



DEPRAVITY

BOAZ ADHENGO



DEPRAVITY

BOAZ ADHENG O



ISBN 978-0-359-73760-4
9 0000
9 780359 737604

©2020 By Boaz Adhengo. All Rights Reserved

Published by Lulu Books
627 Davis Drive, Suite 300
27560 Morrisville, North Carolina.
United States

eBook ISBN: 978-0-359-73760-4

DEPRAVITY by Boaz Adhengo is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en_US.

Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at
<http://www.adhengoboaz.com/depravity.info/reader>

Design and typography: Amanda Spielberg

HX76_n37





www.adhengoboaz.com



@adhengobeuze



Table of Contents

Preface.....	*
I Created with Virtue.....	1.
II Theory of Temperaments.....	8
III Deprived.....	17.
IV Codependency.....	31.
VI Wellness in Christ.....	42.

P R E F A C E

The memories of my past blur in prose from attempts to rekindle the origins of some talents that am proud (*by God's grace*) to have acquired. Perhaps I was ten when our babysitter taught me dribbling using a volleyball. But in persistent attempt to connect into the historical development, towards my becoming a brand ambassador (*for a commercial product*) through the game of basketball, it was the diligent effort of Berkeley Hackett, the missionary from Texas who endeavoured to see me excel, cushioning my lamentations through abundance of hope and provisions. To this date, still a celebrated basketball player, but more to it, an accomplished *creative economy* consultant and a leadership coach.

Still reminding myself, that the first million in earnings ever made, was at age twenty four; though in currency of shillings, it was an accomplishment beyond many at my present age or youthfulness at that time. Yet only now am i at wisdom to understand that even in success and failures, the Lord has always been at work making me ready to become useful in His kingdom. *For it is the LORD who goes before you; He will be with you; He will not leave you nor forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed* (Deuteronomy 31:8).

And truly, God has transformed my heart away from secular strife to be able to serve in His kingdom; protecting me from assassination attempts, away from bankruptcy and promising to restore my youthful wealth in double portion. For although made poor and intimidated through fear; I have become rich in spirit, empowered to serve as royalty. Only through constant reading of *His Word*, am I able to understand myself even more, to realise the past flaws and seek redemption through His grace.

The idea of this book propped my mind while preparing to enrol for a class at *Christian Leaders College*, a course that not only fits into my steady interest within the *Buruburu Basketball Ministry* but is also essential in a community where conflict is inevitable. Thus, *Restorative Justice 101* as the class is labelled; has prompted me to research on extra materials beyond the purview of whatever was offered, and in my curiosity, a reality of a book is generated, to which am obliged to share with hopes that it becomes a tool of equipping behavioural change in our respective societies wherever, but mostly so, as an additional contribution to the many writings that discuss the same topic.

To this end, am grateful to Ms. *Joy Mboya* of the Go Downs Art Centre who first identified the creative publishing possibilities in me, way back in 2010, prompting me to capitalise through trials of authorship and today, am releasing book number twenty. Much thanks to *Prof. Henry Rayenga*, *Prof. David Feddes* and *Bishop Brian DeCook*, all of Christian Leaders Ministries; acknowledging their dedicated commitment towards revival; being happy to be influenced by the wave of involvement and made useful in making known the goodness of God's kingdom through evangelism and discipleship.

In as much as the chapters seek to express their contents from my resourceful narration; am happy to be able to continuously contribute towards social change and importantly, as a reformed person, as a minister of the *Word*.

God works in mysterious ways, for His ways are not within our capacity to judge; we can only observe and see how the enemy is being defeated. Noting that we were created in God's wonderful image, we all have virtuous inclinations, and these have been defined as temperance. But due to the fallen nature of man, the

holy temperance has been contaminated with sin; therefore varied as the multiplication of mankind is being accomplished; agreeing that no one is more perfect than the other, and thus the different virtuous inclinations we have, however polluted by sin, are our gifted nature from God which must always be controlled into a balanced output. More so, temperance and the struggle for righteous humanity results into different personalities but the popular delinquency is that of codependency to which my curiosity has satisfied its explanation on several pages but relating this with the ultimate title of our deprived nature as humans, our sinfulness due to the mistakes of Adam and Eve.

As if not to develop the blame mentality, my understanding of redemption and being justified, prompts a whole chapter about healthy Christian living. Discussing our natural possibility to accept atonement as offered for our sins hitherto able to live a *Spirit Filled* life.

May the Lord open your hearts as you seek to learn something new, something different and something of virtue. Amen!

CHAPTER ONE

created with virtue

Mood swings, emotional reactions, ups and downs, knee-jerk responses, and apparently incorrigible behavioural ruts are the cause of countless heartaches and frustrations with our own selves and others. We want to know where it all comes from and what we can do about it. We seek answers on the *self-help shelf* or in the counsellor's office, or perhaps at the drug store. Too often, however, we fail to get to the root of our difficulties. Unwittingly at times, we get caught up in dealing with symptoms, without ever getting to the malady itself.

Temperance governs our action with regard to good things that we find attractive and desirable: food, drink, sex, knowledge, play, wealth, etc. All these are truly good things (*they contribute to our perfection as human beings*) and it is right that we are attracted to them and pursue them and enjoy them. Temperance gives us the ability to deal with these things in a moderate way, which means in accord with what reason tells us (*for example, eat food in a way that is healthy*) without letting the attractiveness of the thing govern our actions (*for example, eating until we don't feel like eating any more*).

Temperance is the virtue by which we habitually resist the urges or desires that pull away from actions that we know by reason should be done. As with other moral virtues; a person comes to experience the right amount of desire for the right things at the right times through habituation whereas habituation to the virtue occurs by repeatedly choosing to do what you should in the face of mixed desires to do something else. There are many such desires, so the virtue of temperance actually covers a wide variety of desires and actions.

Desire, understood as the basic urge for a good (*when it is not yet possessed*) can be grouped into major desires (*eating, drinking and sex*) and minor desires, for instance; desire to know, desire for honour, desire for wealth, desire to avenge injustice and to right wrongs (*anger*), desire to play games, etc.

Temperance is the virtue by which a person habitually controls the urges or desires that will pull him away from the good of reason, thus a *temperant* person habitually has his desires under control (*he has moderate desires*) and indulges them according to reason: the ones he should, when he should, in the way he should, and to the degree he should.

When we understand our temperaments, we can begin to master those inclinations or untoward reactions that may thwart our growth in virtue and in love. We will develop greater compassion for others and will stand ready to encourage and strengthen our loved ones – to begin that transformation of hearts which, through the grace of God, will build a civilization of life and love here on earth and ultimately, intimate friendship with him.

There are but two powers that control the minds of men - the power of God and the power of Satan. Christ is man's Creator and Redeemer; Satan is man's enemy and destroyer. He who has given himself to God will build himself up for the glory of God, in body, soul, and spirit. He who has given himself to the control of Satan tears himself down.

Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization and beautiful in form. Our natural inclinations and appetites were divinely appointed, and when given to man, were pure and holy. It was God's design that reason should rule the appetites, and that they should minister to our happiness. And when they are regulated and controlled by a sanctified reason, they are holiness unto the Lord.

Man is a mysterious union of body and spirit. The only creature on earth that God wanted for his own sake; he is called to greatness. In the Garden of Eden, man was lord of the world, immortal, gifted with preternatural knowledge and God's own supernatural life. His higher faculties perfectly governed his passions and emotions; that is, his spirit ruled his body. The

original unity and harmony - *within our own persons as well as with one another and with God* - was disrupted by sin.

After the fall, man remains divided against himself, alienated from his fellow man and adrift from God; incapable of overcoming the onslaught of darkness, chaos, and evil. Paul would later bemoan the loss of that original harmony: "*I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want*" (Romans. 7:19).

