A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THEOLOGICAL

ANTHROPOLOGIES IN SELECTED CHRISTIAN

COUNSELING MODELS

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by

Lilly Hae Park

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**APPROVAL SHEET**

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To my parents.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

*CTJ*       *Calvin Theological Journal*

*JBC*       *Journal of Biblical Counseling*

*JCP*       *Journal of Counseling Psychology*

*JETS*       *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*

*JPC*       *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*

*JPCC*       *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*

*JPP*       *Journal of Pastoral Practice*

*JPT*       *Journal of Psychology and Theology*

*JRH*       *Journal of Religion and Health*

*MJT*       *Midwestern Journal of Theology*

*NDBT*       *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*

*NDT*       *New Dictionary of Theology*

*SBJT*       *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*

*TynBul*       *Tyndale Bulletin*

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PREFACE

The term "steadfastness" comes to mind as I reflect on the dissertation years. Like running a marathon, the process has been challenging but edifying as well. I would not have made it to the finish line if it were not for several people.

I thank my family for their love, support, and confidence. They have been encouraging and understanding throughout the process. I'm also thankful for their sense of humor and laughter. My dear friends in Maryland and on the West Coast are like family. Their prayers have strengthened me.

I am also thankful for my dissertation committee. Timothy Jones has been a mentor, inspiring me in the area of research. I appreciate his skill in graciously critiquing works and knowledge in a wide range of subjects. He and his family have become good friends. I also appreciate Jeremy Pierre and Gregg Allison for their insightful feedbacks and comments. In addition, Stuart Scott has been another mentor and friend who has taught me counseling wisdom. Indeed, I've been blessed by each person.

Conversations with professors, pastors, and colleagues from various locations have also sharpened my understanding of anthropology. I'm thankful for each conversation.

Above all, I am thankful to God for his steadfast love. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable" (Ps 145:3).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, Christian counselors have mostly focused on epistemological

differences.[1] Theological anthropology, however, is an equally important foundational

pillar in counseling theory and practice. Counseling, after all, is about people.

Epistemological differences have centered on the role of psychology and theology,[2] and

whether Scripture is sufficient for counseling.[3] A comprehensive discussion on the

differences among Christian counseling models requires not only epistemological

comparisons but also anthropological ones.[4]

This dissertation will focus on the primary anthropological distinctive in three

models of Christian counseling: Christian psychology, Christian integrationist, and

biblical counseling.[5] At a panoramic level, three dynamics of each model will be

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[1]In 1970, Jay Adams' book created a controversy in Christian counseling. Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970). Questioning the psychologized approach to Christian counseling, he advocated a return to a biblical approach and the responsibility of the local church in caring for their members.

[2]Substantial epistemological differences exist on the role of the Bible and psychology. Tim Stafford, "The Therapeutic Revolution," *Christianity Today,* May 1993. Is the Bible "a" source of authority or "the" source of authority in counseling? Should the Bible serve as a starting point or the main source in understanding human nature? Is it simplistic to primarily rely on biblical knowledge or necessary to rely on both psychology and the Bible? These questions are longstanding and will not be answered here, but they highlight a core epistemological debate among the models.

[3]For instance, see Christian psychologist Gary Moon's comment regarding biblical counselors. "I respect the Biblical Counseling position for its high view of Scripture and relentless focus on practical applications for people living in the real world. However, I think as a whole those in this camp have a tendency to minimize the contributions of "modern psychology" while maximizing the Bible's application to problems outside the realm of its intended writing—forming our souls and pointing them toward heaven." Gary W. Moon, "Integration in Three Tenses: A Journey from Separate and Not Equal to Integral and Interwoven," *JPT* 40, no. 1 (2012): 68.

[4]Chapters 2-4 will show that epistemological positions tend to parallel anthropological positions.

[5]The purpose is not to argue for the superiority of one Christian counseling model over another. Each model has nuanced views but common core assumptions. Several criteria were considered in selecting the counseling models for this work. All three models have an established presence in Christian

explored, especially in reference to the spiritual nature and sin: (1) How does each model view the spiritual nature in its anthropological framework?[6] (2) How does each model describe the problem of sin?[7] (3) What are the implications for a Christian *telos*?[8] The term *telos* means "end" or "purpose" in Greek. In this work, the *telos* is associated with the concept of wholeness or health. Clarity on the three anthropological dynamics provides a more nuanced understanding of the epistemological differences among the models. If solutions correspond to problems, then the interpretation of the spiritual nature and sin has implications for the epistemological debate among the three models.

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counseling with at least one organization that represents their beliefs and mission. They are also included in Eric L. Johnson, ed., *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010). The other two models, levels-of-explanation and transformational psychology, are excluded in this work for the following reasons. The levels-of-explanation model views psychology and theology as two fields that should be considered and appreciated separately. "Any attempt to mix Christian beliefs with psychological accounts is guaranteed to cause confusion and to make nonsense of both, since it is clear evidence of a failure to recognize the different domains to which the two kinds of knowledge belong and the different categories they use for expressing that knowledge." Malcolm Jeeves, *Human Nature: Reflections on the Integration of Psychology and Christianity* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2007), 8-9. For more on this view, see Malcolm Jeeves, *Human Nature at the Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Baker), 1997. Well-known levels-of-explanation adherents are Malcolm Jeeves and David G. Myers. Transformational psychology is a newer approach within Christian psychology. It emphasizes the work of the Spirit for transformation and a view of persons in relation to God. John Coe and Todd W. Hall, *Psychology in the Spirit: Contours of a Transformational Psychology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 35-37.

[6]Christians differ on the extent that the spiritual and psychological aspects of human nature overlap or are distinct. For instance, in comparing the five approaches, Greggo and Sisemore note the following dissimilarities: Christian psychology and integrationist "intertwine psychological and spiritual definitions of health in various ways," while biblical counseling, "conflates psychological disorder into the spiritual problem of sin." Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore, "Distinctives and Dialogue," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches*, ed. Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 193-94.

[7]In 2001, Mark McMinn and his colleagues published the results of a study that evaluated clergy perspectives on what psychologists could do to help their ministry. The most popular theme was understanding the relationship between sin and pathology. Barrett McRay et al., "What Evangelical Pastors Want to Know about Psychology," *JPT* 29, no. 2 (2001): 99-105. Are most counseling problems psychological and thus outside the scope of Christian ministry?

[8]In *Counseling and Christianity*, the editors list ten questions to consider in evaluating the five approaches and five of the questions pertain to anthropology: What does a "psychologically" healthy person look like, and how is health or wholeness defined? What is psychopathology, or what are the types of problems addressed in counseling? How does Scripture inform, regulate and bring life to the helping encounter? What is the connection between physical well-being and the soul, medically/behaviorally oriented treatment and soul care, individual autonomy and participation in Christian community? What is the source of healing and growth? Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore, "Moving Models in Practice," in *Counseling and Christianity*, 40. The questions affirm that theological anthropology is a major component of counseling and Christian counselors have various views on anthropological issues.

**Thesis**

The *imago Dei* is the starting point of anthropology from a Christian perspective.[9] In this research, I propose a covenantal schema of the *imago Dei* for holistic change in Christian counseling. By a covenantal schema, I am referring to the centrality of a relationship with God to fulfill his purposes for human beings and to God's faithfulness in fulfilling them. A covenantal schema is based on the assumption that the spiritual nature is holistic, encompassing the three aspects of the *imago Dei*—structural, functional, and relational.

This holistic approach could also be termed "theo-anthropological holism." The term "theo-anthropological" reflects the assumption that a Christian view of human nature must cohere with theological anthropology. The term "holism" implies the necessity of addressing all three aspects of the *imago Dei*. I focus on the three aspects of the *imago Dei* as well as the spiritual nature and sin, because of their all-encompassing effect on the *imago Dei*. The concern is that the spiritual nature and sin are minimized or reinterpreted in the counseling context. Another concern is that certain aspects are emphasized to the neglect of others or the aspects are viewed apart from a theo-anthropological framework.[10]

**Definitions**

In this dissertation, these terms will be used in the following way.

*Christian counseling*. The term "Christian counseling" will be used to refer to counseling intended to be Christian in orientation, unless noted otherwise.[11] Some

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[9]"Any adequately Christian anthropology needs to begin with an understanding of human persons as *imago Dei* beings." Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 93.

[10]This research focuses on the soul but the physiological component is important as well.

[11]The label "Christian counseling" is ambiguous. The term *Christian* could refer to the fact that the counselor is a Christian or it could refer to a Christian worldview in counseling. In this research, it is used to refer to a Christian who seeks to counsel using a Christian worldview. This clarification is necessary, because integrationists often use the label "Christian counseling."

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Christians distinguish pastoral care (a more general form of care) from pastoral

counseling (a more specific form of care) based on the duration of meetings and intensity

of problem.[12]

     *Counseling*. The term "counseling" will not be distinguished from

"psychology" or "psychotherapy," except as needed for clarification. Some people

associate psychology with the theoretical realm and counseling with the practical realm.[13]

Yet, others use the terms counseling and psychotherapy without distinctions.[14] These

distinctions are sometimes an issue of semantics and not central to this work.

     *Spiritual and spirituality*. The terms "spiritual" or "spirituality" are vague,

because they are used in reference to a broad spectrum of religions. The concept of

spirituality could be associated with any divine being, meditation, yoga, and well-being.[15]

In this research, it will refer to a biblical understanding. Some researchers distinguish

religion from spirituality by associating it with traditional protocols, such as attending

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[12]Shirley C. Guthrie Jr., "Pastoral Counseling, Trinitarian Theology, and Christian Anthropology," *Interpretation* 33, no. 2 (1979): 130. Stuart Palmer also characterizes pastoral counseling to handle problems that require individual attention. "It is distinguished from pastoral care in general by the fact that it is a minister's attempt with or without specialized training to help people who are especially troubled by emotional and interpersonal problems, involving a brief or extended conversation between the minister and one or more persons, taking place within or outside an ecclesiastical setting." Stuart L. Palmer "Pastoral Care and Counseling without the 'Soul,'" in *What about the Soul? Neuroscience and Christian Anthropology*, ed. Joel B. Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 167-70. For a historical and philosophical background on pastoral care and pastoral counseling, see Thomas St. James O'Connor, "Pastoral Counseling and Pastoral Care: Is There a Difference?" *JPCC* 57, no. 1 (2003). He believes the differences are minor. He notes that pastoral counseling developed as a separate entity, in 1963, when the American Association for Pastoral Counselors (AACC) split from the Clinical Pastoral Education. Ibid., 6.

[13]For example, see Virginia Holeman, "Psychology and counseling are intimately related but not identical disciplines. Psychology studies all aspects of human nature including, but not limited to, perception, sensation, cognition, social interaction, human development, organizational behavior, etc. Counseling, on the other hand, focuses attention on theories and techniques that intend to relieve suffering caused by psychological and emotional disorders and relational problems." Virginia T. Holeman, "The Neuroscience of Christian Counseling?" in *What about the Soul?* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 209n. This distinction can be helpful but also misleading, because both psychology and counseling are descriptive and prescriptive.

[14]For example, psychology professor Siang-Yang Tan uses this definition: "Christian counseling or psychotherapy can be simply described as counseling conducted by a Christian who is Christ centered, biblically based, and Spirit filled." Siang-Yang Tan, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 363. For a summary of various definitions, see chap. 1.

[15]Brian Luke Seaward, *Health of the Human Spirit: Spiritual Dimensions for Personal Health*, 2nd ed. (Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2013).

religious services. Such distinction is not made in this work.

*Theological anthropology*. Theological anthropology is not a sub-discipline under modern anthropology but a subject within Christian theology. In Christian academics, theological anthropology[16] may share more affinities with the discipline of psychology than with the discipline of anthropology, which is a broad field that encompasses specialties ranging from biology to philosophy to archaeology. In this research, theological anthropology refers to a biblical understanding of human nature. The term "theological anthropology," rather than "biblical anthropology," will be used to reflect the scope of both biblical and theological sources used in this research.[17] Note that theologians refer to theological anthropology using other terms: "biblical view of man,"[18] "Christian anthropology."[19]

## Methodology

Theological anthropology is a broad field and studied in other disciplines. My primary interest is in Christian counseling, so I will not address secular counseling approaches.[20] This research, however, is not advocating a religious approach that denies or excludes medical interventions.[21] Also, I will not articulate a comprehensive

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[16]Theologian J. Patout Burns provides a broad definition of theological anthropology. According to Burns, theological anthropology "investigates the resources, the limitations, and the destiny of the human person."[16] Burns, *Theological Anthropology*, 1.

[17]Theologian G. C. Berkouwer wrote, "On closer inquiry, however, it appears that 'Biblical' or 'Pauline' anthropology is used not to describe a systematic and scholarly anthropology, but rather a Biblical and Pauline 'teaching' regarding man; and further, to describe it not as a closed system, but rather as a limited way of approaching and shedding light on the nature of man; so that a 'picture of man' is all that is meant, rather than a scholarly discipline." G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, trans. Dirk W. Jellema (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 31.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Anthony Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

[20]For an overview and critique from a Christian worldview, see Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, *Modern Psychotherapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011).

[21]I am referring to people who decline medical attention because of their religious beliefs. Believing in a spiritual aspect to etiology is not equivalent to claiming spiritual etiology for all problems, which I do not support. A difference exists between a spiritual aspect to problems versus a spiritual cause

theological anthropology framework for Christian counseling, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

In this dissertation, I will focus on each model's theological anthropological framework, specifically the spiritual nature and sin, at the conceptual and functional levels. This work seeks to uphold the theological understanding of the spiritual nature and sin. For theological coherency, the knowledge expertise of scholars in Old Testament, New Testament and systematic theology will be referenced in chapter five to describe aspects of the image of God and evaluate key themes in each model.

My counseling perspective is closest to the biblical counseling model. For an objective presentation of each counseling model, the presuppositions and beliefs of each counseling model will be based on sources that represent each counseling model. Sources will be limited to key thinkers and influential works. The selected authors or leaders are self-identified proponents of that particular model. The scope of this dissertation will limit literature to ones that provide insight mostly on the theological anthropology of each counseling model. Other sources within each model are included, as necessary, for further clarification. All of my sources are obtainable either through the library at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary or inter-library loan. Several of the sources are a part of my personal library.

In this chapter, I briefly summarize the epistemological views of each model to establish some context in understanding the anthropological views presented in chapters 2, 3, and 4. Then, I discuss five common views among the three models regarding theological anthropology to show the consensus on the significance of theological anthropology in counseling. The common areas of agreement are the following: (1) Theological anthropology is foundational in counseling; (2) An overlap exists between

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of problems. For instance, some problems, such as cancer or Alzheimer's disease, do not necessarily have a spiritual etiology but could benefit from medical treatments.

the soul and self; (3) Theories on human nature are both descriptive and prescriptive; (4) An overlap exists between psychology and theological anthropology; and (5) Sin is an important anthropological issue in counseling.

In chapters 2, 3 and 4, I will present a contour of each model's theological anthropology with an emphasis on the spiritual nature and sin. This entails identifying underlying assumptions in their anthropological frameworks to analyze accurately key themes. The description of sin in each model is examined, because of its significance in theological anthropology and usefulness in demonstrating the functionality of theological anthropology. At the end, case studies will be used to illustrate counseling methodologies and to evaluate the conceptual coherence of the spiritual nature and sin in each model. Methodologies and practices reveal a theory's true beliefs.[22] So, they are a valuable source to determine a model's functional beliefs. The primary case study in each chapter will be taken from *Counseling and Christianity*, because this text includes all three models of counseling that are explored in this research.[23] In the case study, Jake is a 22-year-old male who started college after being discharged from the Army. His initial problem points to academic adjustments, but upon further talks, Jake has problems with loneliness, anxiety, fear, drug addictions, and brain injuries.

In chapter 5, I will use the three aspects of *imago Dei*—structural, functional, and relational—to categorize the themes from chapters 2, 3, and 4. This categorization provides theological categories that Christian scholars tend to emphasize in discussing *imago Dei*.[24] It also provides structure in evaluating the themes for theological coherency. For each of the three aspects of *imago Dei*, a brief theological summary is given,

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[22]George Knight, *Philosophy & Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006), 20.

[23]Greggo and Sisemore, "Moving Models into Practice," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Views*, 51-57.

[24]See chap. 5 for an explanation of how Christian scholars discuss the *imago Dei*.

followed by a critique of corresponding themes from chapters 2, 3, and 4. I will demonstrate that each counseling model emphasizes the structural, functional, or relational aspect of the *imago Dei* in various ways but not necessarily holistically. I propose that a covenantal schema supports theo-anthropological holism and show how it can address some of the weaknesses identified in the three models. In chapter 6, I will summarize the findings from the previous chapters and suggest future areas of research. A covenantal schema to the case study on Jake is also included for conceptual clarity and coherence.

## Epistemological and Anthropological Differences

All three counseling models claim the epistemic priority of the Bible. The general consensus is that the Bible is sufficient for salvation and sanctification but not necessarily for counseling.[25] The differences arise when defining sufficiency, specifically in relation to anthropology. Christian psychologist Philip Monroe states that the "real difference [among the models] is not whether the Bible contains a grand theory of counseling, but how we describe the scope and sufficiency of the Bible to deal with human problems."[26] Monroe points out biblical counselors and Christian psychotherapists (referring to all integrationists) have done a poor job in properly understanding each other's positions, which has led to inaccurate generalizations and criticisms. I would add the need to discuss anthropology in greater depth. A focus on epistemology alone is inadequate for a holistic approach.[27]

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[25]Each model's interpretation will be discussed in its respective chapter. The purpose here is to introduce the relevance of the debate on sufficiency of Scripture to theological anthropology.

[26] For example, he points out that Christian psychotherapists inaccurately assert that biblical counselors claim that the Bible is the textbook for counseling. Philip G. Monroe, "Building Bridges with Biblical Counselors," *JPT* 25, no. 1 (1997): 32.

[27]The epistemology of each model is examined to the extent that it brings clarity to the theological anthropology of that model and affects the composition of an anthropological element. Mary Van Leeuwen, a Christian psychologist, states, "[A] particular culture's anthropology, or theory of human nature, intimately determines its psychological epistemology—that is, its assumptions as to how the details about human beings and their unique functions can best be studied." Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *The Person in Psychology: A Contemporary Christian Appraisal* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 42.

One challenge in discussing a holistic approach is that each counseling model defines the spiritual nature and psychological nature differently. Integrationist Gary Collins opposed "psychological-theological dualism," which separates psychological and spiritual issues, negatively affecting Christian psychologists who seek to integrate psychology and theology.[28] The attempt, according to Monroe, erects a "false dichotomy between the spiritual and mental life."[29] What has resulted, whether intentional or not, is a form of epistemological dualism in assessing problems: the Bible corresponds to spiritual issues and psychology addresses the rest. More clarity is needed on how each counseling model describes the spiritual nature and psychological nature.

Further, the discussion on the spiritual nature raises questions on how sin is interpreted in each counseling model. A particular tension among Christian counselors is the approach to sin in counseling. For some Christian psychotherapists, discussing sin presents the risk of losing credibility in a field that prizes scientific research.[30] This tension has existed since the beginning of the pastoral counseling movement. In 1962, Seward Hiltner, one of the first integrationists in pastoral counseling, said that the dialogue between psychologists and theologians cannot happen without talking about sin.[31] He gives the timeless example of psychologists and theologians disagreeing whether all problems are rooted in sin or an illness. He presents his point creatively by writing what representatives from both disciplines would say to each other. Here are some of the relevant questions. The psychologist says,

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[28]Gary R. Collins, "The Distinctives of Christian Counseling," in *Helping People Grow: Practical Approaches to Christian Counseling*, ed. Gary R. Collins (Santa Ana, CA: Vision House, 1980), 329-30. Collins says that spiritual, psychological, and physical issues are interrelated.

[29]Monroe, "Building Bridges with Biblical Counselors," 32.

[30] Mark A. Yarhouse, Richard A. Butman, and Barrett W. McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2005), 93-94.

[31]Hiltner was one of the first, but liberal, theologians to integrate psychology and theology in pastoral care.

You seem to say that the actuality of man's trouble lies in his sin . . . . And how is it you seem to think you have diagnosed everything adequately once you have talked of sin? Aren't you curiously uninterested in differential diagnoses? . . . . And anyhow, is sin the whole of the problem? Does a youngster whose mother did not love him, and who now can love no one, simply get chalked up as 'sinner'?[32]

The theologian says:

"Do you believe that virtually all of man's troubles and sufferings are of the nature of sickness or illness? If so, what do you mean by illness? . . . . Do you imply that he, as a subject, has not responsibility for confronting and dealing with his condition? . . . . Of course you rely on a wide stock of medical, psychological, and social resources to help a man move out of his existing pathological condition toward something better, but what are your criteria for telling when he is better? Is it when he suffers less? . . . . Is it that he becomes more mature?[33]

The dialogue is timeless, because modern Christian counselors continue to raise similar questions. Pertinent to this research, the dialogue affirms the significance of understanding sin and properly communicating it to adherents of other counseling positions. It also raises the issue of whether sin is a simplistic diagnosis of problems. From the theologian's comments, a concern exists on the nature of personal responsibility. Another issue is defining wholeness.

A few decades later, Monroe includes sin and the spiritual nature in his list of important topics that integrationists and biblical counselors need to discuss.[34] He lists several helpful issues:

What are the varying effects of being both sinner and sinned against? Are victims of sinful behavior also responsible for their response to that sin? If so, how do we appropriately describe it? Does our understanding of sin encompass not only willful sin but that of lifestyle, or blind, idolatrous, sin? How does our conception of sin affect our understanding of mental well-being? Are psychologists prepared to accurately identify sinful thinking, feeling, and doing and handle it appropriately?[35]

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[32]Seward Hiltner, *The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective*, ed. Simon Doniger (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 258-59.

[33]Ibid., 260.

[34]"I present four important areas for further dialogue between the integration and biblical counseling movements: the role of the Bible in creating a comprehensive anthropology and theory of human behavior, sin and human behavior, the spiritual nature of life, and the purpose of counseling. These four are not the only areas of tension between the two movements, but they appear to be important in building a sturdy bridge of dialogue. Monroe, "Building Bridges with Biblical Counselors," 35.

[35]Ibid.

