

Position Paper #2: The Fall's Relationship to Psychopathology

Debbie Lewis-Vann

Alliance Graduate School of Counseling Mental Health Counseling

GCN: 6180A: Theology in Mental Health Counseling

Dr Julio A. Orozco

March 21st, 2023

Eric Johnson (2018) presentation on how the human functioning can be disordered yet function within itself in various ways; biologically, psychosocially, ethically, and spiritually. In this presentation which illustrated his perspective on the problem of suffering, the nature and development of sin, weakness seen as fault. From a Christian worldview presenter, "focused on the foundation of soul care indicating that counselor should treat humans within Christian psychopathology context, as a personal agent made in the image as well as organism that has biopsychosocial damage resulting in disorders, causing damages and disability and has identifiable diagnosis correlation with several DSM-5, which he separated into two categories; sin; alcohol addiction, habitual anger, homosexual activity, and depression due to loss of jobs repeatedly for poor performance and weakness; autism, hallucination, paranoia, depression due to childhood abuse and homosexual orientation (2018)."

Presenter made the proclamation on God's approach towards weakness, God took our weakness to shame the strong, sending Jesus to take on human shame and sin is crucified on the cross and took on our weakness. Johnson (2018) explicitly declares that sin was created by humans, causing biopsychological damages resulting in weakness but God took compassion on human weakness in the cross. Another statement presenter by Johnson (2018), on the question of why suffering? In his explanation suffering is a strong negative emotionally or psychological and physical pain causing strong sadness. In contrast author also explicitly, provided Biblical reason for personally suffering and how suffering brings wisdom and spiritual maturity making us God centered (2018)."

There is multiple perspective for the above-mentioned statements made by Johnson (2018), I do not consider myself a scholar of Christian psychology not psychopathology however, from a personal perspective based upon experiences which are not adequate, I desire

deeper exploration of content. Nevertheless, I will continue to seek clarification and gain knowledge for deeper understanding. The context on sin and weakness and the differentiation and presentation of biological damage caused by sin is puzzling, based upon the dual premise that human is responsible for some abnormalities and there are abnormalities not responsible for, Johnson (1987). If weakness is strength, based on Paul's proclamation in 1 Corinthians 1:27 and 11 Corinthians 12:10 and 13:4, the synonyms for weakness is strong, mighty, powerful, or able, would this not justify the individual who has an addictive behavior such as eating disorder? A individual with addictive behaviors is weak upon self-awareness and acceptance, and the desire for change, this same individual seeks help and out their weakness strength is develop. According to Pizzigoni, Fox, O'Grady (2019), "body image issues in adolescence has been linked to depression, unhealthy weight control, reduced physical activity and eating pathology."

There are many other reason that perpetuate eating disorder, individuals may have experience anxiety about their relationship with God cause from various etiology; perfectionism, negative criticism, sexual abuse, guilt and shame associated with religious ideologies, and ritualistic behaviors can find themselves weaken from emotional and physical pain, seeking self-purge through emotional purification. How does one differentiate such cause factor? How can these question be answered within limited time session understanding the factor of cost analysis of cost of service versus reimbursement value. What is the most practical approach addressing sin versus weakness without conducting psychoanalysis session. Clinton 2001, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23." Except for Jesus no one can claim to be sinless, having been born in sin, and inherited the sin nature from our earthly father Adam, sin separates us from God, but we are not left hopeless, God, Son and Holy Spirit desire to share his glory with us and send His Son to die for us, Romans 5:8, offering us enteral life. (Clinton,

2001)” Having this knowledge of redemption and also the awareness that without this precious gift from God our life is nothing, creating categories separating or contrasting sin/weakness changes nothing.

Bird (2016) discuss embracing the shame of the cross, all our sin and weakness; foolishness, horror and shame have been hidden in the Cross, “Jesus’s death have been our recapitulation eradicating the sin of Adam, unlike Adam, Jesus is successful over sin, obedient to death on the cross. (Bird, 2016)” This statement, imploring all Christians to have compassion on other is imperative and should not be ignore, as a helping professional, who is aware of the victory, of Jesus death, his triumphant over sin, weakness, evil and the devil I must be open to the Holy Spirit operation within oneself to bring awareness of hope and peace to others. In doing so, the light of God will transcend into our client’s heart. I believe that there is no need to create or identify sin or weakness, because we all have sinned. Sin came into this world thru man, because of sin we suffer, God in his infinite love and grace works thru those suffering and rescue us, and manifested his abundant love giving hope, joy, and peace.

References

Bird, M. F., (2016), *What Christians ought to believe: An introduction to Christine doctrine through the apostle creed*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Clinton, T. (2001), *The Soul Care Bible: Experiencing and sharing hope God's way*. Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers

Johnson, E. (2018, March 15), *Towards a Christian psychopathology* [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Z2DsXT8O8&t=2323s>

Johnson, E. (1987). Sin weakness and psychopathology. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 15(3), 218-226