Consequently, we experience *both a high calling and a deep misery* that can be reconciled only through Christ. "*Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more*" (Romans 5:21); God made Christ to "*be sin who did not know sin*" so that we might be saved (2 Corinthians. 5:21).

Man is a mystery to others and to himself. Only in Christ can we discover our true selves and discover that high calling: intimate communion with God. Only in Christ will our lives be renewed and transformed, "*for creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God*" (Romans 8:19). Grace never destroys nature, but perfects it.

Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies at the foundation of the feebleness which is apparent everywhere. Through the temptation to indulge appetite, Adam and Eve first fell from their holiness; and it is through the same temptation that humanity has become enfeebled. They have permitted appetite and passion to take the throne, and to bring into subjection reason and intellect. The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of man, when, if he had conquered on this point, he would have moral power to gain victory over every other temptation of Satan. But slaves to appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character. The eye of the Lord is open upon every scene

of debasing amusement and profane dissipation. The words and deeds of the pleasure lovers pass directly from these halls of vice to the book of final records. What is the life of this class worth to the world, except as a beacon of warning to those who will be warned, not to live like these men, and die in the manner of a fool?

Satan was the first rebel in the universe, and ever since his expulsion from heaven he has been seeking to make every member of the human family an apostate from God, even as he is himself. He laid his plans to ruin man, and through the unlawful indulgence of appetite, led him to transgress the commandments of God. He tempted Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit, and so accomplished their fall, and their expulsion from Eden. If should have been that the fall of Adam and Eve had been the only human transgression; but from the loss of Eden to the present time, there has been a succession of falls. Satan has planned to ruin man, by leading him away from loyalty to the commandments of God, and one of his most successful methods is that of tempting him to the gratification of perverted appetite. We see on all sides the marks of man's intemperance.

Satan gathered the fallen angels together to devise some way of doing the most possible evil to the human family. One proposition after another was made, till finally Satan himself thought of a plan. He would take the fruit of the vine, also wheat, and other things given by God as food, and would convert them into poisons, which would ruin man's physical, mental, and moral powers, and so overcome the human senses to the extent that Satan should have full control. Through perverted appetite the world would be made corrupt.

Men's natural appetites have been perverted by indulgence. Through unholy gratification they have become *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*. Unless the Christian watches unto prayer, he gives loose reign to habits which should be overcome. Unless he feels the need of constant watching, ceaseless vigilance, his inclinations, abused and misguided, will be the means of his backsliding from God. Christ knew that in order to successfully carry forward the plan of salvation He must commence the work of redeeming man just where the ruin began. Adam fell on the point of appetite.

The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the *up-building* of character. Hence it is that body that the adversary of souls directs his temptations towards enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being. The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the dominion of God, will surely work ruin and death. The body is to be brought into subjection; the passions are to be controlled by the will, which itself is to be under the control of God. Temperance is understood not only as sound thinking but also as embodied *self-control* and active patience. On the level of *self-leadership*, it is argued that temperance enables the leader to establish forms of integrity that protect the leader's self from chaos and destruction.

Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection; that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. Hence that time is spent to good account which is directed to the establishment and preservation of sound physical and mental health.

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from the pangs of hunger as from His sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon humanity. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation. Our only hope of regaining Eden is through firm self-control. If the power of indulged appetite was so strong upon humanity, that in order to break its hold, the divine Son of God, in man's behalf, had to endure a fast of nearly six weeks, what a work is before the Christians?

Temperance is certainly nurtured moral reflection and persistent participation in moral and communal and organizational practices that form virtues and habits; however, from a theological perspective, this idea is only the second half of the story that begins with God's revelation in Jesus Christ and the grace that is given through the Spirit. It is important to understand how our individual temperament affects us and how best to work with its particular strengths and weaknesses to form ourselves both humanly and spiritually. But it is equally important to remember that temperaments never tell the whole story. Understanding temperament should never be used as an excuse for bad behaviour.

CHAPTER TWO

theory of temperaments

The four temperaments theory is an ancient system devised for understanding human nature and thereby improving the human condition. The theory divides people according to various personality characteristics that appear to make up their basic temperament. Some people attempt to distinguish between a person's temperament and his personality by saying that temperament traits are inborn while personality traits are the result of nature and nurture. However, the distinction is not always possible or clear.

The four temperament categories are Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy, and Phlegmatic. Each category or type is defined by a list of descriptive terms. Then people are assigned to one or more types by matching the person with the descriptions.

Sanguine	Choleric	Melancholy	Phlegmatic
Cheerful	Optimistic	Melancholy	Calm
Friendly	Active	Sensitive	Dependable
Talkative	Confident	Analytical	Efficient
Lively	Strong-willed	Perfectionistic	Easy-going
Restless	Quick to anger	Unsociable	Passive
Self-centered	Aggressive	Moody	Stubborn
Undependable	Inconsiderate	Rigid	Lazy

The above list is both brief and incomplete. As the theory has been passed down through the centuries, the descriptions of each type have been modified and expanded. Descriptive terms for each type are not always consistent among those who use the four temperaments system. For some, a particular characteristic, such as leadership, would be used to describe the Choleric; for others it

would describe the Sanguine. Thus, the lists are not hard and fast. They vary according to the person who is presenting them.

The concept of the four temperaments was originally proposed 350 years before the birth of Christ, to explain differences in personalities according to the *humours*, or bodily fluids. And after more than two thousand years of intervening medical and psychological advancement, the concept of temperament itself (*and in particular the classic four divisions*) is still referenced by contemporary psychologists, educators, and spiritual writers. Perhaps because of life's ever-increasing complexities and numerous complex psychological systems, people are looking for simple ways to understand themselves and others.

The four temperaments theory also gives an illusion of truth. One can apply all descriptive traits to all humans to a greater or lesser degree. Therefore, when temperament characteristics are placed in categories, people can easily see themselves because of the universal nature of traits, such as friendly, confident, sensitive, dependable, and so on. The process of categorizing self and others relies on previous subjective knowledge; all that happens is that the subjective knowledge one already has about a person is organized according to an artificial arrangement and given a name. For instance, if you *discover* that your child is *phlegmatic*, you were already familiar with enough of his characteristics to line them up with the adjectives listed under *phlegmatic*.

Using temperament or personality typologies undermines the complex variety of individual differences expressed within the vast possibility of social interactions and circumstances. People are not exactly the same in different circumstances. One who may appear reserved and quiet in some circumstances may be highly expressive and outgoing in others. Personality theories and

temperament typologies are filled with human notions about the nature of man, how he is to live, and how he changes.

The Choleric

Enthusiasm, energy, intelligence, and a strong will combine to make the choleric temperament a *classic go-getter*. Whether at home or on the job, the choleric will take charge and get many things accomplished in a short time. The choleric reacts quickly and intensely; decisiveness is his hallmark. In addition, he is extraverted and self-confident, comfortable taking charge of people as well as situations. Opposition is never a stumbling block, but rather, a further incentive to action. Dynamic and direct, the choleric has a keen mind and thinks independently. He will always let you know what he's thinking.

The choleric's enthusiasm and energy will attract others to him. He thrives on activity; work invigorates him. He is optimistic and magnanimous; he values success in his endeavours and sets high goals. He is comfortable with power, blossoms in competition, and is confident in his decisions.