Again, Monroe raises similar questions that are found in Hiltner's dialogue. He points out the need for more clarity on sin and personal responsibility. He also mentions the concept of well-being. Even though sin is a major doctrine in theology, its implications in counseling seem ambiguous. A need exists for more discussion on the role and relevance of sin in counseling, not in a simplistic manner but in a thoughtful engagement with existing psychological theories. The following section introduces the broad views among the models for some context in understanding the models. Chapters 2 through 4 will provide a more detailed description and analysis of key anthropological issues.

**Christian psychology.** Proponents of Christian psychology[36] represent various religious and denominational backgrounds, with emphases in psychology, philosophy, and theology.[37] According to Eric Johnson, the term "Christian psychology" has a broad meaning: "Christian psychologists are any who study the soul from a Christian worldview, be they biblical authors, theologians, philosophers, novelists, mental health practitioners or empirical psychologists."[38] The general consensus is that a Christian understanding of human nature has existed for centuries and is relevant for contemporary Christian psychology. As Ellen Charry, professor of theology and psychology, states, the "structure of Christian psychology is already in place, so the "task is not to construct but to reclaim this Christian psychology."[39] For instance, Charry cites Augustine as the first

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[36]Christian psychologists commonly use the term "psychology" to refer to the general understanding of human nature from various perspectives, not necessarily the formal field of psychology. When referring to the formal field, often other phrases are used, such as "contemporary psychology," "modern psychology."

[37]For a list of proponents, see the website of The Society of Christian Psychology, accessed April 20, 2015, http://christianpsych.org/wp_scp/resources-page/christian-psychology-authors/. Some of the names are Ellen Charry, John Coe, C. Stephen Evans, Todd Hall, Eric L. Johnson, Diane Langberg, Gary Moon, Nancey Murphy, Robert C. Roberts, Kevin Vanhoozer, Paul Vitz, P. J. Watson. Most of the adherents of Christian psychology are psychologists. Some are philosophers with specialties in psychology, such as C. Stephen Evans and Robert C. Roberts. Ellen Charry and Eric Johnson write from a theological perspective.

[38]Eric L. Johnson, forward to *Counseling and Christianity*, 27-28.

[39]"Gen 1:26-27, Gen 3, and Rom 7 are among Western Christian psychology's foundational texts, showing that the human soul teeters between its identity in the divine image and its fallen reality,

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one to "articulate a Christian psychology," with insights on the role of self-examination and disordered desires.[40]

The common denominator of Christian psychologists is the belief that non-Christian sources are valuable for a comprehensive understanding of human nature. According to Robert Roberts and P. J. Watson, empirical research could validate biblical teachings in psychology, and it could challenge Christians to rethink an aspect of anthropology if the findings conflict with biblical teachings.[41] According to Robert Roberts, Christian psychologists seek to develop a "distinctly Christian version of psychology" based on a Christian worldview "explicitly in conversation" with secular psychology.[42]

Monroe summarizes Christian psychology's critique of biblical counselors:

> Biblical counselors fail to focus on the whole person. As a result of their burden to call men and women away from the worldly philosophy of irresponsibility and victimhood, biblical counselors have focused on psychology's problematic relabeling of inordinate sinful desires as legitimate needs (Powlison, 1994). Their focus is understandable in the light of popular psychology that suggests that unmet needs cause psychological dysfunction. However, their singular focus on the important message of "people are responsible beings" appears to overpower their belief that "people are victims of sinful behavior." Vivid descriptions of the effects of living in a fallen world are often wanting in biblical counseling literature.[43]

Likewise, one of Johnson's critiques of biblical counseling is "traditional" biblical

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seeking repair, release, redemption." Ellen Charry, "Augustine of Hippo: Father of Christian Psychology," *Anglican Theological Review* 88 (2006): 577.

[40]Ellen Charry, "Theology after Psychology," in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 127.

[41]Robert C. Roberts and P. J. Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," in *Psychology and Christianity*, 166. Johnson also discusses the value of engaging with other disciplines to avoid "embeddedness." "Embeddedness" occurs when a different view is interpreted using one's own ideals, resulting in intolerance. Eric L. Johnson, "Let's Talk: Embeddedness, Majority-Minority Relations, Principled Pluralism, and the Importance of Dialogue," *JPT* 40, no. 1 (2012).

[42]Robert C. Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart: Self and Other in an Age of Therapies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 12.

[43]Monroe, "Building Bridges with Biblical Counselors," 34.

counselors have not addressed the biological and social factors that are involved in sin.[44]

**Integrationists.** Out of the three models, integrationist counseling[45] may be the most familiar to Christians.[46] It also has a strong public presence through the media,[47] conferences[48], and books.[49] It consists of "a family of views," according to Stanton Jones and Richard Butman, not "the" Christian approach to counseling.[50] They also state that Christian counseling "must be thoroughly reconceptualized from a biblical foundation to lay claim to the adjective 'Christian.'"[51] The integrationist approach involves comparing and contrasting data from theology and psychology, rejecting data that conflicts with

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[44]Based on the role of sin in counseling, Johnson distinguishes "traditional" from "progressive" biblical counselors. Lambert, however, disputes the accuracy of Johnson's two categories of biblical counselors. Heath Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 49-80.

[45]The concept of integration in education is less controversial than integration in counseling because of the subject matter. Unlike English, math, and science, counseling is directly concerned with human nature, which the Bible also addresses. The section on worldview, later in this chap., will discuss the main concerns.

[46]It is the view that the typical church, Christian college/seminary, and Christian bookstore probably support, whether explicitly stated or not. Some of the well-known integrationist proponents are John Carter, Henry Cloud, Gary Collins, Larry Crabb, James Dobson, Stanton Jones, H. Newton Maloney, Stanton Jones, Mark McMinn, Frank Minirth, Paul Meier, Clyde Narramore, Bruce Narramore, and John Townsend. Within this model, there is a spectrum of approaches to integration, which will be further described in chap. 3.

[47]Focus on the Family and New Life Ministries (NLM) host daily radio talks and conferences. Christian psychologist James Dobson founded the Focus on the Family radio program, which began airing in 1977. In 1988, Steve Arterburn founded the New Life Treatment Centers, which acquired the popular Minirth Meier Clinics in 1994 and changed its name to New Life Ministries (NLM) in 1999. Paul Meier, who founded Minirth Meier Clinics with Frank Minirth, also taught at Dallas Theological Seminary and had students such as John Townsend, Henry Cloud. The NLM radio program, New Life Live, is the "#1 nationally syndicated Christian counseling talk show." http://newlife.com/broadcasts/meet-the-hosts/steve. The NLM radio program is hosted by Arterburn, John Townsend, Henry Cloud, and others.

[48]In 1996, NLM started the Women of Faith conference with over 30,000 attendees that year.

[49]Some of the books are listed as *New York Times* bestsellers, such as *The Five Love Languages*, *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life*. These books are available for various demographics, indicating their popularity. For instance, *The Five Love Languages* is available in editions for children, teenagers, singles, men, the workplace and the military. Similarly, *Boundaries* has editions for kids, teens, dating and marriage.

[50]The "integration view posits that the result of our Christian engagement will be a family of views that share a sibling resemblance to each other based in their common commitments to biblically grounded truths." Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 39.

[51]Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 460.

theology.[52] Some integrationists disagree that theological claims are more authoritative

than psychological claims.[53] The general consensus, however, is the belief in God's Word

as an epistemological framework,[54] but human minds are fallen, requiring external

sources, such as psychology, to confirm or challenge biblical truths. Based on the

presupposition "all truth is God's truth, wherever it is found," integrationists believe that

truth will not contradict each other.[55] Integrationists believe the ideal Christian counselor

will possess knowledge of both disciplines for proper interpretation and practice.[56]

    Integrationists warn against a "simplistic" view of sin, assuming that all

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[52]Gary Collins says that "discovered truth must always be consistent with, and tested against, the norm of revealed biblical truth" and "we limit our counseling effectiveness when we pretend that the discoveries of psychology have nothing to contribute to the understanding and solution of problems" Gary Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*, 3rd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 19. For example, see the "engagement" style of integration found in James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 21-22. Psychological data that conflicts with Scriptural teachings should be rejected and prompt further research. Ibid., 399. Jones and Butman suggest "theoretical integrationism" for "constructive integration," which entails two stages. The first stage is "critical evaluation" of secular thought, discerning content that may be valuable. The second stage is "theory building," integrating valuable knowledge with theology to develop a Christian theory. Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 42-43. In a way, the two stages resemble David Powlison's three epistemological priorities (see chap. 4). They categorize McMinn and Campbell (2007) under "theoretical integrationism." Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones, "Responsible Eclecticism and the Challenges of Contemporary Practice," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 451.

[53]David Entwistle disagrees that theology should always "be granted the upper hand" when conflicts occur between theological data and psychological data. Instead, he recommends reexamining both sources for more clarity and if conflict still exists, then not knowing the answer should be accepted. David N. Entwistle and Aaron Preston, "Epistemic Rights vs. Epistemic Duties: A Reply to Porter," *JPC* 29, no. 1 (2010): 27-32. Mark McMinn, however, believes that theological claims are more authoritative. Mark R. McMinn and Jeannine Michele Graham, "Theology as Science: A Response to 'Theology as Queen and Psychology as Handmaid,'" *JPC* 29, no.1 (2010): 16.

[54]Stanton L. Jones, "An Integration View," in *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 102. "Christians must approach the subject of humanity embracing what God has told us about it means to be fully human first; that then is our framework for engaging psychology as a social science" Ibid., 183.

[55]John D. Carter, and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 13; see also Gary Collins, "An Integration View," in *Psychology & Christianity: Four Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson and Stanton L. Jones (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 111. For support, Jones and Butman reference God's common grace. Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 50.

[56]McMinn says, "When psychologists without theological training attempt to do integration, they often minimize the importance of doctrine, psychologize Christian beliefs, and overlook the historical and sociological context of today's psychology. Orthodox Christian theology keeps counselors grounded in the midst of a profession easily swayed by new theories, fads, and sensationalistic claims. When theologians without psychological training attempt to do integration, they often misrepresent the nuances of psychological science and misunderstand the complexities of clinical applications." Mark R. McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1996), 9.

psychological problems result from sin.[57] After discussing the divisive nature of sin in Christian counseling, McMinn describes the stereotype that biblical counselors are about sin ("sin camp") and integrationists are about grace ("grace camp").[58] On the other hand, some integrationists have critiqued other integrationists for overly focusing on sin. Integrationists David Entwistle and Stephen Moroney claim that past integration literature has been imbalanced in presenting the whole person by focusing more on human dysfunction (psychology) and sin (theology) "than on human flourishing and goodness."[59] While not denying the reality of sin, they argue that findings in positive psychology (human flourishing) adds a more balanced perspective on human nature.[60]

McMinn says that the relationship between sin and psychological problems is "complex": "Some very mature Christians who are well along on the journey of sanctification face serious psychological problems. Others whose lives are filled with hedonism appear to function quite well psychologically. It is best not to make any quick or simplistic links between sin and psychological problems when doing counseling."[61] Later, McMinn comments, "As an integrationist, I have often bristled at the biblical counselors' insistence that many functional problems are the result of 'idols of the heart.' This seems to oversimplify the biological, psychological, interpersonal and cultural complexities of human behavior. But still, they may have a point worth considering."[62] He then talks about the Bible's teaching on the heart as a source of sin (Matt 15:19-20).

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[57]Mark McMinn, and Clark Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy: Toward a Comprehensive Christian Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 42-43.

[58]Mark R. McMinn, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling: An Integrative Paradigm* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 15-19.

[59]David N. Entwistle and Stephen K. Moroney, "Integrative Perspectives on Human Flourishing: The *Imago Dei* and Positive Psychology," *JPT* 39, no. 4 (2011): 298.

[60]Ibid., 299-300. For example, positive relationships and diversity complements aspects of the *imago Dei*.

[61]McMinn, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling*, 93.

[62]Ibid., 115.

**Biblical counseling.** In biblical counseling, the belief is that the Bible is "sufficient" for Christian counseling.[63] As David Powlison clarifies, sufficient means comprehensive, not exhaustive: The Bible is not "an exhaustive catalogue of every fact about every person in every time and every place."[64] The Bible is comprehensive, because it reveals essential knowledge for counseling. Biblical counselors view secular psychology with more caution than the other two models but do not necessarily reject it. As Powlison clarifies, secular psychology is not essential but can be useful for "illustrational" and "provocative" purposes.[65] For instance, psychological findings can give examples of biblical truth and raise questions that were not previously asked. Another reason for their cautious engagement with psychology is the belief that "personality theories and psychotherapy overlap at every point with sound theology and sound Christian practice."[66] That is, personality theories and psychotherapy include the same knowledge domains as theology.

Biblical counselors claim that sin is a significant problem and to avoid sin is to avoid the root issue. It dwells in all persons, negatively affecting perceptions and decisions. Powlison states that sin is the "ultimate psychopathology" and the "ultimate disease, the grand psychosis.[67] According to Robert Jones and Brad Hambrick, "If sin is the primary human problem, then those with theological and practical expertise in dealing

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[63]Some of the well-known proponents of biblical counseling are Jay Adams, Elyse Fitzpatrick, Bob Kellemen, Heath Lambert, David Powlison, Stuart Scott, Paul Tripp, and Ed Welch. Note that Martin and Deidre Bobgan identify themselves as biblical counselors, but their extreme views are not representative of the biblical counseling movement. As Powlison notes, they are "even further to the 'right' than Jay Adams." David Powlison, *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2010), 217.

[64]David Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," *JBC* 11, no. 3 (1993): 28.

[65]David Powlison, "Does Biblical Counseling Really Work?" in *Totally Sufficient: The Bible and Christian Counseling,* ed. Ed Hindson and Howard Eyrich (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2004), 78.

[66]David Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling Response," in *Psychology & Christianity: Four Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson and Stanton L. Jones (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 144.

[67]David Powlison, "Giving Reasoned Answers to Reasonable Questions," *JBC* 28, no. 3 (2014): 8, 12.

with sin—in its varied and complex forms—should lead the way in the field of people-helping."[68]

In the introduction to *Care of Souls*, Mark McMinn summarizes the disagreement between Christian psychologists (including integrationists) and biblical counselors:

> Biblical counselors have emphasized the devastating effects of sin that turns us away from a loving God and draws us instead toward idols of the heart. To care for the soul, then, we must confront the idols that impede us from experiencing God's rich grace and blessing. Christian psychologists have tended to emphasize faulty learning patterns, unhealthy relationships during formative years and incorrect thinking as the source of problems. They have valued many contributions of modernity's psychology while attempting to integrate psychology and theology. Of course this dichotomy is not as simple as it seems. Both groups see sin as a problem, and both look at faulty learning patterns, unhealthy relationships and incorrect thinking. The difference is primarily one of epistemological priorities. Biblical counselors place relatively more emphasis on special revelation and therefore on sin, and Christian psychologists typically spend more time and energy studying general revelation.[69]

While McMinn points out epistemological differences in accounting for the hamartiological differences, I argue that anthropological priorities are also primary. Theologically, the greatest problem is sin but not necessarily in counseling. This discrepancy is worth examining, considering the significance of sin in theological anthropology.

In summary, an overview and comparison of the three models is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of three counseling models

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[68]Robert Jones and Brad Hambrick, "The Problem of Sin," in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, ed. James MacDonald, Bob Kellemen, and Steve Viars (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 151.

[69]Mark R. McMinn, "Introduction: Psychology, Theology & Care for the Soul," in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology & Theology*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 13.

|  | Christian Psychology | Integrationists | Biblical Counselors[70] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Audience | Anyone working from any perspective within the historic Christian Church | Clinical, pastoral, and lay care-givers | ACBC: pastors, professors, and other Christians CCEF: the church |
| Epistemology | Primarily the Christian Scriptures Christian traditions Psychological truth Philosophy Human experience Other human sciences | Biblical truth and psychosocial insights | ACBC: the Bible, biblical wisdom CCEF: the gospel |
| *Telos* | God's understanding of human nature A distinct Christian psychology | Personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability, and spiritual maturity | ACBC: Maturity in Christ; discipleship CCEF: Equipping Christians to live, love, and counsel |

The information is based on the mission statements of significant organizations from each model. Based on table 1, the audience of Christian psychology[71] and integrationists[72] is sufficiently broad to include any Christian in the work of psychology

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[70]Out of the three models, biblical counseling has several organizations that train or certify counselors. Two of the largest organizations are the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC, formally known as National Association of Nouthetic Counselors until October 2013) and Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation (CCEF). A more recent organization is the Biblical Counseling Coalition (BCC).

[71]The Society for Christian Psychology's (SCP) mission statement: "A Christian vision of human nature is shaped primarily by the Christian Scriptures, as well as Christianity's intellectual and ecclesial traditions. However, a Christian psychology will also be critically informed by other relevant sources of psychological truth, particularly its own reflection, research, and practice, but also the psychological work of other traditions (e.g., secular psychology), philosophy, human experience, and the other human sciences. While God's understanding of human nature is the goal of a Christian psychology, given human finitude and the existence of distinct Christian traditions, the Society welcomes those working from any perspective within the historic Christian Church." Society for Christian psychology, "Mission Statement," accessed February 6, 2015, http://christianpsych.org/wp_scp/about-the-society/.

[72]The American Association of Christian Counselors' (AACC) mission statement: "AACC is committed to assisting Christian counselors, the entire "community of care," licensed professionals, pastors, and lay church members with little or no formal training. It is our intention to equip clinical, pastoral, and lay care-givers with biblical truth and psychosocial insights that minister to hurting persons and helps them move to personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability, and spiritual maturity." The American Association of Christian Counselors, "Mission," accessed February 6, 2015, http://www.aacc.net/about-us/.

and counseling. In particular, proponents of Christian psychology and integrationist counseling are interested in studying psychology from a scientific perspective.[73] In biblical counseling, the audience is primarily Christian leaders and laypersons in the church.[74]

## Significance of Theological Anthropology in Counseling

Based on writings from the late twentieth century, Christian psychiatrist Jeffrey Boyd in his 2001 work commented, "Theologians have resigned from the task of writing about theological anthropology . . . . It is as if theologians have said, 'We'll leave that subject to the counseling department.'"[75] His comments are insightful, because he understood that theological anthropology is as important as any other Christian doctrine

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[73]"Christian psychology is interested in the science of psychology and would be of greater interest to psychology teachers, researchers, practitioners and others dedicated to developing distinctively Christian versions of psychology and scientifically complex models of soul care." Eric L. Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007), 192. Proponents of integrationist counseling such as Stanton Jones and Everett Worthington also discuss the value of scientific research in counseling. See chap. 3 for this discussion.

[74]ACBC's audience: "All pastors, professors, and other Christian servants who desire to be trained in their gospel-responsibility to be disciple-makers." ACBC, "Who We Serve," accessed February 6, 2015, http://www.biblicalcounseling.com/about/. CCEF's truncated mission statement: "*CCEF works to restore Christ to counseling . . . CCEF works to restore counseling to the church.* We believe that the body of Christ is God's primary context for change, the community God uses to transform his people. CCEF's mission is to equip the church to be this kind of transforming community. We see ourselves as an extension of the local church, and we want to serve and promote its ministry. The good news of the gospel is meant to be preached, taught, and counseled with relevance to individual people. Equipping Christians to live, love, and counsel is our goal." Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation, "Mission," accessed February 6, 2015, http://www.ccef.org/about.

"Biblical Counseling is discipleship. It is the personal ministry of the word through conversation. Every Christian is called to speak the truth in love to his neighbor and help them grow in grace. Believers should desire to apply the Bible to every area of life. The goal of Biblical Counseling is to present everyone mature in Christ by teaching with all wisdom." ACBC, "What is Biblical Counseling?" accessed February 6, 2015, http://www.biblicalcounseling.com/training/.

[75]The comment seems to be based on his readings in the 1990s. Jeffrey H. Boyd, "Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul," in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology and Theology*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL; InterVarsity, 2001), 115. Other theologians had written about anthropology for pastoral care but not necessarily on theological anthropology. For example, Swanee Hunt-Meeks critiqued Jung's anthropology from a Judeo-Christian worldview and described aspects of Jung's anthropology that could benefit pastoral counselors. Some of her critiques were insightful. For example, she compared Jung's unconscious and the search for meaning to Christians finding meaning in God's purposes for everything. It seems, however, that the theological critique could have been more extensive. Swanee Hunt-Meeks, "The Anthropology of Carl Jung: Implications for Pastoral Care," *JRH* 22, no. 3 (1983): 191-211.

for counseling.[76] Admittedly, Christians have written extensively on theological

anthropology but primarily for theological contexts.[77] Some Christians have written from

philosophical perspectives. For example, philosopher Kevin Corcoran proposes the

"constitution view." This view is a form of Christian materialism (or physicalism) and

claims "we human persons are constituted by our bodies without being identical with the

bodies that constitute us."[78] Philosopher John Cooper is often mentioned as the

representative of holistic dualism: "Many anthropology texts stress wholeness and totality

of human existence, not its metaphysical divisibility."[79] In addition, Christian

philosophers have been discussing the implications of neuroscientific research on the

understanding of the soul. In particular, Joel Green has written and edited several works

on these topics.[80]

In the context of counseling, however, Christians have not addressed

theological anthropology as deeply as works in theology and philosophy.[81] A few

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[76]Since then, several works have been published on theological anthropology, as shown in this section.

[77]For further readings on theological anthropology, see the following sources: H. D. McDonald, *The Christian View of Man* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981); John R. Sachs, *The Christian Vision of Humanity* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991); Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*; Berkouwer, *Man*; Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*.

For a survey of anthropology in the early church, Reformation and post-reformation, and modern period, see Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 321-41. See also J. Patout Burns, *Theological Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981). Burns translates the work of several church fathers on anthropology. He covers the Gnostic movement of the middle second century, the ascetic movement of the middle third century, Christian Platonism in the third and fourth centuries, Neo-Platonism in the fourth century, and Augustine's anthropology.

[78]Kevin Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul* (Grand Rapids: 2006), 17.

[79]John Cooper, *Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 97.

[80]For further reading, see Joel B. Green and Stuart L. Palmer, eds., *In Search of the Soul: Four Views on the Mind-Body Problem* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005); *What about the Soul?* According to Green, neuroscience findings could support a biblical view of humanity. Joel B. Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

[81]A few theologians have written about the intersection between theological anthropology and pastoral care. For instance, Ray S. Anderson, *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 1982. In this book, Anderson, who was formerly Professor of Theology and Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary, interacted primarily with Karl Barth's anthropology.

