

DEU 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

DEU 30:20 by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

The point is that you have to make a choice, will it be the problem solving devices or will it be the defense mechanisms? Think of it, how can a believer have an effective and wonderful relationship with God apart from the filling of the Spirit, personal love for God the Father, and occupation with Christ? The answer is that **he can't**. How can a believer have wonderful interaction and a great relationship with other people without doctrinal orientation and grace orientation? **He can't!** How can the believer have a life of meaning, purpose, and definition apart from a personal sense of destiny? **He can't!** How can I have the necessary metabolized doctrine

in the stream of consciousness when I have all of these defense mechanisms rather than the problem solving devices on the defense line of the soul? **I can't! We can't!**

Every believer has an option in his postsalvation experience (after salvation): Defense mechanisms to avoid reality in life and become a loser (even though you think you are always right and have a pseudo self-esteem) or the function of the ten problem solving devices to become a winner. If you do not know how the ten problem solving devices function, then you cannot apply metabolized doctrine to your spiritual life and Christian experience and you can only fall back on the defense mechanisms which function in your soul. At the moment any person believes in Jesus Christ, God does at least forty things for that person. And one of the most overlooked things is that God forgives and forgets all past sins and failures. This is why it is useless for a believer to probe his pre-salvation experience for answers to his current failures because it is old garbage.

In Isa 43:25, the Lord says ***"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins."***

The Hebrew word to wipe out is the word machah

which also means to abolish, blot out, destroy, to obliterate, and to exterminate.

All of our sins, failures, and even reactions to injustices were wiped out at salvation. So why would you want to go back into your childhood and into your past when every bit of that was blotted out at salvation?

Isa 44:22 "I have wiped out [same word] your transgressions like a thick cloud, And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

By the way Isa 43:25 is before salvation, Isa 44:22 is after salvation. This is why this verse says ***Return to Me, for I have redeemed you***"If you believe the word of God, why probe into your past to find answers instead of probing into the future through perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine? Many people do not want to face the fact that they've made some bad decisions. Therefore, they want to justify themselves. They feel better if they feel righteous but that is not how to solve your problems. The soul, and especially the heart, is the location of the spiritual life. In fact, the heart is the battleground of your spiritual life. And there are four battles fought in the soul:

a. The first battle is of stress in the soul Both adversity and prosperity attack the soul.

Your FLOT line or the defense line of troops is the ten problem solving devices extrapolated from metabolized doctrine in the heart. Your counterattack to stress in the soul begins with the rebound technique. Both adversity and prosperity attack the soul.

For example, in **REV 3:17**, prosperity attacks the soul when it says *'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,*

If they break through, either one, adversity or prosperity, then you have stress in the soul and stress in the soul means that the sin nature is now in control and you are out of fellowship with God. The battle of stress in the soul is the conflict between outside pressures in your life and the actual resistance of those pressures entering into the soul. Once the outside pressures penetrate your soul then you have stress and it is extremely destructive. This explains a great deal of the reasons why people are having problems today living the spiritual life. They are usually psychotic, neurotic, and who are having great difficulty dealing with their giants. Therefore, the only solution is for you to counter-attack which begins with the rebound technique.

b. The second battle is the battle of sin in the soul. This battle is the result of losing the first battle and allowing stress in your soul. You are committing sins of ignorance and sins of cognizance. However, whether you know something is a sin or not is not the real issue. The real issue means stress in your soul is overrunning the command post of your soul including the problem solving devices and thereby putting your spiritual life out of action. This is how the worst of all sins--arrogance and emotion--gain control of the soul. To the extent we are being punished in our souls for our failures, we have gaps in our FLOT line, and this is how the sin nature gets control of the soul.

c. The third great battle is the battle of false doctrine in the soul.

As this is a result of losing the first two battles, we create a vacuum in the soul which sucks up anything false into the soul.

EPH 4:17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility or vacuum of their soul,

EPH 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

The vacuum in the soul attracts every system of false doctrine and results in seeking solutions through self-righteous arrogance, through legalism, through the irrationality of emotional revolt of the soul, through popular cults, through lasciviousness.

d. And the fourth great battle is the battle of the defense mechanisms and the ten problem solving devices of the spiritual life.

This conflict is the result of losing the first two battles plus retreat and confusion of the soul from being set back by the third battle.

Now, God has designed the spiritual life for you personally to solve your own problems in the privacy of your own priesthood.

And this is why you learn doctrine every day so that you can learn the doctrine and have created and formed in your very own soul from doctrine, those problem solving devices.

However, once you have false doctrine in the soul, it gives muscle to the garbage in your soul.

This battle may be described as garbage versus metabolized doctrine in the stream of consciousness.

When the believer is losing the forth battle, he or she accumulates two categories of garbage in the soul: garbage in the subconscious related to certain defense mechanisms such as suppression, repression, dissociation, and denial, and garbage in the stream of consciousness related to idealization, role model arrogance, and unrealistic expectation.

Children use denial, repression, projection, and dissociation as problem solving devices in order to survive.

This is perfectly normal for their survival.

However, what is a problem solving device for a child is a problem for an adult.

And the point is, the longer you have been out of fellowship, the more trash you have in your soul and the more difficult your recovery is.

If you want to know how much garbage is in your soul, evaluate your life in terms of how much you are self-righteous and defending yourself against being wrong.

This lack of reality results in justifying yourself and vilification of others, committing verbal sins against others.

So, defense mechanisms are no substitute for the function of the spiritual life and must never replace the function of the ten problem solving devices on the FLOT line of the soul.

If you have collected garbage, then your life is not a spiritual life but a life of garbage-in and garbage-out.

And you are going to spend your life being constantly angry with people, bitter toward people and blaming people.

Every time there is a problem with anyone, you think they are wrong and you are right.

So, as a believer, you have an option in your postsalvation experience.

The option is to advance in the spiritual life and forget

about your past as stated in Phi 3:13-14, "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it [the objective]; but one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and advancing toward what is ahead, I press on toward the objective for the prize of the upward call from God in Christ Jesus."

Forgetting what is behind can be things that happened to you in your childhood or as a teenager or even recently as an adult.

So now that you're saved all of your sins are blotted out **but** what about the garbage for the smell of the garbage may still be there.

It may have a great affect upon you or it may have minimal.

However, if the garbage is allowed to stay in the stream of consciousness or the subconscious, you will never see yourself in the mirror of the word of God as Jam 1 teaches.

You'll never see yourself in the mirror of the word of God no matter what because you have loaded your stream of consciousness with that which obscures the mirror.....you have loaded it with garbage.

Now, let me just say this in closing.

Psychotherapy may be necessary for some believers but there are some pitfalls to probing into your past through psychotherapy.

Some believers may need therapy because of certain extreme or unusual traumas in their past; others may need help to cope with specific situations.

The decision must be left to the individual so involved and the fewer people who know about your problems the better.

The goal of the therapy process is change, not to establish blame or prevent the function of your spiritual life. When the process of therapy becomes an end rather than a means, the believer may become stuck in the past to the detriment of his spiritual life.

Evaluation of past events may help the believer avoid future mistakes.

Unfortunately, many believers refuse to learn from their own past failures.

Past events should never be evaluated for self-justification or to assign blame to someone else in projection. And psychotherapy can never replace the spiritual solution to

problems but it can expedite the ability to use the spiritual problem solving devices.