Cholerics are eminently rational; they expect to hear good reasons for any argument. Even as children, they will not accept "*because I said so*" as sufficient reason for doing something. Cholerics can grasp the big picture and can communicate the vision to others; they are natural organizers and tend to rise to positions of authority. They easily express their ideas to others, but are less willing to listen. They hate to "*waste time*" on meetings, employee relations, or small details. Many entrepreneurs are choleric! They tend not to delegate because they believe that they can do it better and faster themselves and because they enjoy their own productivity. Cholerics will be valuable employees - if not the

founder of the business itself. They are self-motivated, task-oriented, quick thinking, pragmatic, and energetic. They enjoy their work. They enjoy leading projects and people, but sometimes need to be reminded that not everyone works as quickly as they do. Sometimes, in their determination to achieve results, they can roll over their co-workers' feelings to accomplish the task at hand.

The choleric may fear intimacy in personal relationships; he is too independent, impatient, and insensitive. He can be rash and imprudent when making decisions, and then deny that he has made an error. He tends to hide his insecurities while blaming others for his own mistakes.

A spiritual life marked by strict discipline and obedience is critical for the choleric, to help him overcome his tendencies to pride, anger, and obstinacy. He will need to develop compassion, humility, tenderness, and understanding in dealing with others. But it will be first necessary to convince the choleric that he needs the spiritual life, that he can trust a spiritual mentor; that he must humble himself before God and learn the virtue of obedience. He will learn to be more understanding and forgiving of his fellow man and will develop greater humility when he realizes that the natural gifts of his temperament are gifts from God and are not something he personally earned or deserved.

The Melancholic

More than any other temperament, the melancholic tends to value the ideal - whether it be truth, beauty, or justice, and all that is noble. He can be thoughtful, pious, and compassionate, given to solitude and reflection. It is said that the melancholic so longs for heaven that everything on earth falls short. Sensitive and idealistic, he is deeply concerned about injustice and vice. His

idealism combined with compassion for humanity and passion for justice may lead him to a humanitarian vocation. Great writers, poets, artists, and composers have been of this temperament.

Many melancholics have become great saints - founders of religious orders, reformers, great mystics and theologians. The melancholic is principled, consistent, faithful, and persevering. He is orderly, diligent, and attentive to detail. He appreciates the mystery and depth of life. The melancholic temperament is characterized by a weak or dull initial reaction to stimuli, followed by an increase in intensity over time; the reaction then tends to last a long time.

Because of their slowness to react and their tendency to introversion, melancholics base much of their decision-making on ideals. They long for perfection, yet so few people can meet their expectations and their dreams. No wonder they often have their nose in a book!

Melancholics form relationships very slowly; in fact, they're usually quite content to be left alone. They do not initiate relationships, and it may take a long time for them really to trust. But when they do form a relationship, they will be faithful and true to a fault. Yet if their trust is violated, and they become aware of the betrayal, they can be relentless in unforgiveness.

Because of their tendency to reflect on and to weigh every pro and con, melancholics can appear to be irresolute and indecisive. They may spend too much time on planning and preparing, and too little time putting their plans into action. It is sometimes very difficult for them to bring others aboard a project because they don't know how to convey enthusiasm for it - not because they lack that enthusiasm inside themselves. For some reason, melancholics tend

to be less physically vigorous than other temperaments. Where a choleric seems to abound in energetic enthusiasm, the melancholic tends to be quieter, weaker, and more prone to small illnesses that sap his will.

In his spiritual life, the melancholic should focus on personal intimacy with Christ, because his nature is drawn to the highest of ideals and will never rest until it rests in the Lord. Furthermore, only through an intimate relationship with Christ will the melancholic learn to temper his overly critical expectations of other people (*such trust should be placed in God alone*) and to overcome his natural tendency to sadness.

The Sanguine

The creative, fun-loving, high-spirited sanguine's natural tendency to look on the bright side, to enjoy people, and to seek out adventure sometimes results in a label of superficiality and frivolity. But the world is a brighter, more joyful place because of the inspiration, enthusiasm, and fellowship he provides. Relationships are extremely important to sanguines; they are warm-hearted, compassionate, generous, and eager to please. They are energized by large groups, and cooperative with and accepting of others. They want to please their parents and teachers.

Strength of the sanguine is his ability to "*live in the present moment*"; because he does not dwell on the past, nor spend time worrying about the future, he has a very optimistic, joyful attitude toward life. The sanguine is often adventuresome, enterprising, and creative - and is a source of inspiration to others. Weaknesses of the sanguine temperament include the tendency toward superficiality (*due to the immediacy of their reactions and their*

creative imaginations), inconstancy (*due to the short duration of their impressions*), and sensuality (*lacking the perseverance to withstand temptation once their passions are aroused*). Because he places such a high value on relationships and pleasing others, a sanguine is often tempted to forsake what he knows is right in order to fit in with the crowd.

In the spiritual life, the sanguine is less likely to fall prey to a *Pharisaic* legalism because he prioritizes relationships and freedom of expression. But when poorly formed in the faith, this tendency can lead to an undisciplined and incoherent set of beliefs based on personal preferences rather than on the truth. If, however, the sanguine develops a close personal relationship with Christ, he can develop faithfulness and obedience to authentic Church teaching. “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*” (John 14:15). Thus, the moment life-loving, people-pleasing sanguine discovers that Jesus Christ is the true friend of his soul, he embarks on a journey toward spiritual maturity; depth and constancy of personality will result; and motivated by a love for Christ and with attention to spiritual formation, the sanguine will exhibit great energy, sensitivity, and vivacity in spreading the Kingdom and bringing more souls to Christ.

The Phlegmatic

Phlegmatics are reserved, prudent, sensible, reflective, respectful, and dependable. They are not easily insulted or provoked to anger, nor are they given to exuberance or exaggeration in speech. They are loyal and committed, tolerant and supportive. They possess a hidden will of iron that is often overlooked, because they are such agreeable people. They have a knack for diffusing tense situations.

Phlegmatics make superb diplomats and military strategists; they tend to be clear, concise, and thoughtful in speech and writing. They are excellent listeners and have great empathy for others. They are supportive friends, patient with difficult people and situations, and considerate at all times.

Because of their reserved natures, phlegmatics are sometimes accused of being unassertive, or of lacking enthusiasm and spontaneity. Since they aim to please, and want to avoid conflict at all costs, they may become overly conciliatory. Unlike the sanguine, who is characterized by his attraction to things (*people, experiences, novelties, and material objects*), the phlegmatic is known for avoiding things: conflict among people, or demanding physical labour or mental exertion. The phlegmatic might defer to peer pressure in order to keep the peace or to avoid conflict (*and thus, can become overwhelmed*), while the sanguine gravitates naturally into the thick of his peer group.

In the spiritual life, a phlegmatic may find it much easier to accept doctrines and teachings of the Church, and may not be as inclined (*as perhaps a choleric might*) to argue with the Magisterium. The dutiful and cooperative phlegmatic may take at face value the teachings of the Church and may need to be encouraged to internalize and personalize his faith.

CHAPTER THREE

deprived

Habitual sin can also cause you to exhibit characteristics that may not be related to your temperament, but are, instead, the result of sin. For example, a phlegmatic (*who is typically quite easy going and cooperative*) may become angry, argumentative, and mean-spirited as a result of a habit of drinking to excess. Or, a sanguine (*who is naturally very open and friendly*) may become deceitful and secretive if he is trying to hide an adulterous affair.

It is of utmost importance that we understand our temperaments and the inclinations our personalities develop, and in so doing, be in a position to moderate the behavioural impacts that we, in moderation, practice as righteous. Temperance is the virtue by which a person habitually controls the urges or desires that will pull him away from the good of reason; there is also need for a judgment (*of prudence*) as whether a desire should be satisfied here and now or not. This is the thinking side of the virtue. How much a passion/emotion/urge should be satisfied depends on many circumstances, and it requires a judgment or reason to determine it. Most fundamentally, a person who is dominated by passions and urges will not be able to devote himself to higher goods of God, family, friends and the common good.

