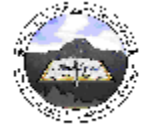




On The Frontier



“For The Glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

Vol X No.3

May/June 2002

Spiritual Schizoid Man

According to some medical sources schizoid personality disorder presents itself in a pervasive pattern of detachment from social relationships with a restricted range of the expression of emotions in interpersonal settings. This, they say, begins in early adulthood and is found present in a variety of contexts. An individual so afflicted might demonstrate an inability to form social relationships and even a lack of desire to do so. It's said that this personality type is capable of functioning by holding a job or socializing but will make life tough for themselves, family, friends, employers, teammates and acquaintances. However, they often tend to avoid relationships at all and seek jobs that don't require much in the way of social contact. They are often perceived as "loners."

Apparently this condition is not to be confused with schizophrenia which is believed to be a mental disease, hence substantially more serious than what might be considered a personality disorder. Most of us think of schizophrenia as afflicting people with multiple "personalities." Schizophrenia is said to effect over 1% of the population. It can occur at any age but most commonly happens between 16-30. It leaves the sufferer confused in a chaotic state of mind with multiple debilitating mental pandemonium. Of course I'm no psychiatrist, I'm just a simple preacher. So I'll leave the medical resolutions to the clinicians.

I do, however, know a little bit of the Bible and I'm supremely confident that our God knows everything there is to know about human behavior. Furthermore, there's no doubt in my mind that His Word reveals to us all we need to know about life and how to best live it. Perhaps the aforementioned maladies are nothing more than an exacerbation of the human condition. Since we're all related to Adam, we've all become receptors of his fallen nature. That is, the carnal, senses ruled, self serving, guilt ridden, sin nature. Yes indeed, all of us start life out this way. But more on that later. Life-style comparisons first. One's nature begets one's conduct.

When considering comportment it's rudimentary to remember that the Christian has TWO distinctly different natures. Each of these would pursue antithetical directions.

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience [*apeitheia* = having an obstinate opposition to the Divine Will, i.e., unbelieving and disobedient]:

Among whom also we all had our conversation [conduct, behavior] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by

nature the children of wrath [having a natural disposition towards anger and violence], even as others.

We all were, at one time, children of wrath and that by nature. Our conduct was determined by the selfish lusts of our fleshly minds. We lived in defiant opposition and disobedience to God's Will. We were disposed to violence and often acted out our anger in an aggressive manner. It is incumbent upon us to bear in mind how and when God's love interceded. For it is His love that has freed us and made so very much available to us.

Verses 4-9

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

WOW what a gift! Especially when you consider the state we were in.

You may be supremely familiar with this section of scripture. But I've a point to make which you may not have considered of late. So please bear with me. In any case, our God is wonderful! He has delivered us from the bondage we were in. Which is why after being emancipated we should set our goals in accordance with His view for our lives.

Verse 10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

You are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to walk in good works! Do you think God does good work? I think He's proud of his workmanship. Don't you? When you stop and think of what He has made you to be it simply takes your breath away. He has given you the potential for magnificent accomplishments. You have within you the seeds of greatness, for God has planted them there. Why not rise up and believe this? God thinks the Word of you and so do I. Why not think this of yourself?

Philippians 1:3-6

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

You should think this of yourself! When you do you will act accordingly.

II Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers [share fully] of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption [decay, perishing] that is in the world through lust.

He's given us everything we need to enjoy a fabulous life! We can walk and talk with Him. We don't have to live according to the dictates of this present evil age. If that's not enough for you, I don't know what is. He's also given us exceeding great and precious promises by which we share fully in the divine nature. Take special notice of this because this divine nature is what gives you the wherewithal to escape the corruption that's in the world. Notice also that lust is the driving force of worldly decadence. Lust, you will remember, is what dictated our former godless lifestyles. Lust is a product of sin, even as our life-styles used to be.

It's the divine nature that God has given us that makes it possible for us to live godly lifestyles. This new nature is THE behavior modifier. God provided, God ordained! Nothing works better because no one knows more about human behavior than He does.

Think of it, you have God's nature. He's your Heavenly Father. Deep down inside you want to be just like Him. You really do love what He loves and hate what He hates. I'll coin an

old adage for myself, "I want to be just like my dad." Really! We all do.

What then is the problem? It's a two fold one because we have two natures. One being the old nature (with us from birth) the other being the new (imparted by God when we believed). The new did not depose the old (wish it had) nor does the old do away with the new (thank God). We will have both until Christ returns. On that day the old will be swallowed up of the new. In the interim what have we for a remedy? Are we to live in a constant state of flux? Must we suffer the continual anguish and turmoil of two natures striving for dominance? Are we doomed to the torment of schizoidial paranoia? No! We simply renew our minds with the wonderful Word of God. An unpretentious solution to a seemingly impossible task.