Christian counselors have written extensively on theological anthropology.[82] Still, more work is needed. Even secular psychologists acknowledge the importance of religion and spirituality for holistic well-being. Robert Emmons, professor of psychology, states, "[B]ecause of the pervasive influence of religion and spirituality on cognitive, emotional, and motivational functioning, personality psychologists cannot afford to ignore this realm of experience and be true to their subject matter."[83] He also says that research on the "whole person" must include religion or spirituality and it is the "core of the personality" for many persons.[84] In the next paragraph, he even says theology should be viewed as another form of psychological theory and considered an "ally."

In terms of the significance of theological anthropology in counseling, the three counseling approaches generally share the following five views. First, theological anthropology is foundational in counseling. Second, the soul, not the "self," is at the core of human nature. Third, all theories on human nature are descriptive and prescriptive. Fourth, psychological theories overlap with theological anthropology. Fifth, sin is a component of theological anthropology.[85] The purpose of this section is not to provide a comprehensive list of common views among the models but to show that some commonalities exist, despite substantial differences. Sometimes, the tendency is to make inaccurate generalizations about the models based on the differences. The five points also confirm the significance of theological anthropology in counseling. By presenting

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[82]For example, see Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*; James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005); and Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 1979. Also, Siang-Yang Tan briefly summarizes a biblical perspective on human nature, incorporating views from all three models. Siang-Yang Tan, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011): 328-33.

[83]Interest in religion and spirituality are categorized under psychology of religion within the American Psychological Association (APA). Robert A. Emmons, *The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns: Motivation and Spirituality in Personality* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999), 12.

[84]Ibid., 12-13.

[85]The three models' views on sin were mentioned earlier. In this section, I discuss broader issues that have influenced the role of sin in counseling.

commonalities here, I am able to focus on the points of differences in chapters 2 through 4.

**Foundation of Theological Anthropology**

Why is theological anthropology foundational in counseling? Certain presuppositions about human nature are found in the Bible. One scholar comments, the Bible "can be read as a vast theological anthropology [and] . . . . any of its texts can serve as a source for reflection on the human identity and condition."[86] In Berkouwer's words, "Every page [in the Bible] deals with man in all the rich variations of his countless facets and aspects. And thus there is every reason to inquire as to the 'Biblical view of man.'"[87] The implications of theological anthropology will continue to grow in importance as scientists discover new knowledge about the human body. Theologian Gregg Allison asserts, "[In light of] modern and scientific attacks, . . . . the existence of an immaterial human element and the identity of the image of God have risen to paramount theological importance today."[88] Regarding psychology, in 1937, Machen insightfully commented, "[The] views that a man has about the soul and about God will colour his interpretation of the phenomena of human behavior; and, on the other hand, a false or limited observation of the phenomena of human behavior will colour what a man thinks about the existence of the soul and the existence of God."[89] Based on such assertions, it is incumbent for Christians who are studying and addressing human nature to consider a Christian foundation.

Regardless of the epistemological position, Christian counselors generally

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[86]James Luther Mays, "The Self in the Psalms and the Image of God," in *God and Human Dignity,* ed. R. Kendall Soulen and Linda Woodhead (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 27. "In its theocentricity it is anthropocentric." Ibid.

[87]Berkouwer, *Man*, 195.

[88]Allison, *Historical Theology*, 341.

[89]J. Gresham Machen, *The Christian View of Man* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1937), 138.

agree that theological anthropology is foundational in counseling for a proper view of human nature. Consider the statements from Christian psychologists. Roberts argues the Word, not psychology, must serve as the "logy" of a Christian view of man.

> This Word, as the book contends, is the background of all deepest and truest healing of persons, because it is the one by which persons are truly formed. The word is the "logy" of the true psychology; it is the Word of the soul, which must be brought to the fore and asserted once again, and thought through and placed in perspicuous comparison with the other psychologies that sound daily in our ears and bid to form us in their image.[90]

Moreover, Roberts has expressed his "concern" that pastors incorporate psychological theories and terminology into their sermons with or without a proper knowledge of the theories and terms. He writes, "In many churches the language of popular psychology has swamped the traditional Christian language about persons, their nature, the diagnosis of their condition, what they should become, and how they may achieve their destiny."[91] Elsewhere, he states theology contributes "substantively to our conceptualization of the human person."[92] Eric Johnson asserts, "[The] Bible contains what might be called the first principles of soul care—the most important truths for the maturation of the soul— and so it provides the God-breathed foundation for a radically Christian model of soul-healing."[93]

Integrationists express similar positions. McMinn writes, "[In] understanding human nature—motivation, spiritual yearnings, relational needs, repentance, forgiveness and so on—the truths of the Christian faith form the foundation of our understanding."[94]

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[90]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, xi-xii.

[91]Ibid., 292.

[92]Here is the full quote: "We are unabashed about bringing theology right into the heart of psychological reflection and research, not as an afterthought, to be 'integrated,' but as a basic guiding commitment; and not merely as supplying 'control beliefs' that set limits to what we can accept from twentieth-century psychology, but as contributing substantively to our conceptualization of the human person." Roberts, "Introduction: Christian Psychology?" 8.

[93]Johnson, *Foundations*, 119.

[94]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 25.

Though Jones believes Scripture is an "incomplete" source for counseling, he posits that Scripture is "fundamental" for a Christian foundation in counseling: (1) the way human nature is understood, (2) the nature of problems, (3) the goals of life, (4) the processes of change, and (5) moral guidance.[95] Jones and Butman affirm the relevance of theology in understanding problems: "The claims of Christian truth should fundamentally transform, at a basic and profound level, the ways we conceptualize and understand our human subject matter, as well as our problems, our goals and the processes of change."[96] In a previous edition, they included the following statement: "A distinctively Christian approach to counseling and psychotherapy . . . will be most clearly reflected in its notions of personhood and philosophy of science."[97] Moreover, Mark Yarhouse and Butman believe that a Christian framework of creation, fall, and redemption offers a more "accurate explanatory framework" to understanding and treating psychopathologies.[98]

Biblical counselor Jay Adams believed the doctrine of man was "of most significance to counselors."[99] He said theological "studies must not only hammer out the truths of biblical teaching about human life, but also the full implications of each for

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[95]Jones "An Integration Response to Christian Psychology," 187. Also, "Christian faith should deeply inform our notions of what it means to be a person, of key dimensions of the core nature and identity of persons, of our understanding of health and happiness as well as of brokenness and pathology, and shape our vision of what it means to change." Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones, "Responsible Eclecticism and the Challenges of Contemporary Practice," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 434. "The Scriptures were never intended to be a textbook of all psychological conditions and disorders, although they should anchor and condition our metaphysical and ontological assertions about persons and provide a practical foundation for moral guidance." Stanton L. Jones, Laura Miguélez, and Richard E. Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 53.

[96]Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 462.

[97]Here is the full quote: "A distinctively Christian approach to counseling and psychotherapy will have theological and philosophical underpinnings compatible with Christian faith; *this will be most clearly reflected in its notions of personhood and philosophy of science*" (emphasis added). Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 31. The 2011 edition does not include the emphasis.

[98]Mark A. Yarhouse, Richard A. Butman, and Barrett W. McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2005), 95.

[99]The doctrine of man was not more important than the study of God, but it was a timely issue for the "humanistic climate" in which he lived. Jay E. Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: More Than Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 94, 96.

counseling."[100] In critiquing Christian counselors who poorly incorporate the Bible, Adams contends, "[If] the problem exists at all, you can be sure that it is in discussions of the human being that its expression is paramount."[101] All of these views by leading Christian counselors reveal the belief that psychology should not serve as the dominant ethos in a Christian view of human nature.

Theological anthropology is foundational to ensure an approach that is "coherent."[102] As pastoral counseling professor William Oglesby notes, "To sum up, the anthropological factors which underlie pastoral care and counseling in Christian perspective focus on the nature of the human . . . the nature of sin . . . and the nature of reconciliation," which are important for "pastoral care and counseling that is functionally consistent and theologically responsible."[103] Though counselors may define Oglesby's three anthropological factors differently, he understood the consequential relationship between anthropology and counseling. Potential consequences of a weak theological anthropology in counseling are theological inconsistencies or simplistic approaches to complex issues. For example, Hoekema's book is a classic on theological anthropology. He states that psychologists and counselors must address the whole person because the divisions of human nature, such as the psychological and spiritual, cannot be separated. From a theological perspective, his emphasis on the whole person represents the general consensus among Christian scholars but his basis for the implications seem to lack sufficient support. His implication is that as long as the whole person is treated,

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[100]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, 96.

[101]Ibid.

[102]"[B]efore we can think coherently about what to do in pastoral care . . . we must first learn to think coherently about human beings as such within a theological framework . . . without a coherent, adequate, and responsible understanding of human beings the other doctrines float upon sand." James Lapsley, "The 'Self,' Its Vicissitudes and Possibilities: An Essay in Theological Anthropology," *Pastoral Psychology* 35, no. 1 (1986): 24.

[103]William B. Oglesby Jr., "Implications of Anthropology for Pastoral Care and Counseling," *Interpretation* 33, no. 2 (April 1979): 164. "When pastoral counselors take seriously the implications of anthropology in Christian perspective, their work with people will be greatly enhanced." Ibid., 157.

Christians should take advantage of doctors, pastors and psychologists. The implication simplifies the issue.[104]

**Overlap between the Soul and Self**

A common denominator of secular theories is an exclusion of the soul, presenting a myopic understanding of human nature that is not holistic. For example, human developmental psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg are well-known for their theories on cognitive and moral development, but they excluded the spiritual nature of man and the work of the Holy Spirit in human development. In fact, some of the best psychologists were openly anti-religion.[105] For Christians, the exclusion of the spiritual realm inherent in psychology should create "the irritation of doubt," using Charles Peirce's words, in believing the adequacy of secular theories.[106]

A more subtle way of excluding the soul could be found in the usage of the term "self." In psychology, the "self" is used in reference to "the core of the person."[107] Paul Vitz, a Catholic psychologist, calls psychology a religion that worships the self.[108] Well-known psychologists who have emphasized the "self" are Carl Rogers, Abraham

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[104]Only two pages in the lengthy book address practical implications and supporting sources represent more of a trichotomy view. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 225-26.

[105]Freud believed that religion was an illusion. "Religion is a system of wishful illusions together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else but in a state of blissful hallucinatory confusion. Religion's eleventh commandment is 'Thou shalt not question.'" Sigmund Freud, *Future of an Illusion*, ed. and trans. James Strachey, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press, 1927), 62.

[106]"Peirce (a philosopher and scientist) held that all genuine inquiry begins from 'the irritation of doubt.' That is, the process of seeking the truth cannot start from some arbitrarily chosen point but must begin from genuine doubt about the adequacy of a belief or set of beliefs." Andrew Robinson and Christopher Southgate, "Semiotics as a Metaphysical Framework for Christian Theology," *Zygon* 45, no. 3 (2010): 709-10.

[107]"Self is a term derived from the reflexive pronoun which denoted 'oneness and sameness,' and it has been used since the Enlightenment to refer to the core of the person, sometimes as viewed objectively, and sometimes to refer to subjective experience." James N. Lapsley, "Spirit and Self," *Pastoral Psychology* 38, no. 3 (1990): 138-39.

[108]Paul C. Vitz, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

Maslow, and Heinz Kohut, to name a few. From a secular perspective, psychologist Philip Cushman wrote one of the most insightful critiques on psychology's construction of the "empty self."[109]

Foundational to theological anthropology is the metaphysical assumption that all human beings have a soul. Jeffrey Boyd, an ordained clergyman and psychiatrist, has extensively critiqued the "self" in mental health. He claims both the "concept of the 'self' and 'soul' are somewhat parallel. Both refer to the inner or subjective person in the natural state, for which synonyms are "person, mind, personality, I, subjectivity, identity."[110] But, the term "soul" conveys a theological view of persons who are accountable to God and the term "self" shifts the focus to the individual.[111] Other Christian counselors have expressed similar concerns. They view the secular definition of the "self" problematic for its exclusion of God.[112] As Charry states, the self "does not need God either to understand itself" or for well-being.[113] Vitz distinguishes the term "person," a relational being, from "individual," an independent being.[114] Consequently, as Boyd states, "God is peripheral" in understanding the self and used as a means of self-improvement while psychiatrists are viewed as the expert.

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[109]Philip Cushman, "Why the Self is Empty: Toward a Historically Situated Psychology," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 5 (1990): 599-611.

[110]"But 'self' is a secular word, which implies that God, the Bible, religion, values, are not essential to who we are. 'Soul' implies that these issues are the cornerstone of who we are. 'Self' focuses our attention on this life. 'Soul' focuses our attention on God and the afterlife as decisive for how we live this life." Jeffrey H. Boyd, "Losing Soul: How and Why Theologians Created the Mental Health Movement," *CTJ* 30 (1995): 476.

[111]Jeffrey H. Boyd, "Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul," in *Care for the Soul,* ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 114.

[112]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 459; Robert C. Roberts, "Introduction: Christian Psychology?" in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 3. Charry, "Theology after Psychology," 133.

[113]Charry, "Theology after Psychology," 126.

[114]Paul C. Vitz, "A Christian Theory of Personality," in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 33. Vitz writes that Carl Rogers' book *On Becoming a Person* (1961) is "false advertising," because it is "about becoming, not a person, but an individual, and in particular an autonomous, self-actualizing, independent individual." Ibid., 32.

The word *self* has replaced the term *soul* in popular culture, with the effect that people tend to think of themselves without thinking that God is important to their self-concept. We live in a pre-Copernican age where God, if God is thought to exist at all, is understood as being in orbit around the self, strengthening self-esteem or weakening the self through guilt feelings. The center of focus in our time is on the self, on the individual and the individual's need for autonomy, self-determination, fulfillment, happiness, and self-sufficiency. God is peripheral. Psychiatrists are consultants in the public's quest to understand the 'self.'[115]

In sum, the problem is that the "self" has replaced the "soul," using Boyd's words. Further, notice Boyd's extensive list of soul-like terms used by psychotherapists: "I, you, myself, yourself, self, psyche, whole person, mind, heart, consciousness, personality, psychic energy, libido, subjective experience, subjectivity, identity, essence, feelings, emotions, cognitive process, thoughts, inner self, human nature, being, inner being, who I am, who you are."[116] Many of these terms are familiar but are associated with non-spiritual aspects of human nature. His list shows the many ways that psychologists study the Christian understanding of the soul and refer to it as the "self."[117] Psychologists deny the existence of the soul, but they are studying and theorizing about the soul. If so, then, according to Boyd, therapy groups should be named "Bible study groups" or "churches."[118] Charry concisely states, "For modern secular psychology the self is not a translation of psyche but an alternative to the soul."[119] Moreover, Christian integrationists Larry Crabb and Dan Allender assert that psychologists have "reduced the

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[115]Boyd, "Losing Soul," 473.

[116]Ibid., 472, 475.

[117]For further reading, see the following works: Jeffrey H. Boyd, "A History of the Concept of the Soul During the Twentieth Century," *JPT* 26, no. 1 (1998): 66-82; idem, *Reclaiming the Soul: The Search for Meaning in a Self-Centered Culture* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 1996); idem, "The Soul as Seen through Evangelical Eyes, Part I: Mental Health Professionals and the Soul," *JPT* 23, no. 3 (1995): 151-60; idem, "The Soul as Seen through Evangelical Eyes, Part II: On Use of the Term *Soul*," *JPT* 23, no. 3 (1995): 161-70.

[118]Here is the full statement: "If the secular mental health movement were to repent and recognize that it is the soul that they treat, what reforms would be in order? To begin with, therapists would be required to go to seminary so as to gain some expertise about the soul. In the second place, group therapy has been shown in controlled clinical trials to be just as effective as individual psychotherapy. But since the soul is oriented toward God, it would be wise to organize our therapy groups around God. And finally, we might consider a new name for the therapy groups: 'Bible study groups,' or 'churches.'" Boyd, "Losing Soul," 491-92.

[119]Charry, "Augustine of Hippo," 580.

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mysterious soul" to "a manageable self, a psychological entity that can be analyzed, experimented with, damaged, and repaired."[120] In arguing for substance dualism or the soul, philosopher J. P. Moreland says contemporary psychology would be more accepting of substance dualism if the substance of the soul was more clearly explained.[121]

Like Boyd, Johnson has argued for a return to the usage of "soul" in psychology.[122] Disagreeing with Boyd, integrationist James Beck states the "exact term" is not as crucial as how the terms are defined: "The exact term we use to signify the human being (self, person, or soul) is not crucial to the integrative task . . . as long as the meanings infused into the term are holistic and reflective of scriptural teachings regarding image-bearing features of humans."[123] The fundamental issue may not be the choice of terminology, but the consensus among Christian counselors is the centrality of God, not the self, in counseling.

**Descriptive and Prescriptive**
**Nature of Theories**

Theories on human nature are descriptive and prescriptive.[124] In an academic book on human nature, professors Leslie Stevenson and David Haberman claim all theories of humanity encompass,

(1) a background metaphysical understanding of the universe and humanity's place

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[120]"We think we can do something to a self with roughly predictable results. A soul seems more elusive, random, more difficult to chart. We don't sense the need to stand silent, with curiosity and wonder, before a self." Larry Crabb and Dan Allender, *Hope When You're Hurting* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 26-27.

[121]J. P. Moreland, "Restoring the Substance to the Soul of Psychology," *JPT* 26, no. 1 (1998): 29-43.

[122]Eric L. Johnson, "Whatever Happened to the Human Soul? A Brief Christian Genealogy of a Psychological Term," *JPT* 26, no. 1 (1998): 16-28.

[123]James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic & Professional), 207.

[124]For an insightful critique of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), see Allen Horwitz and Jerome C. Wakefield. *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Their book shows the powerful influence of the DSM in describing and prescribing disorders.

in it; (2) a theory of human nature in the narrower sense of some distinctive general claims about human beings, human society, and the human condition; (3) a diagnosis of some typical defect in human beings, of what tends to go wrong in human life and society; and (4) a prescription or ideal for how human life should best be lived, typically offering guidance to individuals and human societies.[125]

Likewise, theologian Marc Cortez succinctly states, "Theological anthropology can never be entirely descriptive. A description of human nature always both presumes and entails a prescription for human living. The *what/who* questions and the *how* question are inseparable."[126] Hence, all theories on human nature seek to answer the following fundamental questions: (1) What is human nature? (ontology/relational), (2) What is human nature's problem? (counseling diagnosis), and (3) What is the solution? (prescription, methodology).[127] My assertion is that the latter two questions cannot be adequately discussed without answering the first question. Closely related to the three fundamental questions is the *telos*, a theory's goal or ideal person. In explaining biblical anthropology, Joel Green states, "We are concerned, then, with how the Bible portrays the human person, the basis and *telos* of human life, what it means for humanity, in the words of Irenaeus, to be 'fully alive' (*Adversus haereses*, 4.20)."[128] The *telos* is also connected to moral or ethical ideals in counseling. What should I do? What is a good life? What is good conduct?[129] People who seek counseling are often searching for healing or happiness. Every theory promotes a certain form of *telos*: wholeness, well-being or

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[125]Leslie Stevenson and David L. Haberman, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2. They also add the element of "human society" in understanding human nature.

[126]Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*, 3.

[127]Some Christians claim that "Who is man?" is a better question than "What is man?" from a biblical perspective. A Christian metanarrative provides these general answers: (1) Human beings have been created in the image of God with a body and soul, (2) The greatest problem is sin, and (3) The greatest need is salvation.

[128]Joel B. Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 3.

[129]George Knight, *Philosophy & Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press), 2006, 28. Knight is writing for the context of education, but his explanations apply to counseling as well. Like education, counseling involves teaching a certain metaphysical and epistemological view.

health.

Roberts rightly observes that psychologies are actually "philosophies of life . . . [that] are partially rivals of Christianity: they have different outcome-goals, different conceptions of human nature, different conceptions of human dysfunction, and different interventions."[130] Every psychological theory asserts its own "grammar," using Roberts' term, to describe human nature and the ideal state, so Rogers promoted Rogerian grammar and Jung promoted Jungian grammar.[131] Similarly, Vitz notes, every therapy espouses certain virtues, whether it is self-actualization in Rogerian therapy, individuation in Jungian therapy, or self-knowledge in Freudian therapy.[132] Integrationists John Carter and Bruce Narramore have stated similar perspectives: "But whatever the model, it is evident that personality theories, however much they differ in content, all make implicit or explicit assumptions about the nature of the human being and are therefore psychologies equivalent to biblical anthropology."[133] Even secular psychologist Carl Rogers asserted that the therapist's view of human nature affects the form of therapy and encouraged therapists to use their experience in formulating their therapy.[134] Hence, developing and articulating a Christian "grammar" in counseling is foundational.

For centuries, philosophers, psychologists and scientists have proposed a wide range of theories on human nature.[135] Consider the following selection of some of the

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[130]Robert C. Roberts, "The Idea of a Christian Psychology," *JPT* 40, no. 1 (2012): 40; Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 10; Roberts, "Parameters of a Christian Psychology," in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 75-77.

[131]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 9.

[132]Vitz, "A Christian Theory of Personality," 38.

[133]John D. Carter and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 57.

[134]Carl Rogers, "The Nature of Man," in *The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective*, ed. Simon Doniger (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 95. Doniger was a former editor of the journal *Pastoral Psychology*.

[135]For a critique on personality theories, see Jeeves, *Human Nature*, 159-73. Psychology of religion is another sub-discipline in psychology but is outside the scope of this dissertation. For an overview on psychology of religion, see H. Newton Maloney, ed., *Psychology of Religion: Personalities,*

well-known theorists. From an ontological view, Plato and later well-known thinkers, such as David Hume and Sigmund Freud, have theorized about the structure of human nature.[136] Freud had a pessimistic view of human nature, but Rogers and Maslow had a more positive view as reflected in their self-actualization theories. Various psychologists have proposed their own interpretation of human problems. For example, B. F. Skinner explained human behavior as products of the environment (behaviorism). Albert Ellis believed human beings must change their beliefs to gain emotional health (rational emotive therapy). Alfred Adler proposed the theory of inferiority complex in describing the human desire to overcome. Indeed, the theories on human nature are endless.