Yet God never abandons anyone. He provides all the means necessary for each person's salvation, yet, through faith we believe that God allows evil only in order to draw from it a greater good. "*Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more*" (Romans. 5:20).

It is not the will of a person that makes a decision but the person acting by means of his will. And since the person is the first cause of his acts, it is meaningless to ask what the cause of the first cause is. Just as no outside force caused God to create the world, so no outside force causes people to choose certain actions. For

man is created in God's image, which includes the possession of free will and Adam's ability to will what is good was lost by the fall. From that time on man could not choose to will any spiritual good accompanying salvation. Hence, Christ, by His death, made salvation possible for all men; that forgiveness is there waiting for men to receive; that the Holy Spirit may gently urge men to change, but cannot interfere with man's free will.

Many scriptures talk about God's strong arm in protecting his children: "*No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand*" (John 10:29); "*Who by God's power are being guarded*" (I Peter 1:5); "*him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory*" (Jude 24); *nothing ...will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:39). These and other verses assure God's children of the security of their eternal condition.

In the first few centuries after Christianity began, early Christians were divided about the extent of Adam's fall in the Garden. Most believed that there was some extent of depravity inherited from Adam, suggesting that we inherit a sickness and inclination, but this did not extend to a state of total depravity. In the early fifth century a man named Pelagius taught that Adam's sin had no hereditary effect whatsoever on his children, and that there is not even an inclination toward depravity in a person until he sinned personally. This extreme view of "*lack of depravity*" was countered by an equally extreme pendulum swing of Augustine who proclaimed that man was totally depraved from birth and inherited all of Adam's guilt.

The Bible teaches that Adam was created in the image of God (*Gen. 1:26*) with true knowledge, righteousness and holiness (*Gen. 1:31; Ecc. 7:29; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24*). Adam's nature was

intrinsically good and he had the spiritual and ethical ability to perfectly obey anything that God required of him. After God created Adam He made a covenant or verbal agreement with him. God promised Adam that if he rendered a perfect and personal obedience to God he would never die (*This promise is clearly implied by Gen. 2:17; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 5:12-20; 10:5*). If Adam at any time violated God's law by eating the fruit from the forbidden tree he would certainly die (*Gen. 2:17*). Genesis chapter 3 records Adam's failure to obey God. Adam sinned in eating the forbidden fruit (*Rom. 5:12ff*); fell from his original righteousness; lost his communion with God; was cast out of paradise; and became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

The Bible teaches that Adam's sin not only had very negative spiritual consequences for himself, but also for the whole human race (*everyone descending from Adam by ordinary generation*). The teaching that mankind is guilty of sin in Adam and corrupted in nature because of Adam's sin is commonly referred to as original sin. This teaching is part of the faith of every branch of Christendom. The disagreements on this teaching are mostly about the nature and extent of man's corruption.

God's Word says that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to all men (*To impute Adam's sin means that God reckons it to, or lays it to one's account*). The teaching that "*in Adam's fall we sinned all*" is explicitly taught by Paul in Romans 5:12, 15-19: "*Through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned [in Adam's transgression]by the one man's offense many died....judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation....by the one man's offense death reigned through the one....through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in*

condemnation....by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Tragically, as a result of Adam's sin all men also inherited Adam's moral corruption. The pollution or inner corruption of sin passes from Adam to his posterity by ordinary generation. That our first parents are now not only really guilty before God but also morally corrupt throughout their entire being is also immediately evident in the fact that their first transgression is immediately followed by a series of transgressions. It is now their nature to act in accordance with their new sinful condition. We see Adam and then Eve refusing to acknowledge openly their wilful act of disobedience and to take the blame for it. Adam blames his wife and, indirectly, God himself for his situation. Eve then blames the serpent.

All men naturally born of Adam's seed come into this world spiritually dead, with an innate hatred and hostility toward God, with a depraved soul that loves sin and cannot cease from it, with ethical pollution that extends to every aspect of his nature. "*The imagination of a man's heart is evil from his youth*" (Genesis. 8:21). Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5). "*The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born speaking lies*" (Psalms. 58:3). "*For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin*" (Eccl. 7:20). "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh*" (John. 3:6). "*We were by nature children of wrath*" (Ephesians 2:3; see 1 Kings. 8:46; Isaiah. 53:6; 64:6; Psalms 130:3; 143:2; Romans 3:19, 22, 23; Galatians 3:22; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8, 10; 5:19).

Hitherto, several theological paradoxes have been developed, some see God's sovereignty over all things and man's ability to make free choices to be a paradox which cannot be explained, only accepted and lived-with. They conclude that either God is

sovereign or man is free, but not both. Man's will may be called a *free will*, not in relation to that which is above him, that is to say, to God; but with respect to that which is below, that is, to the things of the earth. As regards my property, my fields, my house, my farm, I can act, do, and manage freely. But in the things of salvation, man is a captive; he is subjected to the will of God, or rather of the devil.

If we still have a total inability to do any spiritual good in God's sight, then do we still have any freedom of choice? Certainly, those who are outside of Christ do still make voluntary choices - that is, they decide what they want to do, then they do it. In this sense there is still a kind of *freedom* in the choices that people make. Yet because of their inability to do good and to escape from their fundamental rebellion against God and their fundamental preference for sin, unbelievers do not have freedom in the most important sense of freedom (that is, the freedom to do right, and to do what is pleasing to God).

The first great controversy over the doctrine of original sin and its relationship to how God's grace operates was the Pelagian controversy. The Pelagian movement was named after Pelagius (A.D. 360-420) a British layman who advocated asceticism. Pelagius had become a teacher of asceticism in Rome (c. 400) and believed that the church's view of original sin, which at that time was dominated by Augustine, denied human responsibility and thus discouraged holiness. Pelagius was the first theologian to set forth the principle "*that man must have plenary ability to do and to be whatever can be righteously required of him....the intimate conviction that man can be responsible for nothing which is not in their power, led, in the first place, to the Pelagian doctrine of the freedom of the will.*" The philosophical presupposition set forth by Pelagius regarding freedom of the will and human responsibility

completely and consistently dominated his whole theological system.

In the attempt to preserve his concept of human responsibility Pelagius and his followers taught the following: (1) Adam's sin only brought injury to himself and no one else. (2) There is no such thing as original sin, or inherent hereditary moral corruption. (3) Everyone born after Adam is the same as Adam was before the fall. (4) Adam's sin was only a bad example to his posterity and nothing more. (5) Since all men are born without the contamination of original sin and moral depravity, everyone has the full ability to do everything that God requires and many men have lived without sin. Pelagius and his followers taught that men could be saved without the gospel by keeping the law. "*The only difference is that under the light of the Gospel, the perfect obedience is rendered easy.*" (6) Adam in a state of innocence was mortal and would have died whether he sinned or not. Therefore, the fact that all men grow old, and die, has nothing to do with the fall. (7) The grace of God refers not to unmerited favour to undeserving sinners but simply to the natural endowments of men which are gifts from God. "*Grace merely enables us to do more easily what we could still do without it, albeit with greater difficulty.*"

The teachings of Pelagius and his followers were condemned at the council of Carthage (A. D. 418) and again at the Council of Ephesus (A. D. 431). While Pelagianism was a dangerous heresy because it denied the grace of God and the gospel, it nevertheless was used by God to greatly sharpen the early church's understanding of original sin and the nature of saving grace. The controversy raised the question that is still with us today. Are sinners saved because of their own will, strength or exertion or are they saved solely by God's grace, solely by what God does?

