

# Understanding and Defending the Reasons of our Faith in a World Gone Mad

## A case study:

### Atheistic Impact on Psychology and the Modern Quest for Happiness

#### 1. Shaping ideas of modern psychological thought:

- a. Nature vs. Nurture
- b. An outside-in world to an inside-out world (an agrarian world to a technologized world).  
*Do we live in a world of order, structure, purpose, and meaning that is transcendent and to which we must conform? Or do we determine our own purpose and meaning and strive to conform the world's structure to us?*
- c. Authenticity and the return to the natural state.
  - i. Religion enslaves people by imposing external standards.
  - ii. The family corrupts people by conforming children to codes and traditions.
- d. Expressive Individualism  
*The quest to find our own way of realizing our personal humanity and to give expression to our authentic selves without restriction or suppression from outside "authorities".*
- e. Therapy and the quest for happiness:  
*"At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under compulsion of the State."  
O'Connor, Kennedy, Souter, "Planned Parenthood vs. Casey"*  
  
*"The difference between killing disabled and normal infants lies not in any supposed right to life that the latter has and the former lacks, but in other considerations about killing.  
Most obviously there is the difference that often exists in the attitudes of the parents.  
The birth of a child is usually a happy event for the parents...  
So one important reason why it is normally a terrible thing to kill an infant is the effect the killing will have on its parents. It is different when the infant is born with a serious disability.  
Birth abnormalities vary, of course. Some are trivial and have little effect on the child or its parents, but others turn the normally joyful event of birth into a threat to the happiness of the parents and any other children they may have." Peter Singer*

## 2. A naturalistic/materialistic world and the disease model of mental health.

### a. What is “mental health”?

Mental health refers to the status of a person’s “emotional, psychological, and social well-being”. (American Psychiatric Association)

### b. What is “mental illness”?

*“Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior. Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.” “Mental illness...is a medical condition, just like heart disease or diabetes.”* (APA)

*“A mental illness is a condition that affects a person’s thinking, feeling, behavior or mood. These conditions deeply impact day-to-day living and may also affect the ability to relate to others.”* (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

*“Mental illness, also called mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behavior...a mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect your ability to function.”* (Mayo Clinic)

### c. What is the disease model?

### d. Why do we think this way?

i. What benefit does this way of thinking give to the “Psychological Man”?

ii. But where has this taken us?

## 3. “Help” that really hurts.

a. Many in these streams of thought mean well.

b. The disease/illness model is powerless, hopeless, and denies the new creation (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

## 4. We are all psychologized now.

a. We have been influenced by and think in terms of psychological categories.

b. We relate to the world from the inside out.

c. We have adopted the ideas, terminology, and responses.

[Safe spaces/people, abuse, toxic relationships, boundary setting, venting, etc.]