## Overlap between Psychology and Theological Anthropology

Though psychology is based on secular presuppositions, its area of study overlaps in many ways with theological anthropology.[137] Roberts describes how psychology and theology overlap insofar as both domains describe human nature, motivation, needs, and development:

> Insofar as theology makes statements about human nature and its fulfillment, about proper and improper human motivation, about ways in which the human spirit can develop properly and improperly, then a part of theology seems to *be* a kind of psychology, and one formally similar to 'personality theory.' Insofar as psychology indulges in broad and fundamental claims about the structure of the psyche, its needs, development, and the shape of its fulfillment, then, while it is not theology proper unless it sets these claims in a context of statements about God, still it is very much the same *kind* of intellectual product as that part of theology that bears on human nature.[138]

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*Problems, Possibilities* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991).

[136]Plato's theory encompassed reason, spirit, appetite where reason was in charge. For Hume, it was primarily about reason, passion. For Freud, it was about the id, ego, and superego.

[137]Mary Van Leeuwen, a social psychologist, discusses how personality theories overlap with theological anthropology. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *The Person in Psychology: A Contemporary Christian Appraisal* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 42. She states that Christian psychologists "need to be working very hard to develop alternative conceptions of the person in keeping with an ever-deepening understanding of biblical anthropology" (235). See also Jeeves, *Human Nature*, 149-62.

[138]Roberts, "Introduction: Christian Psychology?" 10. Charry comments, "Classical Christianity is thoroughly psychological because it is based on a biblically inspired understanding of the psyche, the self, the soul. In modern technical theological language, Christianity's reading of human nature

He recognizes presuppositional differences in psychology and theology but identifies areas of overlap. The key point is that both psychology and theology study human nature. Moreover, consider the etymology of "psychology." The term "psychology" literally means "the study of the soul." Psychology textbooks, however, typically exclude the term "soul" in defining psychology. Consider the example of a Christian psychology textbook: "the scientific study of mental and behavioral processes," encompassing the observable behavior and inner thoughts and feelings.[139] Presumably, "inner thoughts and feelings" refer to the soul. The contemporary usage of the term "psychology" seems to be a misnomer in a fundamental way. In contemporary psychology, the emphasis is on scientific research but it was not always this way.[140] Professor Julie Reuben insightfully comments on the changed meaning of truth in academics: "In the late nineteenth century intellectuals assumed that truth had spiritual, moral, and cognitive dimensions."[141] By the twentieth century, she explains, intellectuals excluded the spiritual and moral dimensions, viewing them as "values," while science was associated with "truth." It seems this broader intellectual climate would have challenged the authority of Scripture as a valid source of knowledge. Similarly, contemporary anthropology formally included the

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is referred to as theological anthropology." Charry, "Augustine of Hippo," 576.

[139]David Myers, *Psychology*, 9th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2010); Robert Feldman, *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006). The term *scientific* is significant in psychology's history because it created an official separation from supernatural or religious beliefs. It redefined the field of psychology.

[140]Even the nature of psychological science continues to evolve. Gergen seeks to demonstrate how postmodernism could strengthen modernist psychology. Kenneth J. Gergen, "Psychological Science in a Post-modern Context," *American Psychologist* 56, no. 10 (2001): 803-13.

[141]Julie A. Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 2. See also Daniel N. Robinson, *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 3rd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1995), who says, "Consistently, the defenders of a scientific psychology have been ready to dismiss as 'idealism' nearly the entire range of competing claims. Equally indiscriminately they have declared physics to be the ultimate arbiter, evolutionary notions to be impeachable, and practical success to be the final criterion of validity . . . . Fundamental debates about the possibility of a scientific understanding of things are not settled by appeals to science, for these are only begging the question," (363-64). For an insightful critique of the changes in psychology, see Herman Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, ed. John Bolt, trans. Harry Boonstra and Gerrit Sheeres (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 165-73.

metaphysical realm. Wolfhart Pannenburg explains how anthropology became a non-theological discipline:

> Metaphysical anthropology for its part took for its object not only the human person but God and the angels as well, and even the souls of animals. Then 'anthropology' came to refer specifically to human psychology. This made it possible for the doctrine on the nature of the human being *(doctrina humanae naturae)* to be removed from its earlier metaphysical setting and made independent.[142]

Based on the literal meanings, then, the term anthropology—the study of human beings—is a more accurate description for contemporary psychology.

In the past, theologians have discussed the overlap between psychology and theology and the need for careful discernment. In Christian counseling, the most cited[143] reference is probably Emil Brunner's "law of closeness of relation."[144] He insightfully discerned that the closer any study or discipline is to "man's relation to God and the being of the person, the greater is the disturbance of rational knowledge by sin." Brunner warned that a researcher who studies human nature is more likely to be biased than a researcher in mathematics. Similarly, J. Robertson McQuilkin discussed the spectrum of Scripture's "functional control" over various disciplines at five levels.[145] Theology and Christian philosophy were placed at level one, because of their high overlap with

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[142]Pannenberg's explanation is based on Odo Marquard, "Zure Geschichte des philosophischen Begriffs 'Anthropologie' seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Collegium Philosophicum* (1965), 209-39. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 17. Pannenberg's voluminous work provides an extensive literature review on anthropological works in both theology and social sciences.

[143]For example, Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 166; Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 20-21; Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," 45.

[144]Emil Brunner's complete statement: "The nearer anything lies to the center of existence where we are concerned with the whole, that is, with man's relation to God and the being of the person, the greater is the disturbance of rational knowledge by sin; the further away anything lies from the center, the less the disturbance is felt, and the less difference there is between knowing as a believer or as an unbeliever. This disturbance reaches its maximum in theology and its minimum in the exact sciences, and zero in the sphere of the formal. Hence it is meaningless to speak of a 'Christian mathematics.'" Emil Brunner, *Revelation and Reason: The Christian Doctrine of Faith and Knowledge*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946), 383, quoted in James C. Livingston et al., *The Modern Christian Thought: The Twentieth Century,* vol. 2, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: First Fortress Press, 2006)*,* 79.

[145]J. Robertson McQuilkin, "The Behavioral Sciences Under the Authority of Scripture," *JETS* 20, no. 1 (1977): 31-43.

Scripture's revelation, and psychology and anthropology were placed at level two. For level two, McQuilkin viewed "empirical research and experimentation" as other sources of knowledge, but the telling description is that he still viewed psychology and anthropology to closely overlap with Scripture. McQuilkin advocated integration based on competency in theology and psychology to prevent the loss of Scripture's functional authority. He was well aware of the slippery slope involved in integration. Both Brunner and McQuilkin recognized the potential value in social-scientific disciplines but also the potential danger.

In addition, Christian counselors, including Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors, have discussed the need for discernment when engaging certain sub-disciplines under psychology, such as personality theories and psychotherapies,[146] where the research is more worldview dependent and less scientific. Paul Hiebert, professor of mission and anthropology, claims worldviews "both enable us to see reality and blind us from seeing it fully."[147] Johnson specifies that "phenomena studied in neuroscience, perception, learning, animal motivation, and cognition seem to be less affected by worldview assumptions than distinctly human motivation, personality, psychopathology, psychotherapy, and social psychology."[148] Likewise, Roberts discusses the impossibility of complete objectivity in psychology, "where questions about meaning and value so naturally arise," mentioning Skinner as someone who sought to uphold scientific standards but still promoted personal ideals in his research on human nature.[149]

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[146]Jeeves discusses the challenge of relating personality theories and psychotherapy to a Christian view of persons. Malcolm Jeeves, "Personology and Psychotherapy," in *Human Nature at the Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 144-58.

[147]Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 23. In addition, he says that "we take for granted and rarely examine" assumptions in worldviews and "beliefs and explanations make sense" when they cohere to one's assumptions. Ibid., 29. Hiebert explains worldviews are powerful in promoting and hindering discernment.

[148]Johnson, "Let's Talk," 30.

[149]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 7.

Jones and Butman acknowledge that psychotherapy in its many forms, is based on, "for the most part, from clinical experience and reflection rather than deductively from scientific axioms or from systematic empirical research."[150] Inevitably, psychologists are influenced by their own views on human nature. Consequently, it is paramount for Christians to examine the presuppositions in psychological theories with a Christian worldview.

**The Phenomenon of Sin**

In Christian theology, the problem of human nature could be summed in one word—sin. Psychologists don't use the word "sin" but most of their work involves problems related to sin. Sin affects the whole person, both body and soul, including the structural, functional, and relational aspects; its reality cannot be denied. Indeed, the "enemy of the spirit/body is sin."[151] In his theological anthropology book, Cortez writes, "Any adequate anthropology must address the fact that real humanity as we actually see and experience it is corrupted by sin."[152] One theologian succinctly summarizes, "The whole nature of the Christian religion stands upon these two great pillars, namely, the greatness of our fall and the greatness of our redemption."[153]

Yet, how does sin affect the diagnosis and treatment of problems, such as depression, anxiety, or fear? Whether consciously or not, the reality is that assumptions about sin are inherent in terminologies and counseling methods. For instance, the term "sin" is used to convey a spiritual problem and "dysfunctional" or "unhealthy" for

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[150]Jones and Butman, introduction to *Modern Psychotherapies*, 19.

[151]Sachs, *The Christian Vision of Humanity*, 57. Sachs says, "Sinful humanity and the Spirit of the holy God" are in "opposition." (cf. Gal 5:13; Rom 7:18; 1 Cor 15:44; 1 Cor 2:13-3:3). Ibid., 53.

[152]Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*, 40.

[153]Bruce A. Milne, "The Idea of Sin in Twentieth-Century Theology," *TynBul* 26 (1975): 3. Milne cites J. R. Coates, *Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologische Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament: Sin* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1951), v.

psychological problems.[154] Sometimes, spiritual and psychological terms are used ambiguously, such as "pathology" for both spiritual and psychological problems. In addition to terminology, the recommended treatment is also descriptive. For instance, treating anxiety with cognitive-behavioral therapy indicates a belief that anxiety is more of a psychological problem.

The interpretation of the doctrine of sin (hamartiology) has consequences in viewing the solution. An overly positive view of human nature minimizes the necessity of the gospel. Theologian Mahoney says that a "positive view of human ability coupled with an optimistic view of the human condition depreciates the need for salvation and opens the door for alternate interpretations of the nature of our deliverance from sin."[155] Similarly, theologian Erickson correlates a low view of sin with behavioral or environmental changes and a high view of sin with repentance and salvation.[156] Therefore, the doctrine of sin must start with a right understanding of theology, which has implications for anthropology as well as christology and soteriology.[157]

Sin in counseling, however, has become a declining phenomenon for various reasons. One of the weighty influences has been the growth of psychology in both the culture and church.[158] Consider some of the following comments. In 1975, theologian

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[154]"Sin and Redemption," in *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling*, ed. Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011), 190. In a Christian psychology textbook, sin is placed under the category of theology (spiritual problem) and compared to abnormal psychology under psychology. Paul D. Meier et al., *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 31.

[155]John W. Mahoney, "A Theology of Sin for Today," in *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 190.

[156]Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 580-81.

[157]To illustrate this point, he uses a diagram of concentric circles. Starting from the inner most circle, the order is theology, anthropology, christology, soteriology, and ecclesiology. Mahoney, "A Theology of Sin for Today," 191.

[158]For example, liberal theologian Donald Capp argues that the theology of sin needs to be "reformulated" by interpreting sin in terms of shame rather than guilt. His argument is based primarily on psychological studies on the self. Donald Capp, *The Depleted Self: Sin in a Narcissistic Age* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 3. For a historical background on psychology and the church, see the excellent work of E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983).

Bruce Milne argued that a few of the well-known theologians of that time were not properly defining the doctrine of sin.[159] He briefly mentions that the "rise of the whole psycho-analytical approach associated with the work of Freud, Jung and others" was a contributing factor to the decline of sin. Moreover, other secular psychologists have contributed to the ambiguity of sin by presenting conflicting views. In 1960, Albert Ellis, wrote "the concept of sin breeds sickness."[160] In contrast to Ellis, O. Hobart Mowrer argued for the usage of the term "sin" to restore moral responsibility.[161] In 1973, cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker wrote that "sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same thing."[162] Yet, in that same year, American psychiatrist Karl Menninger observed that the absence of the label sin had negatively affected societal problems by shifting personal responsibility to the state.[163] In *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be*, theologian Cornelius Plantinga Jr. commented that society no longer took sin seriously and discussed the contemporary relevance of sin.[164] More recently, Terry Cooper, a Christian psychology professor, attempts a balanced perspective on sin, arguing that both pride and low self-esteem exist in sin, though one of them may be more dominant.[165]

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[159] Milne, "The Idea of Sin in Twentieth-Century Theology," 4. He carefully critiques the doctrine of sin in the writings of three well-known theologians: Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Norman Pittenger.

[160] Albert Ellis, "There is No Place for the Concept of Sin in Psychotherapy," *JCP* 7 (1960): 188-92.

[161] O. Hobart Mowrer, *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1961), 40. He was using the term "sin" broadly, not biblically.

[162] Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press,1973), 196. His theory on mental illness is based on the works of Søren Kierkegaard, Sigmund Freud, and Otto Rank.

[163] Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorne, 1973). His solution is not the gospel, but he recognized the inadequacy of psychotherapy alone in treating people. He is a Freudian therapist but more open to religious influence in therapy.

[164] He says, "The reason is that although traditional Christianity is true, its truth saws against the grain of much in contemporary culture and therefore needs constant sharpening." Cornelius Plantinga Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), x. *Christianity Today* awarded him the Book of the Year award in 1996.

[165] Terry D. Cooper, *Sin, Pride & Self-Acceptance: The Problem of Identity in Theology & Psychology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003).

Still, Cooper is concerned with the concept of sin, not sin, as evidenced in his interaction with theologians and psychologists.[166]

Christian scholars have noted other influential factors on the decline of sin. According to Boyd, psychotherapy has "fostered" narcissistic views of the self, resulting in people who are "preoccupied" with "Who am I?"[167] Theologian David Wells comments, postmodern spirituality has contributed to the "psychologizing of sin" by conceptualizing sin as a problem in reference to the self rather than God, removing the moral aspect and valuing God for what he offers.[168] Moreover, he explains that struggling with sin is normal in classical spirituality but "abnormal" in postmodern spirituality, which emphasizes immediate "divine relief" and God's love for people.[169] Similarly, according to theologian D. A. Carson, the culture of postmodernism and tolerance have contributed to the "lack of awareness of sin"[170] and, in his assessment, the "deep cultural

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[166]Regarding pride, he focuses on the teachings of Augustine and Reinhold Niebuhr. On self-esteem, he focuses on Carl Rogers' humanistic teachings. Regarding a balanced perspective, he uses Karen Horney's theory on the self. One of the strengths of Cooper's book is his nuanced view on pride and self-esteem. For instance, a person with low self-esteem may have an inflated view of self. Ibid., 166. He notes that people are "more confrontational" and "more direct" when responding to pride but supportive and encouraging for low self-esteem problems. Ibid., 3. According to Cooper, our response to sin should not be based solely on whether the issue is pride or low self-esteem.

[167]"In a self-centered culture, Americans are often more preoccupied with the question, "Who am I?" than with the larger questions, such as whether life has purpose and meaning. The vast influence of psychotherapy fosters that narcissistic preoccupation with the self." Boyd, "Losing Soul," 490. In such a culture, the starting point for evangelization should be, "Yes, who are you?" In other words, "theological anthropology could be a launch pad for the Gospel in a psychologically minded culture." Ibid.

[168]Here is the full quote for context: Postmodern spirituality begins "not so much with sin as morally framed, but with sin as psychologically experienced, not so much with sin in relation to God, but with sin in relation to ourselves. It begins with our anxiety, pain, and disillusionment, with the world in its disbrutality and insecurity. God, in consequence, is valued to the extent that he is able to bathe these wounds, assuage these insecurities, clam these fears, restore some sense of internal order, and bring some sense of wholeness." David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 42.

[169]"Whereas in classical spirituality it was assumed that sinners would struggle with their sin, and feel its sting, and experience dismay over it, in postmodern spirituality, this struggle is considered abnormal and something for which divine relief is immediately available." Ibid., 42. Wells observes, "While everyone even remotely within a biblical frame of reference affirms both God's love and his holiness, this postmodern spirituality greatly enlarges his love . . . . And while his transcendence and immanence are alike affirmed, it is his immanence, his relatedness, that is preeminent." Ibid., 43.

[170]D. A. Carson, "Sin's Contemporary Significance," in *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 34. "To sum up: the contemporary significance of biblical teaching on sin is best grasped, first, when the place of sin within the Bible itself is understood, and, second, when we perceive how desperately our culture needs to be shaped

animus against the category of sin means that many preachers much prefer to talk about weaknesses, mistakes, tragedies, failures, inconsistencies, hurts, disappointment, blindness—anything but sin. As a result, the biblical portrayal of God is distorted and his plan of redemption."[171] Based on these scholars' observations, sin has become a social construct—its relevance and meaning determined by human beings rather than God.

In church history, however, Christian pastors, leaders, and scholars have written about sin in relation to human nature.[172] For example, Gregory the Great described the seven deadly sins in Moralia in Job.[173] Augustine reflected on personal sins in his classic work, *Confessions*. He wrote that sin is evil because it is the rejection of God's goodness: "All which is corrupted is deprived of good."[174] John Owen wrote *The Mortification of Sin* (1656) to teach Christians how to kill sin by the Spirit's work.[175]

Christianity's metanarrative on human nature is not solely about sin but also redemption. John Stott sums it well, "How could anyone imagine that Christianity is about sin rather than about the forgiveness of sin?"[176] Thus, a theological perspective does not fixate on sin alone, presenting an incomplete story. It works toward redemption found in Christ alone. From Genesis to Revelation, the overarching story is redemption

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by what the Bible says about sin." Ibid., 37.

[171]Ibid., 35.

[172]The point here is to show that the topic of sin was addressed in early writings, not to provide a historical background on the topic of sin in church writings, which is outside the scope of this research. For a helpful overview on the historical views of sin, see Allison, *Historical Theology*, 342-62. For a historical background on pastoral care, see William Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective* (1964; repr., New York: Jason Aronson, 1975).

[173]For a helpful explanation of Gregory the Great's *Moralia* 7, 28.34, see Gerald Bray, "Sin in Historical Theology," in *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 172-74.

[174]Augustine, Confessions, VII: [Ch. XII] 18. Augustine believed that God made everything good, so evil could not have existed from the beginning. According to Bray, the view that sin was a "deprivation" of good was common in the early church. Bray, "Sin in Historical Theology," 168.

[175]John Owen, *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, ed. Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006).

[176]John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 100.

through Christ.[177] The redemption story gives hope to all people, because nothing can "thwart" God from achieving his purposes for "human welfare."[178] The "story of sin" points to the "story of glory" found in salvation.[179] Thus, how each counseling model views sin have implications not only for the diagnosis of problems but also for the relevance of the gospel in counseling.

## Conclusion

Considering the importance of theological anthropology in counseling, a need certainly exists for more Christians in counseling to engage this field thoughtfully. A holistic approach to counseling must consider the reality of sin and the spiritual nature. The approach to the spiritual nature has implications for the way sin is understood, because sin is considered a spiritual issue. Depending on how the spiritual nature is defined, sin is "a" problem or "the" problem in counseling. It also affects the nature of psychological problems. Examining the spiritual nature and sin in each model will add clarity as to how each model practices a holistic approach and on the extent of theological anthropology in the anthropological frameworks.

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[177]In Gen 3.9-10, God searches for Adam and Adam hides from God. "The search for 'Adam' marks all that follows in biblical narrative, culminating in one who defined his mission as being to 'seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke 19:10)." Oglesby, "Implications of Anthropology," 162.

[178]Guthrie writes, "The ground for this stubborn hope is the Christian confidence that no sin, no sickness, no complex of psychological and sociological influences, not even death itself, can finally thwart the creative, redemptive, life-renewing purpose of God for human welfare." Guthrie, "Pastoral Counseling," 143.

[179]"God himself has told his story so that humanity might understand its own story. Within his story, there is our story, the story of what he intended us to be in creation, the story of what we have become through sin, the story of what he still intends us to become through salvation. Human experience, with all its complexities and ambiguities, is viewed from the standpoint of the biblical story, which is both the story of sin and the story of glory, the glory of divine salvation." Charles Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," *Evangel* 23, no. 2 (2005): 54.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN
CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY

As stated in chapter 1, Christian psychology consists of scholars and

practitioners from diverse backgrounds. Because this research is concerned with

theological anthropology, I will focus primarily on the writings of Eric Johnson and

Robert Roberts who tend to interact intentionally with Scripture and theological sources.[1]

Others may not explicitly engage with the Bible, but their Christian faith still shapes their

perspectives. I will start by presenting an overview of key anthropological themes in

Johnson's and Roberts' writings, followed by a brief critique. The themes provide some

context for the subsequent discussion on the description of sin in Johnson's and Roberts'

frameworks. In Johnson's model, the "four orders" are critical in understanding his

perception of spiritual and psychological problems, as well as the role of Scripture in

counseling. In contrast to Johnson, Roberts' area of research has focused on the

development of virtues and the new self, which are anthropological themes in the Bible.

At the end of the chapter, Langberg's case study on Jake is used to evaluate the

functionality of theological anthropological themes in a Christian psychology approach.

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[1]For example, see Eric L. Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity), 2007; idem, "How God is Good for the Soul." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 22, no. 1 (2003): 78-88. Roberts refers to the apostle Paul's teachings on wisdom in 1 Cor 1 and 2 to show the superiority of Christian wisdom to worldly wisdom. Robert C. Roberts, "Wisdom and Psychotherapy," *JPC* 25, no. 2 (2006): 128. See also Robert C. Roberts and P. J. Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," in *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 155-64. Roberts and Watson analyze the Sermon on the Mount in Matt 5. See also Robert C. Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 137-44.