Although the modern evangelical will recognize the obvious, gross deficiencies of the Pelagian system, nevertheless the central presupposition underlying Pelagianism lives on. That is the philosophical idea that responsibility presupposes human ability.

After Pelagianism was defeated with the help of great theologians such as Augustine (A. D. 354-430), bishop of Hippo, it went underground and re-emerged in a milder, more palatable form. That the original sin and corruption of Adam did pass on to his posterity causing disease, suffering, mortality and a propensity toward evil; therefore, man needs divine assistance if he is to do anything spiritually good. But contrary to the pure grace system of Augustine they held: “**(1)** *That the beginning of salvation is with man. Man begins to seek God, and then God aids him.* **(2)** *That this incipient turning of the soul towards God is something good, and in one sense meritorious.* **(3)** *That the soul, in virtue of its liberty of will or ability for good, cooperates with the grace of God in regeneration.*”

Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to naturally believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free, it is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not (*indeed he cannot*) choose good over evil in the spiritual realm.

In order to deal with the question of “*free will*” we need to carefully define two terms. First, what do we mean when we speak of the human will? Second, how do we define the freedom that is attributed to this will? These questions are important because: (a) *Many people assume that the will is some entity that is independent of the human heart;* (b) *The Augustinian or Calvinistic position is almost always misrepresented by Arminians as holding that men are mere robots.* We will see that the Bible

upholds the validity and freedom of man's decisions as secondary agents; yet, also teaches that every person's choices are determined by the heart.

The Armenian view is that; although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but does so in such a manner as not to interfere with man's freedom. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and perish. The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.

Although there are many different definitions of the term will, this term in the context of the debate over free choice or determination refers to volition or a choice of the mind. When people discuss the soul or heart of man they often will speak of different aspects of the soul such as the intellect, the emotions and the will. Indeed, it is proper to think of the will as a function or part of the human mind. Therefore, as we consider the subject of *free will* we must not separate the will from the intellect or mind as if it has some independent power. The debate over free will cannot be settled unless we understand that the will always decides in accordance with the mind or, as Scripture puts it, the inclinations of the heart (*Proverbs. 4:23; Luke . 6:45; Mathew. 7:17, 21*).

For example, when a man decides to go to the neighbourhood kiosk to get chapatti he exercises his will. This act of the will, however, did not occur spontaneously or in a vacuum. Before the act of the will the mind received hunger pangs from the stomach; the mind thought about the food options available; the mind decided what food it preferred (*this choice was based in part on culture, habit, availability and ease of preparation*) and this choice terminated with an act of the will. The will had a prior reason, argument and motivation to get the chapatti. Similarly, a lion in Kenya is free to eat grass when it is hungry. But it never does so, because lions by nature are carnivorous. Their minds crave meat. A water buffalo is also free to eat whatever it desires. But it only chooses grass because that's the buffalo's nature.

Now that we have an understanding of the will (*that the human will is not an independent force but rather always follows the mind*) we can begin to understand human freedom. On the one hand we can in accordance with Scripture and experience affirm that man is truly a free agent. As beings which are created in the image of God with rationality and intelligence men are valid secondary agents that are free to make choices. Men are not puppets, robots or impersonal machines. Men have the ability to observe, evaluate, deliberate in the mind and then choose between a, b, c, or d. Men are not coerced by anything outside of themselves to choose something they do not want to choose. If this is a person's definition of *freewill*, then we can agree and say that people have freewill. Unfortunately, this definition is not what the proponents of "*free will*" have in mind.

In the previous chapters, we discussed temperance; our natural tendencies as given by God, but mostly, marked by the memory of the original sin. Hence, because we possess certain temperament

qualities, we don't have viable excuse of neglecting reason and choosing passion.

The will of man always acts in accordance with his sinful nature. Jesus says, “*A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks*” (Luke. 6:45). A man's outward life is a reflection of what is in his heart. Men speak and do evil deeds because they are by nature evil. Thus, Solomon warns believers, “*Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life*” (Proverbs 4:23). “*For from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders...*” (Mark. 7:21).

Christ says that the source of sinful thoughts and acts is the heart, not the will. The will carries out the desires, inclinations or habits of the heart. Thus, in the Sermon on the Mount our Lord teaches that “*a bad tree bears bad fruit*” (Mathew. 7:7). “Heart” in the Bible refers to the innermost core of man's being. It includes the whole human nature (*the mind, will, intellect, emotions*). So, although man is at liberty to choose whatever he desires, since his heart is evil, he will only choose between greater and lesser evil. Man is a free agent but he cannot originate the love of God in his heart. His will is free in the sense that it is not controlled by any force outside of himself. As the bird with a broken wing is free to fly but incapable; in the same way the natural man has been made free to come to God but is not able. How can he repent of his sin when he loves it? How can he come to God when he hates Him? This is the inability of the will under which man labours.

Because the Bible describes fallen man's heart as thoroughly wicked and corrupt theologians refer to man as totally depraved.

This doctrine does not mean that man is as wicked as he could be. Obviously, there are some men that are wicked than others.

With Adam's disobedience came the fulfilment of God's promise of death, as we read in the scriptures, "*Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*" (Genesis 2:15-16).

The fact that man is inherently corrupt or totally depraved explains why the Bible teaches that spiritual goodness can only be founded upon faith in the triune God of Scripture. The author of Hebrews says that "*without faith it is impossible to please Him*" (11:6). Paul says, "*Whatever is not from faith is sin*" (Romans 14:23). Unbelievers cannot anything that is well pleasing to God simply because they do not have faith in God or His Word. They continually suppress the truth about God in order to serve their own sinful lusts (Romans 1:18-32). Because everything the unbeliever does is rooted in their wicked heart and actuated by corrupt principles Solomon can say that even "*the ploughing of the wicked is sin*" (Proverbs. 21:4).

True faith in Christ, which issues forth from a regenerate heart, is the foundation of genuine virtue. An act which is outwardly good, but done in the service of self and Satan cannot please God. "*The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God*" (Romans 8:7-8).

A biblical understanding of man's state after the fall ought to cure us of the sinful and somewhat blasphemous notion that a thrice

holy God has associated Himself with sinful depraved man as only a minor partial cause of a sinner's salvation. The fact that the natural man is a spiritual corpse without any ability to seek God or take even one step toward Jesus means: that regeneration must precede and not follow saving faith; that God works directly upon the human soul in salvation; that Christ is not passively waiting, but is actively saving His people. An understanding of the fall leads to the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God alone. Salvation is totally a work of God. Man does not have the ability to contribute anything to his own salvation; even faith and repentance are gifts from above (Eph. 2:8; Phil. 2:13; Ac. 5:31, 11:18). Therefore, let us bow the knee to Christ and give our precious Redeemer all the glory for our salvation.

If a person defines "free will" as an unsaved man's autonomous ability to choose Christ, then we must ask a few simple questions. Is choosing the Saviour a good thing or a bad thing? Obviously, it is a good thing. Does choosing Jesus please the Father? Of course it does. If the unregenerate human will is capable of choosing God's Son and this choosing pleases God, then how are we to interpret Paul's explicit statement that unbelievers cannot do anything that pleases God? "*For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit; for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God*" (Romans 8:5-8).

Paul teaches that people who are unregenerate live according to the flesh (*that is, their sinful depraved human nature*). Further, their minds by nature are focused on the things of the flesh. Why is this so? Because by nature, the carnal or unregenerate mind

hates God and will always take a position of hostility toward the Holy Trinity. Mankind apart from Christ is enslaved to the god of darkness and lives, breathes and thinks in terms of the great satanic lie that sin and idolatry are true freedom. “*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them*” (2 Corinthians. 4:3-4). “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do....When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe Me*” (John. 8:44, 45).