Colossians 3:1-17

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Where there is neither Greek *nor* Jew, circumcision *nor* uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Such exquisite direction! This and so much more becomes available to us as we walk in harmony with the new nature. This we will want to do as the old nature does not esteem the Will of God. Whereas our new nature craves the reverence of God. Yes, deep within the fiber of your being you yearn to render unto God total admiration and complete loyalty.

Romans 8:1-17

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

There are your choices! What a contrast!!! The carnally minded endure the characteristics of death while the spiritually minded live a peaceful life. Which would you rather have?

Verses 7&8

Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to

the law of God, neither indeed can be.

So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Verses 9-17

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Once again we see that there's really only one valid option open to the

Christian. The only logical and profitable life is one that's on track with God and His Word. The following sums it up even more epigrammatically:

Ephesians 5:1-8

Be ye therefore followers [imitators] of God, as dear children;

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Be an imitator of God as His dear child and walk in love as Christ did. What a wonderful way to be pleasing unto our Father!

Yet the battle between the two natures rages within us as the Apostle

Paul reveals to us regarding his own walk. Looks like we are in good company!

Romans 7:15-25

For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

No Christian has ever gone through life without the experience expressed so vividly in this passage! How many times I've heard myself wail, "Oh wretched man that I am!" That's the reality of today but the good news is that our deliver lives. One day the Lord Jesus Christ shall return and when he does we shall be delivered from the stinking death of our old man nature.

Job 19:25,26

For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Hallelujah!!! What a day that shall be! In the meantime we can enjoy the victory purchased for us by simply walking by the spirit.

Galatians 5:16&17

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

It really is easy to walk by the spirit because that is first and foremost to walk according to the revealed Word of God. If we would simply take God at His Word we would avoid the pitfall of walking by the flesh. In fact, walking according to the Word is as simple as walking in love. Why? Because walking in love (God's love, not some ushy-gushy, wine you, dine you, take you to dinner love) is walking by the spirit.

I John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Many years ago (over one quarter of a century) I had the privilege of being exposed to a number of men who served as my spiritual mentors. Some are more memorable than others because of the in-depth way in which they handled God's Word. Others because of the dynamic way they manifested His gift. One of these men stands out in my mind often because he was uncommonly flamboyant and at the same time brilliant. He confronted the practice of pseudo Christianity many years ago. It was he who introduced the phrase "spiritual schizoid man" to me. Being genuine was very important to him, as it should be to us.

How can we, knowing what we know be "spiritual schizoids?" Yet, there are those who will sit through a teaching, act as pious as King David and return to their fleshly ways upon exit. Walking into a church on Sunday morning doesn't make you a righteous Christian anymore than walking in a garage makes you a mechanic. One morning in Church does not justify six days and 23 hours of domestic abuse. Sitting in on a Bible teaching does not authorize anyone to speak disrespectfully to their spouse or treat their offspring roughly. Nor does one day of "piety" make six days of debauchery okay. You've got the point, I'm sure. Let's not be hypocritical in our walks. Let's do our level best to "walk our talk."

I John 3:18

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

There's to be nothing hypocritical in the love of God we manifest.

Romans 12:9

Let love be without dissimulation [without hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

You will notice the first word in this verse is *italicized*. This is an admission by the translators to having added it. The words "without dissimulation" would be more easily understood if rendered as; "without hypocrisy." Thus the opening phrase in this verse would read, "Love without hypocrisy. There's to be no false pretense in us, our love is to be pure and without ulterior motive.

I Timothy 1:5

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned [believing with no false pretense]:

We should not be found living like spiritual schizoids. NO! We must strive to do our utmost for His Highest! Endeavor to understand the conflict and you will easily resolve it, as previously noted. But give in to it and you become little more than a clinical prognosis. Clearly the spiritual realities take precedence over the material. While the medical field may be correct in their observations of a man or woman's fleshly behavior, they remain blind to much of what is "behind the scenes." That is, the two fold nature in the child of God. But we have the answer. Indeed, we have many answers to life's dilemmas because we have the wonderful, matchless, Word of God.

God has given us much to be thankful for. More in fact than my meager life could ever chronicle. He gave us life when we had no hope. He gave us His Son, forgiveness of sin, complete redemption and the promise of an endless life. He delivered us because

He loved us when no one else would. We in turn owe Him everything.

He has made you to be something very special. Please consider the following verses and take particular care to avoid getting caught up in the "spiritual schizoid syndrome."

II Corinthians 6:1&2

We then, *as workers together with him*, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

God bless you, I love you, you are the best!