## Eric Johnson's Four Orders

Johnson's view of Scripture in counseling complements his anthropological structure. According to Johnson, "Christian soul care ought to be grounded in Scripture and Christians ought to reject any beliefs that would undermine biblical teaching regarding human beings and salvation."[2] Johnson believes Scripture is sufficient for salvific issues or "ultimacy counseling," which includes Christlikeness.[3] Johnson asserts 2 Timothy 3:15-17 and 2 Peter 1:2-4 do not teach Scripture to contain "all" knowledge for soul-care but knowledge for godliness.[4] Johnson specifies,

> The Bible gives us many *general* soul-care principles, goals and means. But it does not contain, on the one hand, higher-order *theoretical statements* regarding, for example, cognitive, emotional and volitional aspects of the soul, the structure of the personality or psychospiritual abnormality, or, on the other hand, lower-order detailed, step-wise treatment strategies for applying the gospel and remediating sin and biological and psychosocial damage. Such higher- and lower-order discourse is the fruit of scientific reflection and research.[5]

So, Scripture is necessary but not comprehensive for soul care. Scripture lacks the "how" component of counseling. Using anxiety as an example, Johnson mentions Scripture verses ("cast your burden" 1 Pet 5:6-7; God cares for you more than birds and flowers Matt 6:25-34; "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" Col 3:15) to support his point that the Bible provides general teachings, not specific guidance on "how to cast burdens or anxiety on the Lord."[6] Examining Johnson's anthropology provides clarity as to why he believes the Bible is general and not comprehensive.

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[2]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 180.

[3]"So, in *ultimacy counseling*, Scripture must be seen as the all-sufficient source of information regarding the ultimate, salvific issues of life that lie in the deepest regions of the heart." Ibid., 181. "The Scriptures offer a map sufficient for guiding humanity toward the maturity ideal known as Christlikenss." Ibid., 182.

[4]Ibid., 118-19.

[5]Ibid., 184-85. "The Scriptures are necessary for Christian counseling, but their wise teachings regarding soul-healing are general; from a scientific standpoint, they are relatively underdeveloped and unsystematized" (185).

[6]"Such passages teach that believers have access to a spiritual contentment that undermines anxiety, and they are encouraged to pursue it. However, let us conclude this chapter on the Bible's self-attested value as a soul-care book by acknowledging that all these instructions are quite general in nature. Nowhere, for example, is it spelled out exactly *how to* cast burdens or anxiety on the Lord." Ibid., 49.

Johnson's anthropological structure entails four hierarchical elements or "orders of discourse": spiritual, ethical, psychosocial, and biological. He asserts the necessity of differentiating the orders "to understand human nature properly and do justice both to its multiorder complexity as well as its holistic unity."[7] The spiritual order pertains to God and aspects related to his work, such as conversion and growth in Christlikeness.[8] The Bible is the primary text for the spiritual order.[9] The ethical order is concerned with morality.[10] The psychosocial order concerns mental processes and human development. The biological order refers to the body and brain. The psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual orders are aspects of the "soul," with the spiritual order being the highest.[11]

The orders may be considered separately yet interrelatedly. The spiritual order is the highest and most important for its "subvenient effects," Johnson's phrase for top down changes. As a result of subvenient effects, "the behavioral, cognitive and emotional changes due to salvation and Christian soul care."[12] By subvenient effects, the spiritual order provides meaning in understanding the biological, psychosocial, and ethical orders and, importantly, an accurate interpretation of the self. For instance, Johnson says that all human beings, as created in the image of God, have worth, but their worth is not fully realized outside of a saving knowledge of God.[13] Moreover, the spiritual order is where

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[7]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 369. Christian psychologist Gary Moon also discusses the value of a holistic model. He supports Dallas Willard's anthropological model for including both spiritual and psychological components: spirit, thoughts, mind, body, social, and soul. Gary W. Moon, "Integration in Three Tenses: A Journey from Separate and Not Equal to Integral and Interwoven," *JPT* 40, no. 1 (2012): 68.

[8]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 345.

[9]"The Bible is an indispensable document that has primacy over all other texts, because it provides an inspired, fixed sample of the discourse of the spiritual order." Ibid., 350.

[10]Ibid., 348.

[11]Ibid., 373.

[12]Ibid., 364.

[13]Eric L. Johnson, "Self-Esteem in the Presence of God," *JPT* 17, no. 3 (1989): 232.

"inwardness," inner transformation, begins.[14] Inwardness is critical for Christlikeness to develop. In turn, each order manifests God's glory as "the Form of Christ" or "Christiformity," using Johnson's terms for Christlikeness, becomes more evident.[15] For example, thinking thoughts that are honorable to God displays more of God's glory in the ethical order. In Johnson's anthropological structure, then, the spiritual order is of priority in soul care.

For each order, a corresponding type of problem, or "psychopathology," as Johnson calls it, exists. See table 2 for an overview of Johnson's four orders and the corresponding psychopathologies.

Table 2. Summary of Johnson's four orders and psychopathologies

| Four Order | Psychopathologies | Personal Responsibility | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| Spiritual (highest) | Sin, including guilt and shame | Yes | Confession, repentance, resistance |
| Ethical | Evil acts toward others, possibly guilt and shame | Depends on personal agency | Same as for spiritual |
| Psychosocial | "Damage" | Depends on personal agency | Acceptance of damage, remediation for healing as much as possible |
| Biological (lowest) | "Damage" | Depends on personal agency | Same as for psychosocial |

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[14]See Johnson's extensive explanation of "inwardness," *Foundations for Soul Care*, 416-33.

[15]Ibid., 46, 542-43. Johnson expresses his preference for the term "Christiformity," an older term used in church history, instead of the term "sanctification" to emphasize Christ in the process of change. Eric L. Johnson, "Rewording the Justification/Sanctification Relation with Some Help from Speech Act Theory," *JETS* 54, no. 4 (2011): 780-81. "Human fulfillment, flourishing and true virtue are realized through becoming more like Christ, the perfect human being. God's glory is the end for which we were made, but a human being cannot glorify God any better than by becoming more like him. Growing desires to be like him that are realized in an increasingly Christlike life signify to the world the unsurpassable worth of God and contribute to God's glory. So, Christian soul care, above all else, seeks to foster Christlikeness." Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 218.

**Psychopathologies in**
**Johnson's Four Orders**

According to Johnson, "Psychopathology is any internal barrier to a person's manifestation of God's glory."[16] In the spiritual order, sin is the disorder. It is "only within the spiritual order that sin can be properly grasped. As a result, language describing sin should also be considered a part of the discourse of the spiritual order."[17] Johnson says that sin is the great "equalizer,"[18] because no person is immune from sin, and it is the most serious psychopathology. Johnson considers the fall as the starting point of psychological disorders.[19] While sin is a serious problem, Johnson asserts, "Christ and his redemption are more important than sin."[20] He expresses concern that some Christians overly "hunt for sin" during self-examination, without remembering the forgiveness found in Christ. A gospel approach involves repentance and self-denial of the old self.

In the ethical order, the disorder is "evil activity," both internal or behavioral, toward others.[21] Examples are neglect as well as physical, psychological, and emotional pain against others. Also included in the ethical order are guilt and shame, which are "signs of sin," related to indwelling sin or the flesh.[22] Guilt and shame can be valuable when they move a person closer to God. The solution for ethical disorders is repentance of evil thoughts, words and deeds. A critical concept in the ethical order is "personal agency," which determines whether a person is responsible for wrongdoings. Personal agents are people "who have a sufficiently well-developed human nature that they can be

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[16]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 459.

[17]Ibid., 347.

[18]Ibid., 464.

[19]Ibid., 461.

[20]Ibid., 482-83.

[21]Ibid., 466.

[22]Ibid., 46-70, 483. If guilt or shame are experienced in relation to God, then they are considered spiritual disorders. Only redemption can truly address genuine guilt and shame (464).

legitimately held accountable for their actions and therefore are capable of wrongdoing."[23] Johnson clarifies that people of all ages and mental capacities should be held accountable for their actions but the extent of their "personal agency" should be considered.

In the psychosocial order, the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) is used to identify disorders or "damage," using Johnson's term, such as psychosomatic symptoms, cognitive and behavioral symptoms (e.g., traumatic memories, false beliefs), emotional symptoms, volitional problem (e.g., indecision, impulsivity), relational symptoms (e.g., attachment disorders, codependence), form symptoms (e.g., low self-esteem, defense mechanisms, dissociative disorders).[24] In short, unless the person is responsible for the damage, that person is not held responsible for the effects. Damage to the psychosocial order is not necessarily sin but "signs of sin." Regardless, that person is responsible to seek the necessary treatments. Various "modalities," such as behavioral and cognitive therapies, can be used but the person must depend on God for psychosocial disorders to heal.[25] Healing comes by "pouring out the heart" to the Lord (Lam 2:19). The ideal goal is to connect psychosocial disorders to the gospel, so that God's glory is manifested.

Biological disorders are physical sufferings and limitations. In particular, Johnson discusses the effect of the brain on the other orders. While medications and other biological treatments can be useful, they are not the ultimate solution. He clarifies that biopsychosocial disorders do not cause sin but influences sin.[26] The biopsychosocial orders pertain to the "created structure" of human nature, which could be good or

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[23]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 467; cf. 343.

[24]Ibid., 471-73.

[25]Ibid., 488-89.

[26]Ibid., 477.

"damaged."[27] Addressing the biopsychosocial orders are important for the development of the ethical and spiritual orders.

To illustrate how the four orders and personal responsibility are addressed in counseling, Johnson introduces a case study with Ted.[28] Ted is a Christian who is in his forties, married with children. He is struggling with anxiety, which is affecting his concentration and relationships with people at work and home. In addition, he had several dinners with a female coworker who now desires a more serious relationship. As a child, his Christian parents had high expectations of him.

Spiritually, Ted is a Christian, so a counselor should help Ted draw closer to God and strengthen his greatest relational need.[29] Reading the Bible and other Christian books are suggested. Focusing on the spiritual order first, however, may not be beneficial if the lower orders are damaged. After Ted addresses his biological, psychosocial, and ethical disorders, he works on developing a true knowledge of God over the next nine months. Ethically, Ted needs to repent of his sins and make appropriate changes, but he may struggle in repenting because of previous negative experiences of Christianity in the home. He is intimidated by his perception of God as a harsh being. After Ted becomes more stable with medications and spiritual disciplines, he confesses his poor judgment to this coworker.

Psychosocially, Ted would benefit from meeting with godly Christians for a better understanding of God. The desire is for Ted to grow closer to God as he meets with godly people. Ted learns Christian cognitive-behavioral strategies to use when experiencing anxiety. For example, he learns relaxation strategies that involves thinking about his relationship with Christ. Biologically, sometimes, the counselor needs to start at

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[27]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 447-49.

[28]The story is mentioned in ibid., 328-29.

[29]For an application of the four orders to Ted's life, see ibid., 378-83. Johnson's practical suggestions for each order are found on p. 492.

the psychosocial or biological orders if the person is not a Christian or too "damaged" at these levels to benefit from spiritual guidance. Ted is diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, so he is given anti-anxiety medication to alleviate some of the symptoms. Eventually, he is able to focus more and begins to meditate on the Bible and pray. After a couple of months, Ted is taken off the medications.

**Critique of Johnson's Anthropological Orders**

As demonstrated in the four orders, Johnson aims to present a holistic, multilevel, hierarchical model.[30] Johnson's references are impressively broad, from studies on the brain, human developmental theories, philosophical writings, and church historians. Also, Johnson thoughtfully considers the dynamics within and among the orders. The complexity of human nature is evident in his detailed work. More importantly, Johnson's placement of the spiritual order at the highest level and its priority in soul care reflects a distinct Christian perspective of human nature. In particular, his discussion on "subvenient effects" strengthens the importance of the spiritual order and need for the gospel in counseling.

Ultimately, however, the four orders are Johnson's suggestions regarding the structure of human nature. Johnson acknowledges that no conclusive argument exists for a multilevel and hierarchical model.[31] Johnson's anthropological framework, in many ways, resembles a combination of philosophical and theological anthropology. For instance, the biological, psychosocial, and ethical orders correspond to Catholic philosopher Christian Brugger's philosophical anthropology: (1) human beings are

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[30]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 355.

[31]After presenting arguments for a hierarchical order, Johnson writes, "Altogether these arguments make a pretty good case for a hierarchy, but not an irrefutable one. But such is life. The legal system works with such ambiguity all the time. Quite often we have to hold to positions that are plausible and rational, but not indisputable." Ibid., 371. He does reference various studies for implicit support, such as research on the relationship between the brain and mind activities, biological effects on mood disorders, and parental effects on a person's religious beliefs (360-61).

substantially one, (2) human beings are embodied beings, (3) human beings are interpersonally relational, (4) human beings are rational and capable of knowing morality, and (5) human beings are volitional and free.[32] From a theological perspective, a structural approach to human nature presents certain concerns, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

For holistic purposes, it seems distinct orders could be useful for descriptive purposes and to guard against a simplistic view of human nature. A question is how distinct are the orders in relation to each other? In Johnson's anthropological framework, each order has unique concerns yet overlaps exist among the psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual orders. The overlap between the ethical and spiritual orders seems closest. Johnson even calls them "ethicospiritual." For instance, Johnson places guilt and shame in the ethical order but if they are seen in relation to God, they are placed in the spiritual order. Further, Johnson acknowledges that the psychosocial order is equivalent to the Christian understanding of the spirit or soul.[33] Yet, the Scripture passages used to support the psychosocial order actually support the spiritual order. Johnson writes, "Scriptural teaching leads us to infer that God is especially committed to those who have psychological damage and desirous of improving their well-being (Mt 9:11-13; 11:19; 18:6; Lk 6:20; 1 Cor 1:26-28; 2 Cor 4:7; Jas 2:5)."[34] In context, however, God is revealing his priority on spiritual well-being or salvation. In Matthew 9:11-13[35] and

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[32]E. Christian Brugger, "Anthropological Foundations for Clinical Psychology: A Proposal," *JPT* 36, no. 1 (2008): 10-11. Brugger's theological anthropology refers to the premise that man is created (ontological), fallen (existential), and redeemed (teleology). See also E. Christian Brugger, "Psychology and Christian Anthropology," *Edification* 3 (2009): 5-18.

[33]Here is the full description: "By psychosocial order, we are referring to the immaterial dynamic structures that originate in social interaction but are gradually internalized within the individual human being, developing throughout life and giving definition and dynamic form to the embodied human. It is what in the Christian tradition has been called the spirit or soul of a human being, what modern philosophers have called 'mind' (Rosenthal, 1991; Ryle, 1949), and what psychologists call 'cognition.'" Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 337.

[34]Ibid., 473.

[35]Matthew 9:11-13 states, "And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well

11:19,[36] Jesus is talking about spiritual sickness, which corresponds to Johnson's spiritual order, not psychosocial order. In Matthew 18:6, Jesus explicitly warns against causing children or Christians who have a childlike faith to stumble spiritually.[37] In Luke 6:20, the poor could refer to an economic or spiritual status, but Jesus emphasizes the hope found in the kingdom of God for those who depend on God.[38] In 1 Corinthians 1:26-28, Paul's point is that salvation is not based on worldly standards, such as wealth, power, and intellect.[39] Thus, the cited Scripture passages focus on spiritual well-being and its

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have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Theologian R. T. France explains, "Jesus' first response is in the form of a proverb which uses physical illness as a metaphor for spiritual need." R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 354. See also Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 221.

[36]Matthew 11:19 states, "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds." Unlike his opponents, Jesus did not reject people who did not "bother to observe the details of the ceremonial rules that were the delight of the religious people of the day" (Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 286). In reference to "wisdom is justified by her deeds," France notes the "practical wisdom" of Jesus in caring for the spiritual state of sinners from various backgrounds, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 434-35. France also compares the different lifestyles of Jesus and John the Baptist in displaying "practical wisdom." See also David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 296.

[37]Matthew 18:6 states, "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea." Jesus' warning describes the seriousness of "deceiving" little ones to sin. According to Morris, "most commentators agree that the 'little ones' include not only small children but all lowly believers" who trust in Christ alone. Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 462. Turner also explains Matthew's usage of "little ones" as a metaphor for necessity of dependence on God. Turner, *Matthew*, 435-37. See also Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1995): 522.

[38]Luke 6:20 states, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.'" Commentators define the "poor" with different emphases. According to Robert Stein, the "poor" could refer to the economic status of a believer, but it "has more of a theological than an economic sense here." Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 200. For biblical support, Stein refers to David's poor spiritual condition in Pss 40:17, 86:1, 109:22. John Nolland defines "poor" in terms of poverty, especially for disciples of Jesus who endured suffering. John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 282-83. Further, according to Joel Green, the poor in Luke's writing not only alludes to the economic status but also their marginalization in society, such as lack of "power and prestige" and "arrogant self-security apart from God" Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 267.

[39]First Corinthians 1:26-28 states, "For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are." David Garland comments, "Throughout the biblical narrative God consistently chooses the most unlikely figures, and Paul maintains that God has continued this pattern in choosing the believers in Corinth" David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 77; cf. 72-77. Thus, believers have nothing to boast, because their calling

priority, not psychological well-being. These passages do not seem to distinguish psychological health from spiritual health.

Further, Johnson says that all of the orders are affected by indwelling sin, yet sin and spiritual growth are confined to the spiritual order. This concern is related to how Johnson explains personal sin and responsibility, which will be discussed later. The attempt to be sensitive to external factors, such as psychosocial influences, seems to create a different kind of problem. Moreover, a form of epistemological dualism could develop when the Bible is relevant for the spiritual order and psychological theories for the psychosocial order.

## Virtues in Roberts' Anthropology

In Robert's anthropology, the concept of virtues or traits is significant.[40] Since the 1980s, Roberts has studied virtues found in the theories of Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, and other psychologists.[41] Virtues reflect the *telos* of Roberts' anthropology. Other synonymous phrases used in Christian psychology for the *telos* are human flourishing, ideal person, maturity, and healthy or proper functioning. So, virtues are characteristics of an ideal person or a healthy person. Roberts uses the terms "virtues" and "vices" to refer to healthy/functional traits of the new self and unhealthy/dysfunctional traits of the old self, respectively.[42] From a biblical standpoint, the two selves and their respective traits

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has nothing to do with their socioeconomic status or pedigree. See also Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 78-83; Mark Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: B&H, 2014), 73-75.

[40]Charry has also written on virtues. She uses the term "artegenic" to refer to the development of virtues. Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[41]Robert C. Roberts, "Psychotherapeutic Virtues and the Grammar of Faith," *JPT* 15, no. 3 (1987): 191-204. For an in-depth treatment of virtues, see Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

[42]Roberts, "Parameters of a Christian Psychology," in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 76-77. See also Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 137-38.

pertain to the spiritual nature, so they are the focus in this section.

In a co-written chapter, Roberts with P. J. Watson examines the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5) to discuss the psychology of well-being or *makarios* ("blessed," "happy").[43] The blessed traits, such as purity of heart and humility, describe characteristics of well-being or happiness. Contradictory traits, such as adultery or greed, describe dysfunction or psychopathology. They accurately point out most psychologies focus on the self, such as "high self-esteem, contentment, individual satisfaction, individuation and a sense of empowerment," for well-being. In contrast to the "self," they state true well-being is found in Jesus Christ. Only by knowing Christ can a person experience the blessed traits. For the rest of Matthew 5, they identify various traits or lessons for well-being, such as minimizing anger, managing lust, and respecting others, to name a few.[44] Roberts and Watson are accurate biblically that well-being is found in Christ but they inadequately placed the traits in relation to God, at least in this particular work. Instead, they focused more on the implications of the traits for psychological research and not enough on the development of the traits. In other works, however, Roberts explicitly states that well-being is dependent on a person's relationship to God, which will be discussed next.

In one of Roberts' earliest books, *Taking the Word to Heart*, he asks, what is the "basic human need"? His answer is the greatest commandments. The "double commandment" is "not just an 'ethical' command, but a prescription for psychic health, for fulfillment of our psychological nature."[45] Human beings were created to love God and others, which results in human flourishing and the "true self."[46] In a later work,

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[43]Roberts and Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," 157.

[44]Ibid., 159-64.

[45]Roberts, "Parameters of a Christian Psychology," 85; cf. Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 296.

[46]"According to the Christian Word, the core of the selfhood of all of us—what we most truly are as selves, whether or not we have actualized and acknowledged this—is that we are bearers of God's

Roberts adds a third relational component, a relationship with creation, in explaining

basic human nature.[47] Human beings "need" these relationships, and Roberts clarifies that

he is not referring to relational "needs" in the psychological sense. The condition of a

person's relational nature, especially with God, results in well-being or dysfunction.

Roberts describes six basic structural elements of human nature that are

necessary for the relational nature, and subsequently virtues, to develop. First, human

beings are "verbivorous," dependent on God's words in the Bible for proper

development. Second, human beings are self-determining agents, responsible for their

behaviors. Third, inwardness is the internal dimension, often called the "heart" in the

Bible.[48] Both external and internal states are inter-related and depend on "taking the word

to heart" for transformation. Fourth, God must be the source of the heart's attachment.

An attachment to God is necessary for the "true self" to develop.[49] Fifth, human beings

must identify themselves as God's children, remembering that they are "in Christ." Sixth,

choices must be made to dissociate with the old self and associate with the new self.

Roberts refers to Galatians 2:20 and Romans 7:7-25 as biblical examples of associating

with the new person in Christ and dissociating with the sinful nature. In sum, practical

examples are choosing actions that please God, confessing sins, seeking accountability,

and thinking in ways that are consistent with the gospel.[50]

In Roberts' description of basic human nature, sin is intentionally excluded.

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image, made and intended to be his children, to love him and our neighbor and to serve in his kingdom." Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 304.

[47]Roberts, "Parameters of a Christian Psychology," 77, 92, 97.

[48]Ibid., 84-85.

[49]Roberts uses the terms "false, pseudo, inadequate or lesser self" to refer to a person who lives contrary to God's intended self. Roberts uses Carl Rogers' four selves—actual self, self-concept, true self, and ideal self—as a framework in understanding the self. Roberts references Sigmund Koch, *Formulations of the Person and the Social Context*, vol. 3 of *Psychology: A Study of a Science* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959); and Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961). Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 22-28.

[50]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 98.