Biblical repentance involves a change of mind regarding sin, Christ and the gospel. It involves a turning from a sinful, selfish lifestyle to the true and living God; knowing that our fallen human nature has residuals of the image of God and is also inclined away from Him. This, however, does not mean that we are incapable of doing the right things, nor does it mean that we cannot believe His message. Man is rightly considered to be dead in sin, and by nature the child of wrath, but he still retains the image of God in his being. That image seems to carry with it an ability to believe the gospel (*appropriate God's grace channelled through the message of the cross*) and, by faith alone, obtain eternal life. While man is unwilling to come to God and earn His favour (Jeremiah 17:9–10); he can approach Him by faith. Man is not saved by his good motives; desire to glorify God, or any other meritorious deed. He is saved when he comprehends the consequences of his desperate fallen condition and, perhaps even selfishly and fearfully, believes in Christ alone as his only hope of eternal life.

CHAPTER FOUR

codependency

Man was created holy, without sin and with a faculty to control his appetites as a request of obedience by God. Humanity as represented by Adam and Eve, was not supposed to eat from the fruit of knowledge; hence the single temperance that reflected God's own image became corrupted by the serpent. In the chapter two, we discussed the four different temperaments that emerged as a result of a corrupted heart thereby engaging man to act in different pronouncements, perhaps habitually and ultimately as personalities.

As a consequence to sin, man became dysfunctional; for he was separated from God and this was to be his normal pattern of life. Hence, the divergent nature of temperance which are neither good nor bad but a system of relations that only has respective strengths and weaknesses. Importantly, we can't use our categorization in the temperament scale to excuse for our behaviour of sin. God has created us with the ability to choose good; for that is His image.

Adam and Eve were already in the image of God even before being deceived by the serpent into disorder; thus we can only regain that order by being more obedient to God, more than Adam and Eve were. Jesus therefore bridges the existing gap between mankind and God by owning the original mistake, the sin from deception, thereby bringing tranquillity.

Identifying our dark personalities, such as codependency, enables us to deal with them and develop a plan related to their ineffectiveness; noting that our dysfunctions are normal and can't be avoided because they are part of our fallen nature. Dark-sides only develop when we respond negatively to our dysfunctionalities and this may take the form of blame, victimization, defeatism, denial, self-deception, rationalization or justifications.

As emphasized in relation to depravity of the will in chapter three, codependency is a personality trait to which our dysfunction is that of becoming an object of someone who is dealing with control issues to the extent that my mental attention is focused on pleasing you, solving your problems and not mine. Am not aware of how I feel but how you feel; thus will put my values aside in order to connect with you. This behaviour develops into an addiction to which we must always seek approval of others; an addiction towards being a pleasing personality to others. To this extent, some scholars have seen it as a disease thereby defining it as a pattern of painful dependence on compulsive behaviours and on approval from others in an attempt to find *safety, self-worth, and identity*. In essence, codependency is not a valid diagnosis at all, but rather becomes a description of highly diverse symptoms.

However, in as much as seeking peoples approval if well moderated is virtuous, for without it we become narcissistic (*people who only love themselves*); we must always be reminded that integrity is more important than popularity. Proverbs 29:25 warns against such behaviour of foolishness, to which we are addicted to pleasing others. Nevertheless, the fear of sharing your faith is a sign that you are a people pleaser to which we end up missing on the gifts God gave us.

All in all, using the Christian doctrine, the dysfunctions caused by accepting codependency have consequences, and to this, we can depict five:

1. It causes us to miss on God's purpose (*1 Thessalonians 2:4*)
2. It keeps us from growing in faith because we allow people to become bigger than God (*John 5:44*)
3. It leads us to sin because in the long run, we end up giving up to peer pressure (*Exodus 23:2*)

4. It causes hypocrisy in our lives for we become like chameleons adapting to our environments. We wear masks hence faking reality while hiding our true selves (*Luke 16: 15a*)
5. It silences our ability to share the simple truths of how Jesus has changed our lives (*John 7:12 – 13, John 12: 42 – 43*).

We must always remind ourselves of the numerous people praying to God for help, and how many of such prayers remain unanswered; yet, even God Himself does not seek to please everyone, we sometimes lament for delayed or unanswered prayers. But if it is any dependency, we must only depend on God.

Additionally, what seems important now is simply temporary. Things that we give priority to in the now will cease to be important a few months away (*1 John 2:17*) and in that regard, we only have to please God. The simplicity of life is living for only one audience, and that is God; being reminded that happiness is a choice to which we need not to be approved by others (*John 5:41*).

We live our lives trying to make others happy, yet we don't know who the others are. To understand others, we must first know ourselves in God because God loves everyone unconditionally; and only actions pleasing in honour of God will be best dimension of happiness to others. Only God can give us our self-worth, not other people. Nobody was designed to complete you.

Our compulsion for perfection is met in our relationship with God, yet sin is never private; for it will always affect everyone else. Consider the story of David having an affair with Bathsheba, it resulted to Uriah's death, the wrath of God was kindled and restoration had to be initiated, hence fasting and forgiveness.

The historical literature about codependency presents a complex and interconnected range of terms, assumptions and models associated with the construct. It is contended that the construct has been interpreted variously over time, possibly reflecting a set of values and meanings carried by the communities operating in these different periods. This has created a complex historical background, which comprises a range of historical moments.

Early interpretations of codependency began to appear in the 1940's in the *United States of America* (USA) and were associated with behaviours presented by wives of alcoholics. It appears that some of these initial identifications might have been influenced by the early concepts presented by Karen Horney, a neo-Freudian psychoanalyst prominent in America around the 1940's. Moving on from traditional Freudian psychoanalytical views on sexuality, Horney focused much of her work on psychosocial issues concerning women. In her writings, Horney suggested the notion of a woman's *morbid dependence*, described by her as a *drive for total surrender*, the 'longing to find unity through merging with a partner' and the *drive to lose oneself*. Horney characterised these behaviours as *parasitical, symbiotic relationships*, likely encouraged by traditional societal values featuring at the time.

These early formulations of codependency influenced some health professionals who adopted the term in their clinical practice. Although this trend of thinking had a *reductionist nature*, suggesting a victim-blaming aspect, characterizing the construct within a conceptual framework of behaviours observed mostly in women, it nonetheless influenced the early understandings of codependency. It is possible that these initial formulations influenced the popularisation of the construct, subjecting it to wider exposure to members of the public, substance users and health professionals at the time.

Early theorists suggested that individuals with codependency were likely to experience mental health problems such as depression, compulsive behaviours, stress-related disorders and personality disorders. As a result of such assumptions, researchers have sought to identify the psychological correlates of codependency, and to understand its relationship with other psychological problems.

Codependents can be addicted to relationships in the same way alcoholics use alcohol to get a “fix” or “high”. They feel they have no meaning or self-worth in and of themselves, and are worthwhile only in relation to someone else; and may respond only to external cues, not to internal feelings or perceptions. Each person in a codependent relationship often cannot survive without the other. Neither person functions independently.

The codependent spouse (*often involved with a substance abuser*) finds security in this type of relationship even though it is unhealthy.

Codependents may not recognize themselves as separate people with separate emotions and ideas. They are so externally oriented that they *take on* other people’s emotions, such as anger, as their own and do not recognize that this is happening. Codependents do not know where they “*end*” and others “*begin*.”

Codependents have low self-esteem and are externally oriented. As a result, they often become caretakers of others (*such as substance abusers*) and neglect themselves. The person being cared for is not allowed to take care of himself or meet the needs of the codependent.

