

**Christ Empowered Living: Life Changing Teaching that has Transformed  
Multitudes, by Selwyn Hughes (2002). Published by CWR**

In a society where understanding of human behaviour is dominated by secular psychology, Selwyn Hughes' book is a welcome contribution to developing a biblically grounded framework for making sense of and dealing with emotional problems. Hughes' perspective is explicitly identified in the first chapter where, after discerning a range of secular psychology answers to particular behavioural problems, he writes:

*I believe God has something to say about what lies behind human behaviour.  
When we want the real truth about why we do the things we do, He is the  
Consultant par excellence.*

For Hughes, a 'good psychology' necessitates an understanding of God. Over fourteen chapters, he methodologically examines the attributes of God revealed in humans (the ability to relate, think, feel and choose), how these have become distorted ('fragmented') as a result of the Fall and how through the power of Christ these attributes, reflecting the image of God, can be restored and sustained. After emphasising the need to always consider physical causes of various behaviour problems, Hughes then locates their foundation in relational difficulties. Identifying various scripture including Matthew 22: 37-40, he argues that we were made to relate, firstly, to God, then to one another. Self worth, our sense of significance and security come from an intimate relationship with God. The Fall corrupted this; the result is that our minds, wills and emotions are not in harmony with Biblical principles. Hughes spends time on these three aspects of humankind, identifying how they may be restored to reflect something of their original nature. This restoration is contextualised in the 'three vital issues' of awareness of sin, confession and repentance. Such is Hughes' concern to promote a Christ-centred perspective that the final chapter of the book is used to warn of the dangers of becoming overly engrossed in thinking about our personal problems and learning to deal with them. A twelve question 'spiritual check-up' is usefully provided at the end of the book.

A substantial book running to 270 pages, it is primarily intended for Christians. Whilst the issue of sexual abuse is not separately explored, Hughes' identification of a psychological perspective rooted in the Word of God is no doubt useful for those who wish to understand the complex mechanisms of behaviour without having to depend upon secular psychology. Those wishing to support victims of sexual abuse might find this aspect particularly useful.

The book is available from CWR priced at £7.99. CWR have also produced a companion work book (£4.99), and 40 day devotional (£4.99).