

## **HEALING THE HOMOSEXUAL PAIN?** **Leanne Payne and the "Crisis" in Masculinity**

Leanne Payne is an author who has written several books over a period of years to promote the "healing of memories" as a key to unlocking the problems of living that so many people experience, including homosexuality. She originally studied under Agnes Sanford and has adopted her theories and methods of "healing prayer." Much is drawn from the poisoned waters of both Freud and Jung concerning the nature of man and revelation.

**Revelation and dreams.** Payne's view of revelation opens the door to every sort of subjective "revelation" that anyone might claim to receive from God, including dreams. Revelations are focused on retrieving the "right" memories to explain current sin. "Listening prayer" revolves around feelings and experience rather than biblical truth about either God or man.

Payne believes she has biblical support for her view that God uses dreams as a vehicle for revelation. However, not even one text can be cited where God reveals "memories" from an individual's past that need to be "healed" in order for that person to lead a godly life. Completely different purposes are seen in Scripture. For example, God uses dreams to reveal His own glory and power to pagan rulers such as the Egyptian Pharaoh and the king of Babylon.

**Male and female.** Payne's erroneous view of the nature of man begins with her unusual interpretation of Genesis 1:27. She claims that Adam alone, prior to the creation of Eve, was created both male and female. This is not even possible because God, immediately after creating "male and female" in His image, commands *them* (plural) to "be fruitful and multiply." It is difficult to imagine Adam multiplying all by himself!

This bizarre exegesis leads Payne to conclude that every person has both masculinity and femininity that must be "affirmed" in order to avoid psychological problems. She explains much sin as resulting from a "gender imbalance" within man that must be corrected. Such "imbalance" is allegedly so widespread as to constitute a "crisis in masculinity" of epidemic proportions. Payne's analysis is similar to theories promoted by Jung, who also believed God to be both good and evil.

The Bible recognizes differences between men and women while affirming that both are created in God's image. The

relationship between God and man is analogous to that of husband and wife. Payne acknowledges the analogy but carries it too far with speculations about gender that have no biblical warrant.

**Love and acceptance of self.** Payne sees a failure of self-love and self-acceptance as a major barrier to "inner healing." She believes a proper love of self is necessary in order to be able to love God and others. While recognizing man's need to be reconciled to God, Payne also proposes a need to mend the relationship "between oneself and one's innermost being." The relationship between self and *self* seems more important to Payne than the relationship between self and *God*. Christ's atonement is viewed primarily as taking away emotional pain rather than making the sacrifice required for sin. Payne sees man as *injured* rather than *guilty*.

There is nothing whatsoever in Scripture that can be construed as requiring a love of self in order to love God. Jesus specifically stated that the TWO (not three) greatest commandments were to love God and to love others as much as self, i.e., as much as we already naturally love ourselves. According to the Bible, no one has ever hated his own flesh (Ephesians 5:29).

**Identity and the "true self."** Payne repeatedly refers to a "true self" or "higher self" buried beneath layers of "false selves" which are "not real." She sees man's fundamental problem as a separation from this "true self," obscuring the biblical truth about man's separation from God as the result of sin. The "integration" of "scattered, unaffirmed" parts of self is held up as a primary goal in counseling. Payne claims to root "identity" in God rather than in other people, yet her focus on searching within for the "true self" overshadows the biblical requirement to know, love, and serve God.

**Memories.** Payne asserts that a "psychological healing" of past memories must occur before spiritual concerns about sin can be addressed. Her "healing of memories" is allegedly the application of God's forgiveness of sin at the level of the "unconscious." Forgiveness of others is centered on benefits to self rather than restoration of others. The sins of others, deeply buried or "repressed" in the "unconscious," are seen as the cause of current sinful behavior. The biblical view of man's sin is turned upside down. People are burdened with the requirement to retrieve and "heal" long-repressed memories in order to move forward with their lives. One cannot help but wonder why the apostle Paul never mentioned "inner healing" in

ancient Corinth, where sin ran rampant. Surely some of the Corinthian believers had been sinned against, growing up in that wicked city!

**Homosexuality.** Payne rightly rejects the modern demand to accord homosexuality the status of a legitimate alternative lifestyle. She acknowledges that it is sin but simultaneously insists that it is a "psychological sickness" usually rooted in some parental failure from early childhood. She applies her theories about separation from self and "gender imbalance" to explain homosexual behavior, then asserts that a "healing of memories" is needed.

**Conclusion.** In spite of much Christian terminology, Leanne Payne has taken an essentially Freudian-Jungian psychological approach to counseling and sugar coated it with references to the Holy Spirit and the presence of God. Separation from self replaces separation from God in her diagnosis of man's fundamental problem. "Healing of memories" becomes a substitute for the gospel message of redemption. Homosexuality is seen as sin *plus* sickness. Revelation is an entirely subjective matter for Payne, who believes that an individual's dreams may be a valid way to receive truth from God. This approach to "healing the pain" must be rejected as an erroneous substitute for God's plan of redemption.

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