The codependent becomes so preoccupied in fulfilling the expectations of others that they lose touch with their own feelings. They allow themselves to experience only acceptable feelings, such as compassion, and to ignore negative feelings such as anger. In a chemically-dependent/dysfunctional family, feelings often become *frozen* or totally ignored because the reality of the situation becomes too painful. The concept of self is conceptualised as a structure within the mind with instinctual energy and temporal continuity.

The psychoanalytical perspective of the *false and true self* add further explanations to participants' frustrations with their inauthentic and negative sense of self and their ongoing pursuit for a better and more authentic sense of self-definition. A defensive organization of self, termed the *false self*, emerges when the person did not experience his/her needs validated in childhood. A good parent accepts the initial total dependency of the child, and as the child develops the parent supports their growing autonomy and independency.

Virtually everyone has had dysfunctional family experiences; hence it can be postulated that different people would develop varying degrees of such behaviour depending on the effect that these experiences have had on them; the degree to which the resultant codependent behaviour was reinforced, and the strength of their denial system. Further, the degree to which codependency has had a negative influence on one's life would determine whether it is dysfunctional for a particular person.

In dysfunctional families it is natural for family members to care for and be affected by the member who has a substance abuse or serious behaviour problem. As this member's problems become more serious and unresolved, the family members become more

affected and react intensely. This is a reactionary process in which the family members/involved people see the substance abuser or unhealthy member destroying himself. As a result, they become compulsively “*dependent*” on similar destructive behaviour patterns of their own, such as work addiction, eating disorders, or unhealthy relationships with one person or many people.

Originally, the term codependent was applied only to families of alcoholics. Eventually, the term expanded to include families with someone dependent on any kind of drug. Today, the word is often used to describe anyone in a significant relationship (*or relationships*) with a person who exhibits *any kind of dependency*. Being in relationship with this type of person often results in codependency, which involves an imbalanced sense of responsibility to rescue, fix and help this person. Codependents have a tendency to over-react to things outside themselves, and under-react to things inside themselves.

The over-reaction to things outside is the addictive aspect of codependency. He can help others in crisis, fix the problems of others, focus on all the negative and hurtful things others do to him or her, and blame others for their own problems. These are all ways of avoiding internal reality and pain.

The under-reaction to things inside is the denial aspect of this delinquency. He avoids feelings of pain, joy, dreams, ideas, hopes, desires, preferences, plans and goals. These are the things that make a person who they are! They are the person’s identity. Thus, codependency becomes a denial of the self.

Codependency occurs when a person’s God-given needs for love and security have been blocked in a relationship with a dysfunctional person, resulting in a lack of objectivity, a warped

sense of responsibility, being controlled and controlling others, hurt and anger guilt and loneliness. This often begins in childhood. It is a compulsion to control and rescue others by fixing their problems; this affects the codependent person's every relationship and desire. So, while codependency may start out as a problem in only one or a few relationships, it often becomes generalized and the codependent person responds in a codependent manner to everyone in his or her life, with both healthy and unhealthy people. Some characteristics of codependent include:

- ✓ Bondage to pleasing others
- ✓ Being controlled by someone and trying to control him or her
- ✓ Being dependent on making others happy
- ✓ Taking the responsibility to make sure others are happy, successful and feel good
- ✓ Feeling guilty when you don't do everything just right all the time
- ✓ Trying to make a sick person well, but ending up sick yourself

Codependents cannot view failure as an option. They have to be right. There are two extremes: some perfect their lives and some become immobilized. The obsessive-compulsive person wants their life in perfect order. Although good things can be accomplished, the satisfaction does not last. It has to be done over and over again. When this perfection cannot be attained, the codependent will become immobilized and feel like a terrible failure. The immobilized person feels overwhelmed by the "need" to be perfect. He or she will give up and quit trying. Hitherto, the codependent manipulates others usually by the same tactics used on him. Often, passive-aggressive tactics are used: praise, anger, withdrawal, hurt, humour or sarcasm can all be means of gaining control over others.

The codependent sets himself or herself up for hurt due to an inability to say no and set boundaries. Anger is the reaction toward the source of the hurt. Often, the codependent will be uncomfortable expressing anger, thus setting himself or herself up for more hurt. His or her life becomes a life of “*I have to*” rather than “*I want to*.”

Recovery from codependency can be achieved through a successful combination of *professional treatment* and *self-care*. In seeking professional treatment, codependent must be careful to choose a therapist who recognizes that the codependent is in need of therapy for his own codependent problems, not only in relation to other family members who may have substance abuse or behaviour problems. There are four essential stages a codependent experiences in recovery. These closely parallel the recovery stages of a substance abuser.

- **Denial Stage:** the codependent denies that a substance abuse or serious behavioural problem exists in the family. Consequently, the codependent denies that he is experiencing any individual problems.
- **Acceptance Stage:** the codependent begins to acknowledge his own unhealthy behaviour patterns and take responsibility for them. He accepts the fact that he is *codependent* and that his life has become unmanageable.
- **Core Issues Stage:** the codependent accepts that he is unable to control the behaviour of others and that successful relationships allow each person in the relationship to be independent.
- **Reintegration Stage:** codependent learns to believe that they are worthwhile in themselves and that being worthy is not something that must be “*earned*” through particular behaviour patterns or relationships with others.

In addition to seeking professional treatment and working through the recovery stages with a trained therapist, codependent can take additional self-care steps to aid his recovery:

- *Detachment.* Codependents can learn to separate themselves from unhealthy relationships with others in order to work on their own recovery.
- *Removing the Victim Image.* Codependents acknowledge that they are not victims and have the power to create positive change.
- *Independence.* The codependent learns to trust himself and realize that he can care for himself without help from others.
- *Living Your Own Life.* Codependents begin to focus on themselves and their own goals instead of focusing exclusively on others.
- *Accepting Reality.* The codependent acknowledges and accepts the problems in his life in order to begin solving them.

To recover and become healthy, the codependent person must shift from an external focus (*on other people, relationships, work, food, or power*) to an internal focus (*on his own feelings, needs, goals, and desires*). The codependent learns that healthy behaviour and *self-fulfillment* can be achieved by knowing, accepting, and trusting in himself as an independent person, and not by becoming dependent on something or someone else.

CHAPTER FIVE

wellness in christ

Unhealthy boundaries cause emotional pain that can lead to dependency, depression, anxiety, and even stress-induced physical illness. A lack of boundaries is like leaving the door to your home unlocked: anyone, including unwelcome guests, can enter at will. On the other hand, having too rigid boundaries can lead to isolation, like living in a locked-up castle surrounded by a mote. No one can get in, and you can't get out.

Boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify for themselves what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around them and how they will respond when someone steps outside those limits. Such limits would be easy to set and maintain, if it weren't for all these people who make it difficult for us. They step into our way and overthrow everything we had so carefully planned. They catch us off-guard in our most vulnerable moments and just make it impossible for us to live the balanced life that we all so much desire. They even get into our way when it comes to our Christian walk. Life would just be so much easier without them.

We like to think our *wellness* problems are caused by others. We like to put the blame on somebody else instead of admitting that our worst enemy is us. Although we hate to admit it, we are the ones who break the limits. We are the ones who do not do what is right but instead do what we know to be bad. As Paul puts it in Romans 7:18-19, 21: *I know that nothing good lives in me. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.*

To achieve Christian wellness, we have to set boundaries but must always be reminded that we are not responsible for the other person's reaction to the boundaries we are setting. We are only

responsible for communicating our boundary decisions in a respectful manner. If it upset them, we must remember it is their problem to own. Some people, especially those accustomed to controlling, abusing, or manipulating, might put us in a test. Plan on it, expect it, but remain firm. Remember, your behaviour must match the boundaries you are setting. You cannot successfully establish a clear boundary if you send mixed messages by apologizing.