Sin is not a part of the basic human nature but a perversion of what is meant to be.[51] For example, pride and envy are perversions of humility. Anxiety and distrust are perversions of faith. In essence, sin is the dysfunction that occurs when the structural elements mentioned above are not oriented towards God. So, sin is relational; it is against God, other fellow human beings, or nature. Sin is also evidence of false loves and inordinate loves.[52]

In a later work, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," Roberts illustrates the development of the new self, using a Pauline psychotherapy. It is based on Paul's explanation of the old self and new self, which Roberts refers to as "personalities." A personality is "a set of traits that are expressed in behaviors and emotions."[53] In Pauline psychotherapy, the goal is for the new self to replace the old self. Roberts explains that the old self is dead in Christ but dysfunctional traits or vices still exist.[54] So, Pauline psychotherapy involves identifying and analyzing dysfunctions, and related factors such as family backgrounds and view of God, to facilitate the development of the new self. Crucial to transformation is applying the "verbs" in Paul's writings, such as yielding to God (Rom 6:13), letting the word of Christ dwell in you (Col 3:16), putting off the old nature (Eph 4:22-24), putting to death the old self (Rom 8:13), and giving thanks to God (Col 3:17). At the end of his chapter, Roberts states that Pauline psychotherapy produces psychological change in the broad sense of the term: "Psychological change includes a change in behavior, thought and emotion—not a change in a particular thought, behavior or emotion, but a change in *disposition* toward these things."[55] The psychological change

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[51]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 95.

[52]Ibid., 96.

[53]Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 137.

[54]Ibid., 138.

[55]Ibid., 163.

in Pauline psychotherapy is spiritual, made possible by the Holy Spirit. He also states briefly that spiritual change "does not occur in a different part of the soul from psychological change." In a later work, Roberts seems more explicit in stating the inseparability of psychological problems from human sinfulness. He says that problems are "embedded in . . . sinfulness," so the "larger task" is the "reorientation of lives from folly to wisdom and from vice to virtue, both conceived as in the Christian picture."[56]

**Critique of Roberts' Virtues**

For Christians, the concept of virtues or traits is appealing because of its similarities with biblical teachings on godliness, such as the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5). Vitz also notes a positive correlation between Christian virtues and healing, saying that people who exhibit Christian virtues tend to struggle less with psychological problems, such as "depression, anxiety, family strife, addictions, criminal behavior, a sense of meaningless, low self-confidence, and so forth."[57] He also says such problems are "simply ruled out" in people with virtues, such as "faith, love, patience, humility, hope, compassion, self-control, forgiveness, forbearance, steadfastness, chastity, justice, courage temperance, and wisdom."[58]

The concept of virtues is not limited to the Christian faith, so what distinguishes "Christian virtues" from others? Foundational to the development of Christian virtues is a relationship with God. It is the belief that Christian virtues are evidences of spiritual growth and the new creation.[59] Godliness, using a biblical concept

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[56]Roberts, "Wisdom and Psychotherapy," 135.

[57]Paul C. Vitz, "A Christian Theory of Personality," in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 38.

[58]Ibid., 37.

[59]Hans-Georg Link and Karl Heinrich Ringwald state, "Hence, the NT virtues are not derived from the harmony of the soul (Plato) nor from the quality of the man (Aristotle), but are seen as gracious gifts (charisma) of the divine Spirit: they are the actions and the marks of God's new creation." Hans-Georg Link and Karl Heinrich Ringwald, "Virtue, Blameless," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 927.

of virtues, reflects God and is a work of both human beings and the Holy Spirit. A potential weakness in focusing on virtues is forgetting the divine source of virtues. In theology, practicing virtues or traits is similar to biblical teachings on imperatives, but the imperatives are based on the indicatives—that is teachings on the new self. In Christian psychology, the discussion on virtues must be careful of excluding the divine source of virtues, which is why a term like "godliness" is preferable.

In many ways, the strength of Roberts' Pauline psychotherapy is the orientation towards the new self and personal agency to cultivate virtues. Indeed, the old self and new self are Pauline concepts with direct implications for the change process or sanctification (Eph 4:22-24). Roberts, however, discusses the old self and new self without adequately addressing a critical problem—sin. Following verse 24, Paul lists specific sins to put off, such as falsehood (v. 25), anger (v. 26), theft (v. 28), corrupt speech (v. 29), grieving the Holy Spirit (v. 30), as well as bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice (v. 31). Rather, Roberts focuses on vices and virtues found in a person's character. Vices, however, are not the real problem and they inadequately portray the profundity of human problems. Roberts seems to not use the term "sin" because, in his mind, sin implies personal responsibility and all problems are not the result of sinful choices.[60] If sin is not explicitly described as the problem, then the focus on virtues could result in a moralistic life, not Spirit-based godly living. The topic of vices further supports the importance of properly understanding and teaching sin, which is discussed in the next section on sin and responsibility.

In "A Christian Psychology Perspective," Roberts and Watson accurately identify traits that are uniquely developed in Christians. Their interpretation of Matthew 5, however, presents hermeneutical concerns. They primarily interpreted the verses for psychological significance or to illustrate their point on well-being. The purpose here is

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[60]Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 148-49.

not to analyze Matthew 5 but to show the effects of the interpretation of Scripture on the perception of Scripture's practicality. For example, Roberts and Watson interpret "salt" and "light" in Matthew 5:13-16 to mean that personal well-being should affect others.[61] In proper context, Jesus used the metaphor salt and light to describe a godly life that brings glory to God.[62] While the teachings in Matthew 5 are relevant for a person's well-being, the primary focus is on glorifying God. Related to another issue, this interpretation of Matthew 5 could explain their claim that Scripture does not offer guidance on "how" to develop the traits. According to Roberts and Watson, the beatitudes provide explicit commandments on what to do and not to do, such as "be poor in spirit," but they lack practical instructions on the "how."[63] If, however, the beatitudes are understood in the context of a relationship with God, then it seems the instructions for the "how" points to the necessity of knowing God more. As Christians practice the beatitudes, they become like salt and light to the world. The concern is that passages such as the Sermon on the Mount become a tool for self-improvement rather than a means of grace in becoming like Christ when traits are described without the context of a relationship with God. Moreover, if the teleology is becoming like Christ and displaying his virtues, then a relationship with God should be of primacy in Christian psychology's therapy.

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[61]"We might say that, for Jesus, personal or psychic well-being is never abstractly or privately for the person in whom it resides." Roberts and Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," 160.

[62]In reference to Matt 5:13-16, Morris notes, "Now comes a paragraph that points to the penetrating power of the gospel and of people who are transformed by it. They are likened to salt and to light." Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 103. He adds, "The good works are to be seen, not in order that the doers may be congratulated as fine, upstanding servants of God, but in such a way that the observers will *give glory to your Father*. There is to be no parade of virtue, no attempt to win praise for oneself" (ibid., 106). France also explains that the effect of light, or good deeds, is not "improvement and enlightenment of society as such, but rather as the glorifying of God by those outside the disciple community . . . . The goal of disciples' witness is not that others emulate their way of life . . . but that they recognize" the Light. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 177. See also Turner, *Matthew*, 154-56.

[63]Roberts and Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," 158.

**Sin and Responsibility**

Christian psychologists acknowledge the problem of sin,[64] but they also warn Christians of overemphasizing sin or over-broadening sin in counseling. Charry describes sin and repentance as distinct aspects of the Christian life.[65] In the same paragraph, she also states the necessity of secular psychotherapy for "mental health issues, various personality disorders and temperamental variation," because these issues are outside the church's expertise. Her statements imply some problems are spiritual, requiring repentance, and others are psychological. In an article, Charry agrees with Augustine that "there is no psychological problem that is not also a spiritual problem," requiring "divine assistance."[66] She supports Augustine's insight on the relationship between disordered desires and the broken self,[67] even saying "psychotherapeutic goal is to help people straighten out their love" for human flourishing to occur.[68] She agrees this orderly love is rooted in God. Elsewhere, however, she shares her belief that Augustine narrowly interpreted sin in terms of pride, based on his personal experience, when other moral problems, such as "greed" and "jealousy" exist.[69]

In another article, Charry claims that Christians have overly focused on human depravity, leading to the neglect of the Christian's well-being, such as "self-confidence,

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[64]P. J. Watson, in particular, has conducted empirical research on beliefs about sin and psychological implications. P. J. Watson et al., "Beliefs about Sin: Adaptive Implications in Relationships with Religious Orientation, Self-Esteem, and Measures of the Narcissistic, Depressed, and Anxious Self," *Edification* 1, no. 1 (2007): 57-67. The research measured four dimensions: self-improvement, perfectionism, humility, and self-reflective views. The point of mentioning this study is to show that empirical research regarding sin has been conducted.

[65]Charry, "Theology after Psychology," 131.

[66]Ellen Charry, "Augustine of Hippo: Father of Christian Psychology," *Anglican Theological Review* 88 (2006): 579, 581.

[67]"Perhaps his [Augustine's] greatest psychological insight is that a disordered self is the result of disordered desire; and disordered desire is the source of our misery and suffering in this life. Further, the reordering of love is the key to the repair of the self." Ibid., 578.

[68]Nate Collins, "An Interview with Ellen Charry," *Soul and Spirit Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (2007): 1-2.

[69]Charry, "Augustine of Hippo," 588.

self-respect, and self-love."[70] She believes in human depravity and disagrees with the self-esteem movement, but believes that the Christian life should be more about self-confidence through the work of the Holy Spirit.[71] In a review of Charry's book, Johnson notes Charry's valuable contribution on happiness and human flourishing but observes the book's weakness in not considering the role of sin.[72]

In seeking to correct an overemphasis on the fallen being (sin), some Christian psychologists have presented various arguments for a more positive focus or balanced approach to personal responsibility. For instance, Charry, supporting positive psychology,[73] which focuses on positive aspects of human nature, such as character and virtues, argues for a focus on the created being rather than the fallen being. She refers to Genesis 1 as the ideal state of man. Every human being is born with a sinful nature, but God's good creation of human beings should be emphasized. For a balanced perspective, Johnson advocates a creation-fall-redemption model.[74] In response to people who have misused sin to hurt others, Johnson says the solution is not "abolishing" sin in soul care but "exemplifying the *right* handling of sin—gentle and humble, healing and upbuilding; not seeing it where it does not exist, but addressing it in love where it does, and challenging it wisely and appropriately."[75] As mentioned earlier, Johnson warns against "hunting" for sin. Roberts also warns against "using a modern, hyperindividualistic,

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[70]Ellen Charry, "Positive Theology: An Exploration in Theological Psychology and Positive Psychology," *JPC* 30, no. 4 (2011): 288. See also Collins, "An Interview with Ellen Charry," 2.

[71]Charry, "Positive Theology," 292.

[72]Eric L. Johnson, "God and the Art of Happiness," *JPC* 30, no. 3 (2011): 255-57.

[73]Martin Seligman is credited for developing "positive psychology." See his classical work on this topic, Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2004). For more details on Charry's view of positive theology, see Ellen Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

[74]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 358.

[75]Ibid., 465.

hyperresponsible concept of sin" in assessing problems.[76]

**Johnson's Damaged
Creational Structures**

For a balanced perspective on sin, Johnson and Roberts discuss the nature of

personal responsibility in sin. This discussion pertains to the broader argument in

Christian psychology that all problems are not sin-related or spiritual. A person is

responsible for wrongdoings only when personal sin is involved. The issue concerns how

personal sin is defined. Explaining personal responsibility, Johnson describes what he

calls "damaged creational structural dynamics" (also called "weaknesses," based on 2

Cor 12:9-10).[77] "Damaged creational structures" are aspects of human nature in the

psychosocial and biological orders that are outside a person's control, such as learning

disabilities and "emotion-systems."[78] The "damage" is a result of the Fall or external

factors. In such cases, the problem is not a sin, but a "weakness."[79] Johnson gives the

example of Paul's poor public speaking ability as a "weakness." Johnson cites Luke

12:48[80] for support in claiming that those who are more developed in the lower orders are

held more accountable.[81] In proper context, however, Jesus is warning that judgment is

based on knowledge and faithfulness.[82] Someday, all Christians will have to give an

account to God. He is not referring to human development in that passage.

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[76]Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 148.

[77]Ibid., 448-50.

[78]Ibid., 598.

[79]Eric L. Johnson, "Sin, Weakness, Psychopathology," *JPT* 15, no. 3 (1987): 220.

[80]Luke 12:48 states, "But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more."

[81]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 478.

[82]"Contextually, this remark is directed at the disciples, since they know more about Jesus than anyone else. They bear the most responsibility of anyone that Jesus addresses, and they need to be faithful as a result." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1185. Green also writes that disciples and all Christians are responsible to steward their knowledge of God's will faithfully. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 506-7.

Table 3. Johnson's four orders and damaged creational structures

| Fallen Structural Dynamics | Four Orders | Personal Responsibility | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personal Sin | Spiritual | Spiritual (yes) | Confession, repentance, and resistance |
| Personal Sin | Ethical | Ethical (depends on personal agency) | |
| Damaged Creational | Psychosocial | No, if personal sin is uninvolved | Acceptance of damage, remediation for healing as much as possible |
| Damaged Creational ("weaknesses") | Biological | No, if personal sin is uninvolved | |

In one of his earliest articles, "Sin, Weakness, and Psychopathology," Johnson adds the third category of "moral fault" to sin and weakness.[83] Sin is "an *active* deformity where we depart from God's norms for us" and weakness is a "*passive* deformity where we find ourselves less than certain human ideals or even average human norms."[84] In other words, sin is based on knowledge of God's law and volitional in nature, whereas weakness is based on human norms and "given" in nature. He uses the phrase "moral fault" to refer to functions that include both sin and weakness. In cases of "moral fault," a person is "given" to certain sins but is still responsible for choosing to sin. According to Johnson, the seriousness of sin in "moral faults" lies on a continuum. The "low-sin" end includes emotions and behaviors that are "not condemned but are clearly discouraged," such as Christians with a weak conscience (1 Cor 10) or fear of evangelism. Even though they are free to eat all meats, their past idolatry becomes a weakness or givenness.[85] On the "high-sin" end, he gives the examples of empirical studies that point to genetic

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[83]In developing his phrase "moral fault," Johnson credits Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1965), xvi for the term "fault." Johnson, "Sin, Weakness, and Psychopathology," 222.

[84]Johnson, "Sin, Weakness, and Psychopathology," 220.

[85]Ibid., 222.

predispositions to alcohol addiction or genetic/environmental causes of homosexuality. In Johnson's mind, weaknesses should be considered in understanding a person's behavior when confronting sin.

In *Foundations for Soul Care*, Johnson occasionally uses the phrase, "signs of sin." He is referring to sins that are evidence of indwelling sin (Rom 7:8-17) or the flesh (Gal 5:17-21),[86] "but not themselves moral and spiritual evil."[87] Sometimes, however, an emotion that seems sinful, like anger, is not sin but a sign of sin, indicating repression of emotions or avoidance of the past. He writes, "Some Christians have tragically concluded that these kinds of negative emotions [e.g., frustration, jealousy, self-pity, or self-absorbed anger] are themselves simply sin (which they can be), rather than signs of sin (one's own sin or the sin of another against one); as a result, they simply reject them and deny them."[88] At times, the distinction between sin and signs of sin is difficult to discern. On the one hand, sins "are important ultimately because they are signs of sin,"[89] yet some sins are not sins but signs of sin.

**Roberts' Typology of Sin**

Similar to Johnson's fallen structural dynamics, Roberts nuances sin based on responsibility: "[In] Paul's conception, sin is as much like a burden or a disease or a pervasive condition of the human race as it is a class of responsible actions of individuals (see Rom 7)."[90] According to Roberts, to "say that some act or condition is sinful is to say (1) that it is an affront to God and (2) that the person in whom it exists is not just a

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[86]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 445.

[87]Ibid., 488.

[88]Ibid., 410. In this context, Johnson was discussing the work of the Spirit in people's lives and the benefits in responding positively to the signs of sin.

[89]Ibid., 445.

[90]Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 148; cf. Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 299.

victim of it but is responsible for it and so needs to be forgiven."[91] On the other hand, "inherited" sin refers to indwelling sin and sin inherited from external sources, such as an abusive childhood.[92] Like Johnson's "weakness," a person with inherited sin is less likely able to make moral choices and should not be held fully responsible for sins.[93] He gives the example of a man who grew up in an abusive home and later abuses his children.[94] Roberts says that his abusive treatment is a sin, and should be confessed to God, but he is responsible "to the extent" that it is caused by his background. Roberts clearly states, "But sin is always *somebody's* responsibility—Adam's if nobody else's—and whether a person can be held accountable for his sin depends on his being himself responsible for his dysfunction."[95] On a related note, Roberts disagrees with secular views on the unhealthiness of guilt. In cases of sin, that is instances of personal responsibility, guilt is healthy and necessary for forgiveness of sins, which is "one of the chief therapeutic strategies of Christianity."[96]

 Both Johnson and Roberts acknowledge that human beings are self-determining agents who should be held responsible for their sins. The issue of responsibility, however, becomes less clear as other factors are considered, such as negative past experiences or life circumstances. According to Roberts, attachments to objects other than God or negative experiences of God as a child could lead people to sin. Johnson references on several instances that people's view of God is affected by their childhood experiences with adults who either displayed God-like qualities or not. Charry

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[91]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 185.

[92]Ibid., 300-301.

[93]Roberts, "Parameters of Christian Psychology," 96.

[94]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 300.

[95]Ibid., 301.

[96]Ibid., 302.

also calls for a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of sin, stating that Christianity has been "somewhat one-sided in its treatment of sin" by not considering "temperamental variables [such as fear, meekness] and genetic predispositions."[97] Charry says that sin and repentance "distinguishes the Christian life from other ways of life," but some sins are more "complex" because of circumstances and personality dynamics.[98]

Johnson gives an example of how circumstances potentially minimize personal responsibility.[99] Joan, a married woman, is attracted to her co-worker. Her husband's late nights at work has been hurting the marriage. In Johnson's perspective, Joan's fantasy about her coworker is sinful but it also reveals the human need for relationships. This good desire is not being met by the husband. The combination of her indwelling sin and desire for relationships results in "sinful misdirection."[100] Johnson does not deny her role in sinning, because he mentions the need for repentance, a reorientation to God, taking thoughts captive, and self-examination. He states there is no excuse for sin.[101] On the one hand, Johnson is sensitive to Joan's "need," but this sensitivity could be a slippery slope of minimizing Joan's sin if Joan's counselor focuses more on the circumstances than Joan's response. In the end, Joan needs to be held responsible for her responses to circumstances, because she is a "self-determining agent" who has the Spirit to guide her.

The strength of Johnson's and Roberts' nuances to sin is a sensitivity to environmental factors and other factors that are outside a person's control. A fine line, however, exists in trying to determine the point of responsibility between "signs of sin"

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[97]Collins, "An Interview with Ellen Charry," 2. In addition, Charry notes that feminists have pointed out, "[Some people] sin not through pride but through selflessness, self-hatred, or pathological other-centeredness and neurotic dependency." Charry, "Theology after Psychology," 123.

[98]Charry, "Theology after Psychology," 131-32.

[99]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 454-56.

[100]Ibid., 455.

[101]Ibid.

or "inherited sins" and sin. In attempting to clarify personal responsibility, the concept of

sin seems unclear. A potential weakness is creating a hierarchy of sin, from not so bad to

really bad, which raises the question of who decides what is bad from really bad? For

example, in attempting to nuance responsibility for sin, Roberts writes, "We call the

actions and character faults that result from sin 'sin' in the inherited sense; but real,

ground-level, first-rate authentic sin is dysfunction for which the dysfunctional individual

or community is *itself* responsible."[102]

## Case Study

In *Counseling and Christianity*, Diane Langberg represents the Christian

psychology position.[103] In helping Jake, Langberg uses a three-phase model for helping

people with trauma.[104] In Jake's case, she categorizes his problems, such as anger, guilt,

negative thoughts, and fear, under trauma.[105] Hence, her approach is based on trauma

research. In phase 1, the goal is helping Jake feel safe and stable by giving him coping

mechanisms and caring for his physical well-being. At this point, she believes it is more

of a priority to physically and emotionally stabilize Jake:

> Once the bulk of the trauma-focused work has been done, it is usually true that a
> more direct and forthright approach can be taken with regard to spiritual matters .
> . . . Once he has done the work of therapy he will be able to hear truth with more
> clarity, understand his capacities for deception more fully, and have found safe
> relationships where he is both loved and held accountable. That means a more
> directive approach to God's Word can be used to think through his survivor guilt,
> his responsibility for his child, his need to ask the mother of his son for forgiveness
> (rather than the other way around), a godly understanding of anger, his
> responsibility for his avoidant choices, and what it means to draw on the power of

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[102]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 301. See chap. 5 for further discussion on sin and responsibility from a biblical perspective.

[103]This case study is valuable, because of the limited number of case studies in Christian psychology. Diane Langberg, "A Christian Psychology Approach," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches*, ed. Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 110-131.

[104]Ibid., 119-23.

[105]Ibid., 120-25.

the Spirit in his life to make godly choices and form godly relationships.[106]

Langberg recommends not involving faith talks if Jake responds negatively to it. She also expresses concern that Jake would use God in a manipulative manner, so Jake is not introduced to God until the therapist deems the timing is right. The assumption is that Jake could be willing to discuss spiritual issues after progress in therapy. Roberts would probably agree. He writes, "[A] distinctively Christian psychotherapy, no matter how extensively it uses strategies adapted from the secular therapies, will always enlist the help of God—reconciliation of the client with God through the work of the Holy Spirit— and this will mean at some time (the time may need to be very judiciously chosen) acknowledging explicitly God's saving act . . . and prayerfully invoking present help from his Holy Spirit."[107] So, both Langberg and Roberts suggest choosing the right time in discussing spiritual issues.

Langberg's approach reflects "implicit integration," using Siang-Yang Tan's phrase. Implicit integration, according to Tan, does not intentionally mention spiritual topics, whereas "explicit integration" is the opposite.[108] In particular, the implicit forms are demonstrated in the emphasis on the therapist's character in displaying Christlikeness and dependence on God. Similarly, according to Evans, wholeness in Christian psychology is defined in reference to the lordship of Christ in every dimension of life.[109] It is more about imitating Christ in all areas of life than incorporating explicit Christian content in therapy.

Johnson and Roberts also support a form of implicit therapy. Johnson, based

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[106]Langberg, "A Christian Psychology Approach," in *Counseling and Christianity*, 127.

[107]Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 303-4.