On the contrary, ever since the fall, people have had a tendency to withdraw from relationships when they were in trouble (Genesis 3:8), although this is the time when they need other people most. Because we feel insecure, ashamed of our thoughts or actions, or are too proud to seek help, we turn inward instead of outward. And this is what really makes it a problem. Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 says *two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.*

When we feel that we have lost control over ourselves, we often retreat to work out the problem. We do everything possible to get back under control and feel better. But most of our attempts fail quickly and we feel even more depressed and helpless than before. We retreat further from others because of fear to be looked down upon as weak. Yet, the only real solution is to bring our spiritual and emotional problems out of ourselves to the body of Christ. The trouble is that nothing feels more frightening and unwise and that we won't take that risk unless we feel very secure.

James 5:16 recommends *to confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. Grace and healing must come from the outside.* Just as the branch withers apart from

the vine (*John 15:4–6*); so will we wither emotionally and spiritually without bonding to God and his people. Whatever our boundary problem is – *food, substances, money, time, task completion, our tongue or sexuality* – we can't solve it in a vacuum. If we could, we would have solved it a long time ago. But the more we isolate ourselves, the bigger our problems will become.

We need deep relationships with fellow Christians (*not just our own spouse!*) who help us work through our problems and lift us up again if we fail. That is why we are members of a local church – to build such relationships with at least one or two other Christians nearby. The sad truth is, however, that most people with self-boundary conflicts do not have these deep relationships. They are not rooted in God's love that we so desperately need. *And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.* (*Ephesians 3:17b–18*). So what they have to learn first is to connect to other people and open up to them. This is not easy: finding the right people, group, or church is already hard enough – but admitting that you need their help may be even more difficult.

The purpose of having boundaries is to protect and take care of ourselves. We need to be able to tell other people when they are acting in ways that are not acceptable to us. A first step is starting to know that we have a right to protect and defend ourselves; that we have not only the right, but also a duty to take responsibilities for how we allow others to treat us.

It is important to state our feelings out loud and to precede the feeling with "I feel." (*When we say "I am angry, I'm hurt, etc."* we are stating that the feeling is who we are. *Emotions do not define*

us; they are a form of internal communication that helps us to understand ourselves. They are a vital part of our being - as a component of the whole.) This is what we would refer to as *owning the feeling*; and by stating the feeling out loud, we are affirming that we have a right to such feelings. We are affirming it to ourselves - and taking responsibility for owning ourselves and our reality. This becomes the inception point of wellness, perhaps the ideal of *wellbeing* that has been defined as a contented state of being happy, healthy and prosperous.

The term *well-being* encompasses all the ways in which people experience and evaluate their lives positively. What exactly it means to experience life positively can be understood in myriad ways. Some equate well-being with happiness, but this can sometimes conjure up images of an immensely joyful, cheerful person that many do not identify with. As a result, some prefer to view well-being as a prolonged state of contentment. For others still, well-being is simply about wellness--as in having good physical and mental health. None of these views is incorrect; but each perspective is incomplete in itself. A great challenge for the science of well-being has been to define and measure this broad, encompassing construct. An important development in this field over the past few decades is the recognition and growing acceptance that well-being consists of many aspects--that it cannot be fully represented by any one measure. A person who is depressed cannot be said to be well; however, to equate well-being with an absence of depression misses much of what people strive for when they seek to enhance and preserve their well-being. Wellbeing encompasses a lot of aspects of human life. Today there is still an on-going discussion between various strains of this concept: wellbeing, welfare, satisfaction with life, a happy life, etc.

The science of happiness is a developing field which attempts to measure the health and emotional well-being of populations by reliable social survey techniques. One strand of research suggests that religious practice (*believing and belonging*) are positively associated with well-being measures. Clearly, hope and a sense of purpose under the providence of God are likely to be especially conducive to eudemonic well-being. These are then reinforced among church goers by the regular repetition of liturgical rituals such as collective hymn singing, prayer, and Eucharist, and by the everyday care and support derived from being in *real community with others, in all their awkwardness.*

The spiritual component of wellbeing is an existential component experienced by each person - healthy or unwell. Spiritual health defines the management strategy of personal life which indicates the way to experience effectively different aspects of human existence, for example how to behave in the face of stressful situations, illness or death. Spiritual health becomes that high level of faith, hope and commitment which is caused by a clearly defined worldview or a system of faith providing with the meaning of life and leading a person towards self-fulfilment through a firm adherence to moral values and integrating the relation with oneself, others and God. To this end, spiritual wellbeing is a constant and dynamic self-reflection of one's spiritual health and maturity.

Dignity of human personality and importance of spiritual health are emphasised by Christian anthropology. Anthropological attitude is essential in the concept of wellbeing because only when we understand what a person is, can consider what makes the foundation of human wellbeing. We must accept the fact that Christian teachings, which praised the man as *Imago Dei* encompassing in his nature the spiritual and material systems, laid

the basic foundation for the concepts of human dignity and spirituality in the Western culture. The man possesses an exceptional place in the whole creation; and the concept of “spirit” is related in this teaching to the basis of human life.

From the perspective of wellbeing, theology states that all creation is made good although it is not yet perfect and therefore it is driven by God towards final perfection. Christianity reveals the meaning of existence, purpose and the real vocation of the man as God’s creation. The spiritual human nature indicates the supernatural human vocation. That man was created to serve God in love, to follow a path of personal perfection and to sanctify himself while resembling Christ, to mature for eternity while carrying out the divine plan of redemption and thereby reach completeness in God. According to Christian anthropology, human peace and completeness is possible only in unity with God and, therefore, spiritual health can be expressed as the quality of the relation with God. An authentic human perfection and development requires nurturing of spiritual life, faith in God and community with the body of Christ; overstepping of egoism, justice and peace. Holistic human development is possible only when spiritual human nature is developed in relation with God.

Truths of Christian faith provide the faithful with answers to essential questions about the construction of the world, the human place in it, the meaning of existence and also indicate how to seek for the fullness of being, i.e. wellbeing. A broken transcendental relation can be restored through repentance and conversion; this spiritual resurrection frees people, heals them and recreates the divine image within them. At the same time self-confidence and human dignity are regained while the real identity is rediscovered.

A variety of factors influence the quality of human life. Nowadays human welfare is frequently perceived as a political and economic ideal which not only satisfies the basic societal needs, but also ensures the desired welfare: economic prosperity, social security, sufficient healthcare and so on. However, preservation of unimpaired dignity of human self in this context requires attention to the dimension of spiritual wellbeing.

From a Christian perspective, spiritual health is determined by the quality of personal relation with God and the subsequent moral responsibility. The Creator endowed the human being with a spiritual principle which constitutes an integral part of personal wellbeing. Meaningful worldview and perception of the purpose of life both from the present day and eschatological perspectives play an important role in spiritual human health. This ensures the development of positive internal relationship with oneself, the others and God, which provides for a restitution of sin-destructed harmony as an essential prerequisite for spiritual wellbeing.

Churches often impart emotional skills to their members and thus enhance and maintain their well-being. Possible ways in which this may be achieved are for members to have increased access to channels of emotional disclosure and opportunities to share their burdens. This enables an accountability system of doctrinal boundaries that eventually guide our living as we become healthy both in spirit and physical wellness.



Mr. Boaz Adhengo is President to Creative Arts Society of Kenya, a leadership coach, business for arts consultant and a cultural policy strategist. Having published twenty books, he manages the Adhengo Boaz & Associates consulting group and is co-founder of the Buruburu Basketball Ministry, Inc.

He has been recently ordained as a Life Coach Minister by the Christian Leaders Ministries, Michigan, U.S.A.