[108]Siang-Yang Tan, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 340-43.

[109]C. Stephen Evans, "Doing Psychology as a Christian: A Plea for Wholeness," *JPT* 40, no.1 (2012): 33, 35.

on 1 Timothy 4:1-5 (in particular "everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer"), asserts that soul care "for the glory of God" will sometimes be implicit, such as in secular settings, by inwardly thanking God and praying to him.[110] Johnson adds that implicit soul care is ideal for biopsychosocial disorders, such as "learning disabilities, Tourette's syndrome, attachment disorders, social-skill deficits and even marriage communication problems—since the remediation of such difficulties is not *necessarily* tied to the gospel directly."

Related to Langberg's priority on stabilization is Roberts' "indirect Pauline therapy" in cases with non-Christian clients.[111] The therapist could discuss problematic thoughts and behaviors, and help "the client to put on something like the new self in Christ [such as gentleness, patience, self-control, humility, and compassion], yet without speaking in these terms to the client."[112] Roberts acknowledges that virtues "like" the new self in Christ are not equal to true virtues, but these "like" virtues are still useful in helping people to function better.[113] In that sense, "like" virtues are no different from secular "grammars" that attempt to promote similar virtues. The potential weakness of overly focusing on virtues is evident in indirect Pauline therapy. In practice, virtues become the *telos* rather than the new self in Christ. The concern with this logic is its pragmatic orientation to change. If virtues are a part of the new self, as stated by Roberts, then the formation of the new self is paramount for virtues to develop. "Something like the new self in Christ" does not cohere with biblical truth.

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[110]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 376. Johnson also uses 1 Tim 4:4-5 to suggest that all forms of therapy could be "sanctified by the word of God and prayer," thereby giving glory to God. Ibid., 489-90.

[111]Roberts, "Outline of Pauline Psychotherapy," 160.

[112]Ibid., 160.

[113]Ibid., 161.

While urgent problems are of priority, psychological theories and priorities mostly guide Langberg's approach. Based on Langberg's methods, well-being is foremost about physical and emotional stability, and secondarily about spiritual wholeness. In doing so, an implication is that God is somehow limited in helping Jake until he is stabilized. Hence, depending on Jake's interest and progress in therapy, salvation and other spiritual concerns are not discussed until the right time. Another concern with Langberg's methodology is the priority of therapy over spiritual care, assuming that therapy could prepare Jake for spiritual change.[114] It also places more weight on the therapist's influence than the Holy Spirit's work in achieving changes and softening hearts to the gospel.

In phase 2, the therapist explores areas of grief and trauma, starting from Jake's childhood. At some point, God's Word is used to expose lies and replace them with truth, such as Jake's identity in Christ and the loving identity of God the Father. Using God's Word to produce inner change is consistent with the concept of inwardness, as mentioned by Johnson and Roberts. Moreover, the Christian community is involved to create an incarnational community in Jake's life. In addition to the therapist, Langberg mentions the benefit of involving a pastor, chaplain, and other Christians to help Jake trust again by meeting dependable people. Johnson also discusses the importance of godly people ("form of others") in helping people to change, but he emphasizes that God must be central.[115] As someone who has worked with abused clients for decades, Langberg understands the importance of imaging Christ to clients. She also cautions therapists to protect their times with God, because the work of therapy is overwhelming and draining.[116] She lists five spiritual disciplines: worship, study, truth, prayer, and

[114]See chap. 3 for more discussion on the priority of psychological healing.

[115]Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 507-13.

[116]Diane Langberg, "The Spiritual Life of the Therapist: We Become What We Habitually Reflect," *JPC* 25, no. 3 (2006): 258-66.

obedience. In phase 3, Jake starts amending broken relationships and learns how to grow

spiritually. This process is similar to Roberts' association and permeability.

The role of the therapist is significant throughout all three phases. Because of

the close relationship between therapists and clients, the therapist has an opportunity to

exemplify Christ by loving and caring for the client. According to Langberg,

> The therapist is the human tool in the counseling relationship, and it is paramount
> that the tool be deeply rooted in both God and his Word so that the character
> demonstrated in the counseling dyad reflects him well . . . . It would be an
> oxymoron to call oneself a *Christian* psychologist if these characteristics [i.e., truth,
> wisdom, kindness, patience, justice, and mercy] were not developing and seen in the
> therapist over time.[117]

The therapist's demeanor and care could change Jake's interest in spiritual discussions.

According to Langberg, the therapist should represent Christ by actions and not force

spiritual conversations.[118] Roberts also discusses the healing potential found in a healthy

relationship with the therapist, based on Kohut's concept of "transference."[119] In Kohut's

theory, the therapist serves as a replacement figure, or "mirroring object," trying to help

the client develop a healthy self.[120] Johnson recognizes the potential value of Kohut's

theory but also says that it lacks an understanding of sin and "theocentric purposes of

human relationality."[121]

In Christian psychology, a form of epistemological dualism potentially occurs:

God "redeems" souls and psychology "heals" souls. For example, Roberts describes the

effectiveness of therapy from two angles: therapeutic and spiritual. In short, "therapeutic

effectiveness" refers to practical help from therapies and "spiritual effectiveness" refers

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[117]Langberg, "A Christian Psychology Approach," 111.

[118]Ibid., 129-30.

[119]Transference occurs when the "patient transfers to the therapist the [painful] attitudes and emotions." Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 138.

[120]Ibid., 308; cf. Roberts, "Parameters of a Christian Psychology," 86-87.

[121]Johnson, *Foundations of Soul Care*, 509.

to teleological guidance that secular psychologies cannot provide for Christians.[122] This

mentality is also found in Johnson's separation of spiritual order from the other orders.

Regarding healing, Monroe and George Schwab discuss in an article that

Christian therapists must be cautious to not place their confidence in man's methods for

true healing. At the end of the article, Monroe and Schwab present insightful questions

for clinicians to ask themselves, such as "Does my work over or under-emphasize the

prospects for spiritual, emotional, or physical healing today? Do I rely on 'tools' for

healing in a manner that suggests the power lies in a particular methodology?"[123] They

raise the issue of healing from a biblical perspective and argue that God's healing is both

physical and spiritual.[124] Their definition of healing is "a divine work bringing growth or

positive spiritual change to painful or distorted perceptions, experiences, habits, or

emotions of a person."[125] Interestingly, they state "such a definition does not attempt to

ascertain the cause of the inner turmoil, its location in the person (e.g., body, soul,

psyche, etc.), nor the person of the trinity doing the work since these issues rarely

concern the troubled person." They specify spiritual healing, which might include

forgiveness from God and spiritual disciplines, is essential for true healing to occur.[126]

## Conclusion

Conceptually, Christian psychologists are explicit in supporting elements of

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[122]Roberts, "Psychotherapy and Christian Ministry," *Word and World* 21 (2001): 46-47. Roberts clarifies, "What is needed, and what contemporary psychotherapies tend to provide, is some facilitation of the therapeutic action, some discipline by which, perhaps stepwise, a person can implement the commanded change." Roberts, *Taking the Word to Heart*, 158.

[123]Philip G. Monroe and George M. Schwab, "God as Healer: A Closer Look at Biblical Images of Inner Healing with Guiding Questions for Counselors," *JPC* 28, no. 2 (2009): 127. It would have been helpful to know their answers to the questions, but it was outside the scope of their article.

[124]Ibid., 123, 126.

[125]Ibid., 121.

[126]"While all whom Jesus healed from physical disease later died, genuine healing of the inner life lasts forever." Ibid., 126.

theological anthropology. Both Johnson and Roberts have written extensively on relational needs with God, well-being found in Christ, and a balanced understanding of sin. They also emphasize Christlikeness as the *telos*. In addition, for healthy functioning, they promote spiritual practices: searching Scripture, putting away traits of the dysfunctional personality, considering holy things, and giving thanks for the new self. So theological anthropological elements are a part of Christian psychology's framework. The assertion, however, of a distinct psychological aspect of human nature is an anthropological assumption in Christian psychology. For example, Mark Wells, professor of philosophy and ethics, writes, "However, when dealing with issues of psychology, the church must recognize human personhood as a complex of sociological/cultural, psychological, personal/relational, physical/biological, and spiritual/theological relations. Only as the church recognizes all of these aspects of humanity can psychological issues be treated holistically."[127] In Wells' article, he argues for Christocentric anthropology in Christian psychology for a Christian approach, based on the theological teachings of *imago Dei* and the problem of sin. Yet, as stated in his quote, he describes a holistic approach in terms of a structural approach.

Practically, the Christian emphasis on the spiritual nature is more implicit, at least in Langberg's case study. Langberg's approach is shaped primarily by psychological views with theological priorities on the spiritual nature in the later phase. As mentioned in the case study, some Christian psychologists consider implicit approaches as sufficient forms, not necessarily ideal, of addressing the spiritual nature. The problem with implicit practices is the lack of gospel emphasis in therapy and, at times, an overemphasis on client's preferences. Hence, spiritual issues are not necessarily addressed. Hence, merely exemplifying Christ does not seem adequate in addressing spiritual problems. While

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[127]Mark A. Wells, "The Necessity of a Christocentric Anthropology for Christian Psychology: Reflections on Ray Anderson's Doctrine of Humanity," *Edification* 2, no. 2 (2007): 64.

displaying the gospel is a part of Christlikeness and glorifying to God, it is not adequate for a distinct "Christian approach to counseling.

Overall, the lack of case studies presents a challenge in examining the claims of Christian psychologists for functional coherency. Admittedly, Johnson's massive work, *Foundations for Soul Care,* presents a theoretical framework for soul care and is not intended to present an in-depth methodology.[128] In general, more works that add clarity on Christian psychology's methodologies for various maladaptive cases would strengthen the substance of Christian psychology's arguments for a distinct Christian approach to psychology and counseling. Gary Moon also expresses the need for more practical works from Christian psychologists.[129]

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[128]The case study with Ted is probably the most extensive illustration, which was helpful in better understanding his model. Even in the brief example with Joan, he concludes, "This is not the place to talk about the content of her therapy." Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care*, 456.

[129]"I believe that until the Christian psychology movement produces 'treatment manuals' with empirically supported practices drawn from 'the early days,' this important movement may continue to be seen as having more in common with speculative philosophy than applied psychology." Moon, "Integration in Three Tenses," 69. By "early days," Moon is referring to psychologies prior to modern psychology.

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN
INTEGRATIONIST COUNSELING

Out of the three counseling approaches, the distinction between the spiritual

nature and psychological nature is perhaps the most explicit in integrationist counseling.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that the anthropology in integrationist counseling is

more reflective of a secular psychological view of human nature than theological

anthropology. While the spiritual nature is recognized for its significance in theological

anthropology, the psychological nature is the dominant focus in addressing counseling

problems, raising the question of how "integrated" is the integrated counseling approach.

This psychological focus is based on at least three factors: (1) a narrow view of the

spiritual nature; (2) an emphasis on psychological healing for its practicality; and (3)

view of personal responsibility and sin. I primarily examine the anthropological views of

Stanton Jones and Mark McMinn,[1] but other integrationist views are mentioned as

necessary for context.[2] At the end, McMinn's case study on Jake is used to show the

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[1]Both Stanton Jones and Mark McMinn are contemporary integrationists who have written extensively on anthropological issues. Jones represented the integrationist view in Eric L. Johnson, ed., *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010); see also Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, *Modern Psychotherapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal*, ed. Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011). McMinn represented the integrationist view in Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore, eds. *Counseling and Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012).

[2]The selected works are based on representatives who are more sympathetic to a biblical foundation in counseling and anthropology. Some integrationists, such as David Entwistle and Everett Worthington, support a Christian framework in guiding their research but do not necessarily believe that Scripture should be the foundational source for anthropology. Their views will be briefly summarized later. For other extensive sources on integrationist counseling, see Timothy Clinton and George Ohlschlager, eds., *Competent Christian Counseling: Foundations and Practice of Compassionate Soul Care*, vol. 1. (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2002); Tim Clinton, Archibald Hart, and George Ohlschlager, eds., *Caring for People God's Way: Personal and Emotional Issues, Addictions, Grief, and Trauma* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005). For a survey of integrationist works, see Daryl H. Stevenson, Brian E. Eck, and Peter C. Hill, eds., *Psychology and Christianity Integration: Seminal Works that Shaped the Movement* (Batavia, IL: Christian Association for Psychological Studies, 2007).

implications of his anthropological framework. A concern with the integrationist approach is emphasizing the spiritual nature to address the problem of sin but emphasizing the psychological nature for wholeness.

## Epistemology and Anthropology

Integrationists believe the Bible is relevant for spiritual issues. In one of the earliest integrationist counseling manuals,[3] *Psychology of Counseling*, Clyde Narramore asserted that the Bible is "the glorious manual and guide book of our lives."[4] Specifically, the Bible has the following purposes: convict sin, share the gospel, produce faith, to share God's forgiveness of sins, for discernment, for knowledge, and for protection against sin.[5] Essentially, he meant that the Bible is relevant for spiritual issues.[6] Like Narramore, Collins believed the Bible is intended for spiritual issues, such as sin, God's role in life, and principles for good relationships with others.[7] Spiritual problems, in Collins' mind,

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[3]Integrationists commonly use "Christian counseling" in their works to identify their view, but a few have used "biblical counseling." For example, Larry Crabb, *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975); Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins, *The Quick-Reference Guide to Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

[4]Clyde M. Narramore, *The Psychology of Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1960), 239. Narramore is one of the founding leaders of integrationist counseling and the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS).

[5]Ibid., 243-53.

[6]Narramore even lists Scripture verses by topics, such as anxiety, discouragement, and many others, as a starting reference for counselors. Ibid., 258-73. In a marriage counseling case study, for instance, he used the Bible to encourage godly living but not for issues that he considered practical, such as good communication (184-205). He acknowledged that a stronger marriage is based on godly living, but salvation and godliness did not seem central in his approach. He focused on other sources of problems, such as unresolved childhood conflict (187, 199-200; cf. 66-71). Narramore seemed to view the past as a foundational issue of problems: "A counselor must encourage people to reach back into the past, to re-examine almost forgotten experiences, to dig out the tap-root of the problem" (71).

[7]Gary Collins, "An Integration View," in *Psychology & Christianity: Four Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson and Stanton L. Jones (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 119. Collins acknowledges "the wealth of information about human beings, their universe, and their God" in Scripture, but believes that the "Bible is not intended to be a psychology textbook . . . for example, Scripture alerts us to the place of sin in shaping human behavior, the role of God in bringing healing, the reasons for temptations that can disrupt our lives, and the principles for living in harmony with others" (110). Collins is a mentor to other well-known integrationists, such as Tim Clinton. For a detailed description and analysis of Collins' epistemology and anthropology, see Steven P. Wade, "A Theological Analysis of the Functional Epistemology and Anthropology Underlying Gary R. Collins's Method of Integrating Psychology and Theology," Ph.D. diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006. Wade concludes inconsistencies exist in Collins' functional epistemology and anthropology.

indicated spiritual dryness—a weak relationship with God.[8] Collins believed that the

Bible "speaks with truth and authority on psychological and counseling issues," but it is

not a textbook on human nature.[9] Crabb believed all problems reveal "relational issues"

and a "spiritual disorder."[10] So, the Bible does not directly address every counseling issue

but it indirectly provides answers through doctrinal categories.[11]

    In *Modern Psychotherapies*, Jones and Butman explain their view that

Scripture is an "essential foundation" for a Christian approach to psychotherapy but not

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[8]"Spiritual problems relate closely to where we are in terms of a relationship with Jesus Christ." Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*, 3rd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 808. He clarifies that going through the motions of Christianity is not equivalent to spiritual health. Hence, spiritual growth involved "prayer, meditation on the Bible, involvement with other believers, and a sincere attempt to refrain from sin" (809).

[9]Gary R. Collins, *Psychology and Theology: Prospects for Integration*, ed. H. Newton Malony (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 40. Integration "implies two separate but unique fields shedding light on our understanding of similar issues. Integration does not imply the disappearance of theology, the elimination of psychology, or the swallowing up of one field by the other." Ibid., 18.

Almost two decades after Collins' first book on integrationism, John Carter and Bruce Narramore presented their "Integrates Model": psychology and theology are compared for their knowledge but the Bible is authoritative. Their views were based on the models in H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951). First, the "Against model" is the view that psychology and theology should not be integrated. They placed Adams in this model. Second, the "Of model" ignores revelation, reinterpreting Scripture from a psychological framework (e.g., views sin as psychopathology). Third, the "Parallels model" is similar to the levels-of-explanation model where both psychology and theology are appreciated separately, but in the Parallels model, the set of data in both domains are compared side by side to find similar equivalents (e.g., the heart is compared to Freud's id). Last, the "Integrates model" looks for the unity of God's truth in psychology and theology, but unlike the other three models, it upholds the authority of the Bible. Another distinction of the Integrates model is the belief that human beings are created in the image of God and have a fallen nature. John D. Carter and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 73-79. Here is a summary of Carter's and Narramore's views on theology and psychology: (1) All truth is God's truth; (2) Theology reveals God to humanity; (3) Theology focuses primarily on "human nature and human destiny in God's program"; (4) Psychology is "primarily concerned with the mechanisms by which people function and the methods to assess and influence that functioning"; and (5) Psychology "provides a statement on the nature and functioning of humanity" (49-50). See also John D. Carter, "Secular and Sacred Models of Psychology and Religion," *JPT* 5, no. 3 (1977): 197-208.

[10]Larry Crabb, *Understanding People: Why We Long for Relationship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 62. "I believe that psychological disorder, when unmasked, will be seen to reflect a spiritual disorder" (55).

[11]Crabb supported "biblical sufficiency." He states, "The idea of biblical sufficiency for counseling rests on the assumption that biblical data support doctrinal categories which have implications that comprehensively deal with every relational issue of life . . . . Yes, the Bible is sufficient to answer every question about life, but not because it directly responds to every legitimate question." Ibid., 63. He clarifies, "To understand the problems a counselor faces in a way that deserves the label 'biblical,' we must start with biblical categories derived from the text, gather observations from an honest look at life, think prayerfully until it begins to make sense, and then go through the entire process again and again" (71).

an "all-sufficient" source.[12] That is, Scripture is sufficient as a source on salvation and holiness but not for explaining the "why"[13] or "how" of human nature, such as why a person "struggles with obsessive tendencies or another is blessed with incredible strength of character." Moreover, Scripture "lacks the specificity and precision" to qualify as a scientific theory.[14] Rather, based on 2 Peter 1:4; 3:14-18, they claim that God is "all-sufficient." In reference to 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Jones and Butman state Scripture is inspired, not "the only and all-sufficient source for every bit of knowledge that will ever be needed by anyone for any purpose *related to human need*. Rather, it is called 'useful.' We do not look to Scripture for guidance for theoretical physics or surgery; nor should we for distinguishing schizophrenia from autism" (emphasis added).[15] In their statement, the key anthropological issue is the meaning of *human need*, which affects epistemological conclusions. According to Butman and Jones, psychology addresses "complex and intricate issues."[16] Similarly, Worthington believes Scripture is descriptive

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[12]Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 49. See also Thomas Frederick's summary: "The Biblical, Christian narrative is not a comprehensive text on theological anthropology and cosmology. In fact, a strong argument may be made for the central Biblical framework being soteriological (see Collins 1995). Social science may inform and enhance theological anthropology through its study of human nature. This type of integration work provides a more thorough understanding of humans while honoring a Christian narrative framework especially focused on personal transformation." Thomas V. Frederick, "Models of Psychotherapy: Implications for Pastoral Care Practice," *Pastoral Psychology* 58 (2009): 361.

[13]Stanton L. Jones, Laura Miguélez, and Richard E. Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 60.

[14]"What the Scripture does teach about persons lacks the specificity and precision necessary for qualifying either as a formal scientific theory of personality or as a clinically useful heuristic model for understanding personality functioning." Ibid., 61. Earlier, however, they acknowledged that psychotherapy is not necessarily a scientific field, because each theory tends to represent the interests and experiences of its proponent.

[15]Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Christianity," 49. They were alluding to their perception of biblical counselors. The comments, however, are a straw man argument, inaccurately describing biblical counseling. See chap. 4. Earlier, they also inaccurately group Martin and Deidre Bobgan with Jay Adams.

[16]Butman and Jones writes, "For example, the concept of sin is central to the faith, but that concept, with all its meaning, does not tell us why one person sins by committing adultery while another sins with a prideful, arrogant attitude or by a lack of compassion for the poor. The faith tells us that God did not intend for us to be riddled with anxiety, but it does not tell us how to deal with a person who is phobically afraid of social situations, nor does it tell us why some avoid feared objects while others overcompensate for their fear with an exaggerated bravado. Our faith tells us the ultimate meaning of life, but it does not tell us why so many conversions to saving faith occur in adolescence rather than in late adulthood. It is our psychologies that address these complex and intricate issues." Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones,

but not prescriptive for living a virtuous life.[17] Scripture is not as specific as

psychological science, so it lacks the *how* element of change.

## Narrow View of the Spiritual Nature

In integrationist counseling, spiritual issues pertain to God and spiritual growth

while psychological issues pertain to the "mechanisms" of human nature.[18] Collins

believed that "all problems ultimately result from the fall," but "not all human problems

are spiritual, in that they involve the counselee's specific relationship with God."[19] He

did not believe the Bible addressed problems that "may be caused by faulty learning,

misinformation, early traumas, environmental stress, biological malfunctioning, chemical

deficiencies, misperception, errors in decision-making, or other issues that may not be

addressed by biblical writers."[20] Such problems are "complex," requiring psychological

insights.[21] Collins also believed that spiritual problems could lead to physical and

psychological problems, such as "guilt feelings, self-condemnation, discouragement,

lethargy, fear, defensiveness, bitterness, hypercriticism, anger, and distorted values,

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"Responsible Eclecticism and the Challenges of Contemporary Practice," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 436.

[17]According to Worthington, "The Scriptures tell us of the transformation of our character when we become Christians, and it assures us that the Holy Spirit can produce fruit (Gal 5.26) in our lives. But the Scriptures do not answer the *how* questions beyond relying on God, adhering to ethical teaching and drawing on the Holy Spirit for guidance, support and comfort when we fail morally. The Scriptures are meant to communicate to all ages, and are thus more general than science. Science pinpoints mechanisms for action and change. By its nature science is aimed at the present and will change with history, culture and situations. The Scriptures are not concerned with psychological mechanisms for how we develop and practice love, patience, self-control and the other fruits—just with whether we practice them. Psychological science can help us act virtuously in several ways." Everett Worthington, *Coming to Peace with Psychology: What Christians Can Learn from Psychological Science* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 262. Worthington seems to base the usefulness or relevance of Scripture based on psychological criteria. He assumes that psychological mechanisms are outside the scope of Scripture.

[18]Jones and Butman believe that "the Scriptures and Christian theology do not teach a theory of personality as understood by contemporary psychology." Jones and Butman, "The Integration of Psychology and Theology," 39.

[19]Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 824.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Gary Collins says that a Christian is "limited in understanding people if there is little awareness of the field of psychology with its proven insights into the complexities of human behavior." Collins, "An Integration View," 111.

among other effects."[22] In Collins' view, true change was an act of God[23] and the "Christian distinctive" of counseling was concerned with a person's spiritual condition.[24]

Jones and Butman argue for a holistic approach referencing support from theology and psychology. Theologically, they refer to the biblical concept of the "heart," which holistically captures the unity of human nature.[25] Psychologically, they mention the biopsychosocial model as an example of a holistic approach from a secular perspective but state the spiritual component would need to be included for a holistic approach.[26] Jones and Butman acknowledge "often very little distinction between the religious/spiritual component and the personal/emotional/psychological component" exists.[27]

More recently, in *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*,[28] Bruce and

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[22]Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 815.

[23]Collins writes, "No matter what we face, it is the awesome power of God that brings lasting change which might never come otherwise." Ibid., 10. He follows this quote with Eph 3:20.

[24]"Christian counseling shares many of the goals of secular counseling, but the Christian distinctive is that his or her goals concern the counselee's relationship to Jesus Christ and the acceptance of Christian values." Gary Collins, "The Distinctives of Christian Counseling," in *Helping People Grow: Practical Approaches to Christian Counseling*, ed. Gary R. Collins (Santa Ana, CA: Vision House, 1980), 326.

[25]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman state that the "heart" is equivalent to the "self" in psychology and philosophy. Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," 69. They support dichotomy, or "bipartite" using their words, to emphasize the unity of the whole person (68).

[26]Ibid., 70. They also agree with the biopsychosocial model that changes in human nature can occur upward and downward.

[27]Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 463. Hence, they consider the work of mental health professionals as a part of sanctification, "mirroring and partaking in the redemptive or salvific work of the church whether we like to think so or not." Ibid. "Because our work so closely intersects with kingdom concerns, we must be about the task of structuring our work deliberately and thoroughly in ways that are honoring to the kingdom and compatible with God's own efforts on behalf of his people (Anderson, 1987)." Ibid.

[28]James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005). The book is organized into four parts: origin and destiny, substance, function, and relationality. For each part, theological, psychological, and integrated perspectives are presented. Overall, the integrated perspective, which had the shortest chapters, could have been more developed to show the implications for real life examples. On the back cover, Mark McMinn endorses, "Although I do not agree with all their conclusions, I applaud Demarest and Beck for their thorough scholarship and commend this book as a thoughtful and sometimes provocative look at the human person." Beck and Demarest base their integration model on Franz Delitzsch's work. Franz Delitzsch, *A System of Biblical Psychology*, trans. Robert Ernest Wallis, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1867).

Demarest claim both theology and psychology are needed to address the "whole" person.[29] Their assumption is that the Bible provides a Christian worldview and psychology is relevant for data on the mechanisms of human nature.[30] The fallen state of human beings, according to Bruce and Demarest, explains the problem of human functioning, and the need for redemption to transform the whole person. Psychology is relevant for the "non-spiritual" aspects, such as consciousness, intelligence, cognition, motivation, emotion, and behavior,[31] but every part of human nature is affected by sin.

Also, consider the views of Mark Yarhouse and Richard Butman in their appraisal of psychopathologies. An integrated approach to treating psychopathologies, in their view, considers both psychological and spiritual aspects of human nature.[32] They explain sin affects mental health and well-being and that psychopathologies are "expressions of our fallenness."[33] They also claim hope is found in God's redemptive plan. In part two of their book, the authors address some of the common psychopathologies, such as problems of anxiety, mood, and personality. Compared to part one of the book, part two addresses the spiritual nature and sin less explicitly, focusing on psychological diagnoses and treatments. For instance, according to the

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[29]Here is the full quote, "Given the fact that the human person is a complex *whole*, spiritual and psychological aspects of the person cannot be divorced from one another." Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 399-400. For support, they cite David Benner's view on the benefit of addressing psychological issues prior to spiritual issues. David G. Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 158. See also James R. Beck, "Self and Soul: Exploring the Boundaries Between Psychotherapy and Spiritual Formation," *JPT* 31, no. 1 (2003): 24-36. In addition, Beck and Demarest cite Delitzsch's work to support trichotomy, but a valid concern is that most theologians support dichotomy. See chap. 5. They admire his "intellectual approach," because he was willing to change his views from dichotomy to trichotomy after encountering new evidence. Beck and Demarest, *Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 13.

[30]Beck and Demarest, *Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 22, 300. "Scripture constitutes our benchmark and our rule of truth. Psychology fleshes out some of the details within those divinely ordained boundaries." Ibid., 396.

[31]Ibid., 298.

[32]Mark A. Yarhouse, Richard A. Butman, and Barrett W. McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2005), 32-37.

[33]Ibid., 96.

authors, anxiety problems are "complicated" and "not resolved through meditation on Scripture."[34] They diagnose anxiety as "undoubtedly a biopsychosocial phenomenon," discussing options such as psychotropic medications, healthy relationships, and lifestyle changes to cope with anxiety problems.[35]

Based on their description, pastoral care is ill-equipped to address "complicated" problems and is relevant for the spiritual aspect. Pastoral care might involve "good worship, fellowship and service."[36] Hence, the biopsychosocial model is used to diagnose and treat psychopathologies. This view of the spiritual aspect and pastoral care partly explains why Yarhouse and Butman do not adequately discuss the implications of the spiritual aspect of human nature nor sin in the practical chapters found in part two. Though they acknowledge the importance of Scripture and pastoral care, they generally describe pastoral care adequate for spiritual issues, but not "complicated" problems.

Compared to other integrationists, Entwistle advocates a broader engagement with other disciplines within psychology, in addition to clinical psychology.[37] Consistent with his emphasis on psychological research, he is more critical of spiritual approaches than psychological ones.[38] On the other hand, the biopsychosocial approach is presented

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[34]Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies*, 112.

[35]Ibid., 139-41.

[36]Ibid., 114.

[37]Entwistle says that an integrative approach needs a "fuller understanding of psychological approaches to human nature and functioning." By fuller, he means that integration efforts have been imbalanced, focusing more on clinical psychology and "neglecting the majority of the discipline of psychology (e.g., neuropsychology, social psychology, developmental psychology, learning, sensation and perception, and so forth)." David N. Entwistle, *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity: An Introduction to Worldview Issues, Philosophical Foundations, and Models of Integration* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 142.

[38]Entwistle describes spiritual approaches broadly, from prayer to casting of demons to Theophostic Prayer Ministry. David N. Entwistle, "A Holistic Psychology of Persons: Implications for Theory and Practice, *JPC* 28, no. 2 (2009): 142, 144, 145. He also mentions an extreme example to point out the danger in considering physical and mental issues as spiritual problems. His example was a religious couple who refused medical help for their daughter, who later dies (141-42).

in a positive light for its scientific and ethical requirements.[39] He makes a revealing

statement toward the end of his article when he acknowledges the benefits of religious

practice for "proper living" but cautions that "religious practices are intended primarily to

orient and redeem human life, not to be used as isolated therapeutic techniques."[40]

Though Entwistle argues for a holistic view of human nature, it is primarily

psychological in nature with religious interventions for spiritual issues. Like Entwistle,

Worthington is a strong advocate of scientific research, which explains his support for

psychological science, not clinical psychology, in understanding human nature.[41]

Conceptually, the views of Entwistle and Worthington might seem more extreme

compared to other integrationists, but practically, the sentiment of their views,

specifically the credibility of psychology for its scientific basis, is found throughout

integrationist views.[42]

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[39]Entwistle, "A Holistic Psychology of Persons," 143-44.

[40]Entwistle adds that religious interventions should be "consonant with established psychological techniques" among other factors. Ibid., 147. A few sentences later, he states, "For those clinicians who choose to make use of religiously-based interventions, it is imperative that they ensure that these interventions are consonant with established psychological techniques, grounded in sound theology, and applied ethically and with great attention to their potential for misuse and for harmful consequences."

[41]Worthington writes, psychological science is more "scientifically controlled" and descriptive of human nature, but clinical psychology is based on "data unsystematically" collected. Worthington, *Coming to Peace with Psychology*, 124-25. He believes clinical psychology or psychotherapy is more valuable for counseling but psychological science is more accurate in understanding human nature. (46). He advocates a "relational model," where psychological science and theology are mutually respected and equally considered in understanding truth (137). He believes the interpretation of Scripture and psychological science are susceptible to human error, so data from both sources should be carefully compared (116-17). See also Everett L. Worthington Jr. et al., *Evidence-Based Practices for Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy*, ed. Everett L. Worthington Jr. et al. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 7-24.

In Worthington's judgment, "[When the early integrationists] formulated their counseling theories, most adapted the secular psychotherapy theory in which they had received their training. For example, Freud's theories formed the basis of the integrations proposed by Clyde Narramore and later Bruce Narramore. However, other theories were also influential. Existential theory was integrated with Christianity in Paul Tournier's and Gary Collins's writings. Carl Rogers's listening skills and basic humanism . . . were included across the board. James Dobson even used many behavioral psychotherapeutic methods." Worthington, *Coming to Peace with Psychology*, 35-37. He also says that Larry Crabb's approach was based on a cognitive-behavioral approach. Worthington describes the early integrationists' method as "filter theories . . . because secular counseling theory is essentially poured through a theological filter" (35).

[42]In a way, their view resembles the levels of explanation model, except they are not as rigid in separating psychology from theology.

Table 4. Overview of anthropological framework in integrationist counseling

| Epistemology | Aspect of Human Nature | Nature of Problem | Nature of Treatment |
|---|---|---|---|
| Psychology | Psychological | Psychosocial issues<br>Thoughts<br>Emotions<br>Desires<br>Childhood past | Focus on self and horizontal relationships<br>Psychotherapy |
| Theology | Spiritual | Spiritual issues<br>Sin<br>Salvation<br>Sanctification | Relationship with God<br>Prayer<br>Bible<br>Church fellowship |

## Emphasis on Psychological Healing

In integrationists' writings, a common assumption is that psychological healing prepares a person for spiritual healing. This assumption can be found in integrationist writings, dating to the 1970s. In H. Newton Malony's approach to integrative psychotherapy, his understanding of wholeness was "healing that leads to holiness."[43] "Healing," such as alleviating an illness and improving functionality, through psychotherapy is first necessary. "Holiness" referred to spiritual healing. Malony believed that all persons are "sick" until their spiritual nature, specifically their relationship with God, is healed. Other integrationists have promoted similar beliefs, suggesting the priority of psychological healing in counseling.

### Abraham Maslow: Need Theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a psychological theory that has significantly influenced some of the well-known integrationists.[44] In particular, Maslow's third (social,

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[43]H. Newton Malony, *Psychotherapy: Where the Rubber Hits the Road* (n.p: 1978), quoted in Collins' *Psychology and Theology*, 120-23.

[44]Abraham Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (1943): 370–96. The highest need is self-actualization, which is another concept used by integrationists.

love, and belongingness) and fourth (esteem) needs are promoted among integrationists, such as Crabb in his earlier works and Chapman. Common examples of need theory language are love tank and significance. For example, Crabb believed that personal worth is a person's basic need and essential for wholeness.[45] Personal worth is expressed through significance and security.[46] For biblical support, he suggested the fall of Adam and Eve as the beginnings of insecurity and insignificance,[47] while acknowledging only Christ can meet these needs.[48] In later works, Crabb uses the language of relational longings[49] to emphasize finding significance in Christ. For example, in *Understanding People*, Crabb uses the term "personal" to refer to "deep longings that constitute the thirst which our Lord alone can quench."[50] In this work, he is emphatic on a relationship with God for satisfaction and true change.[51]

Similarly, Chapman, in his best-seller, states that in addition to love, our basic needs are "security, self-worth, and significance."[52] Chapman asserts marriage is

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[45]Larry Crabb, "Biblical Counseling," in *Helping People Grow*, 173. It should be noted that Crabb's more recent writings have shifted towards a focus on spiritual growth.

[46]Larry Crabb, *Effective Biblical Counseling: A Model for Helping Caring Christians Become Capable Counselors* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 61; idem, *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling: Meeting Counseling Needs through the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975).

[47] When Adam and Eve blamed each other, they were expressing insecurity. When labor became a curse for Adam, he would wrestle with insignificance. Crabb, *Effective Biblical Counseling*, 61.

[48]Ibid., 70-71. Thus, Crabb suggests the local church as the primary vehicle in providing fellowship and spiritual growth for significance and security (182-83).

[49]"Other movements in my thinking, some more substantial, will be apparent to the careful reader." Larry Crabb, *Understanding People: Why We Long for Relationship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 15-16.

[50]"Readers familiar with my earlier books will recognize movement in my concepts but not, I think, fundamental change. For example, my preference now is to speak of deep longings in the human heart for relationship and impact rather than personal needs for security and significance . . . Because my choice of the term 'need' has apparently [miscommunicated my beliefs], I hope that referring to 'deep longings that constitute the thirst which our Lord alone can quench' will better convey what I have always believed." Ibid., 120.

[51]"But the answer to all of life's questions lies in relationship with Christ, a personally gripping relationship that is entered into in a moment but takes long and difficult years to develop." Ibid., 211. For an overview of Crabb's evolving approach to counseling, see Agnieszka Tennant, "A Shrink Gets Stretched," *Christianity Today* 47, no. 5 (May 2003): 52-59.

[52]Here is the full quote: "Love is not our only emotional need. Psychologists have observed that among our basic needs are the need for security, self-worth, and significance. Love, however,

"designed" to meet the need for intimacy and love, concluding that marriage problems

reveal an "empty love tank."[53] His solution is for spouses to learn each other's love

language and fill each other's love tank.

> Could it be that deep inside hurting couples exists an invisible 'emotional love tank' with its gauge on empty? Could the misbehavior, withdrawal, harsh words, and critical spirit occur because of that empty tank? If we could find a way to fill it, could the marriage be reborn? With a full tank would couples be able to create an emotional climate where it is possible to discuss differences and resolve conflicts? Could that tank be the key that makes marriage work?[54]

Similar to Maslow's theory on significance, Chapman believed the "need for

significance is the emotional force behind much of our behavior . . . . Feeling loved by a

spouse enhances our sense of significance."[55] As briefly shown in Crabb's and

Chapman's writings, Maslow's need theory has shaped their views on the significance of

the psychological nature.

## David Benner: Psychospiritual Unity

In particular, Canadian psychologist David Benner's writings on the

psychological nature have been cited in several integrationist works.[56] Like most

integrationists, Benner's position is that no "problem of the inner person is either spiritual

or psychological; all problems are psychospiritual."[57] He says the "soul is the meeting

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interfaces with all of those." Gary Chapman, *The Five Love Languages* (Chicago: Northfield, 1995), 139.

[53]"At the heart of mankind's existence is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another. Marriage is designed to meet that need for intimacy and love. That is why the ancient biblical writings spoke of the husband and wife becoming 'one flesh.'" Ibid., 22-23.

[54]Ibid., 23. "We are expressing our love, but the message does not come through because we are speaking what, to them, is foreign language. Therein lies the fundamental problem, and it is the purpose of this book to offer a solution" (16).

[55]Ibid., 140.

[56]Benner is cited in the following works: Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person*, 400. Benner identifies himself as a Christian, a member of the Anglican Church of Canada. He is an adherent of Christian mystics and interested in spirituality, transformation. He is less interested in theology, dogmas, and beliefs. See his biography, accessed February 6, 2015, http://www.drdavidgbenner.ca/my-journey/.

[57]David G. Benner, *Care of Souls: Revisiting Christian Nurture and Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 110.

point of the psychological and the spiritual."[58] He cautions against "psychospirtual dualism," separating the spiritual and psychological aspects of human nature, and advocates "psychospiritual unity," viewing them as interrelated aspects.[59] Psychospiritual unity means that the "totality of our being yearns for and responds to God."[60]

In explaining the relationship between the psychological and spiritual aspects, Benner uses the terms "structure" and "direction."[61] Structure refers to the psychological structures and mechanisms, such as emotions and mental processes. Direction refers to the direction of the spiritual nature, drawing closer to or away from God. Both structure and direction are interrelated.[62] He gives the example that people could use their mind (structure) to worship God or self (direction).

At a practical level, Benner discusses the priority of spiritual or psychological aspects for healing. He suggests healing or "growth" could start in either realm but states that psychological problems could "block" spiritual growth by keeping people "self-bound."[63] This perspective is similar to Donald Browning's belief that "developmental and environmental blocks" hinder pastoral counseling from effectively helping people to change.[64] Browning considered such blocks as a part of psychodynamic change. Benner,

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[58]Benner, *Care of Souls*, 13. Benner observes that contemporary psychology has "marginalized" clergy to be relevant for the spiritual nature. In response, he believes that a "psychospiritual nature" of the soul would restore the relevance of the clergy (14).

[59]Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*, 32-34; 108.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Ibid., 114-16. He credits Albert Wolters for the two terms. Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

[62]"Furthermore, our relationships with God are mediated by the same psychological processes and mechanisms as those that mediate relationships with other people. The spiritual quest is, at one level, a psychological quest, and every psychological quest in some way reflects the basic spiritual quest." Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*, 108.

[63]Ibid., 124.

[64]See the full quote: "Transformative qualities have much more potency and lasting effects if they are mediated with real psychodynamic accuracy. That is, pastoral counselors are more truly helpful…if they are sensitive to and able to address the actual developmental and environmental blocks, conflicts, and ambivalences that are undercutting a person's capacities." Donald S. Browning, "Introduction to Pastoral Counseling," in *Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling*, ed. Robert J. Wicks, Richard D. Parsons, and

based on Maslow's theory on self-actualization,[65] believed that the state of the true self is achieved by addressing the false self and its form of self-protection, such as anger or fear.

> At its best psychotherapy involves the crucifixion of the false self, which is comprised of the ways in which we protect ourselves from encounter with the deepest aspects of our being. Associated with this false-self system is a self-concept that we struggle to defend, regardless of what life may reveal to us about ourselves. This false self blocks us from growth and must be seen for what it is, a defense against the deeper experience of our true self and of life . . . . We are then able to respond to the inner spiritual call . . . and actualize our self-in-God.[66]

It is at the point of true self when a person realizes a need for God, the deepest human need.[67] Psychotherapy, according to Benner, is the means of treatment for the false self. The concepts of the true self and false self are also found in McMinn's writings.[68] Based on this theory, some integrationists seem to prioritize psychological needs to help people realize their need for God.

The strength of Benner's model is the emphasis on the unity of psychospirituality, describing the interrelatedness of the spiritual and psychological aspects. Benner's work on psychospirituality is insightful for several reasons. He discerned psychospiritual dualism could result in the following. First, it could minimize spiritual problems when personal sin is not the problem. He writes, "Thus, if a problem is not the result of personal sin it is judged to be psychological in nature. This does not mean that the person is free from sin, but that sin does not seem to be at the root of the specific problem under investigation."[69] Second, psychospiritual dualism could

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Donald Capps (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 12.

[65]Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*, 123-24.

[66]Ibid., 125.

[67]Benner defines spirituality as "the need and subsequent longing for self-transcendence and surrender, a need that is a fundamental part of our having been created in the image of God." Ibid., 105.

[68]See also McMinn's case study at the end of this chapter.

[69]"As practiced by advocates of psychospiritual dualism, differentiation of psychological and spiritual problems demands first ruling out spiritual problems." Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*, 38.

"trivialize" the spiritual nature when "'spirit' is identified as 'that part of us that relates to God,'" because "suddenly we are in the position of relating to God with only part of our total beings."[70] Third, psychospiritual dualism could result in spirituality being equated with "morality": "Spiritual problems are associated with sin and spiritual health with holiness. While there is no doubt that these are the fundamental dynamics of spiritual life, is spirituality really nothing more than personal holiness?"[71] Benner is careful to avoid reducing spirituality to "morality" and "personal sin," because spirituality, he asserts, is more broad, affecting "all of life" as well as interpersonal relationships.[72] Despite Benner's emphasis on the unity of psychospirituality, at the practical level, a form of psychospiritual dualism still exists, because psychotherapy and spiritual guidance each have a primary focus: "The primary goal of spiritual guidance is spiritual growth, not psychological growth . . . . Similarly, the primary goal of psychotherapy is psychological, not spiritual growth."[73]

Regarding the *telos* in counseling, Jones, Laura Miguélez, and Butman insightfully distinguish psychological wholeness from Christian holiness. They acknowledge secular psychologists too often define wholeness based on functional well-being, being well adjusted and doing "one's best at a purely human level" rather than pursuing Christlikeness.[74] Christian holiness, however, is based on conformity to the image of Christ (Phil 3:8-11) and suffering is a part of the growth process. They know suffering conflicts with psychological ideals of a pain-free life. Their description of

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[70]"One consequence of separating the spiritual from the psychological aspects of persons is a trivialization of the spiritual dimension of personhood." Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*, 40.

[71]Ibid., 41.

[72]Ibid., 102-3.

[73]"Spiritual guidance and psychotherapy both inevitably address psychospiritual problems and aspects of person. But as usually practiced, each could be said to have a primary focus." Ibid., 153.

[74]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," 86-87.

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Christian holiness reflects their understanding of human flourishing, which is based on the relational and functional views of *imago Dei*. Relationally, people are created to "love and serve the Lord God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37), love others (Lev 19:18; Matt 22:39)," and functionally, people are created to "care for the created order."[75] Thus, they insightfully point out the danger of confusing wholeness as defined by a certain theory with holiness.[76] They state that "Christian clinicians need to think carefully, critically and courageously about the goals . . . to think in light of what it means for a believer to be 'salt and light' in the world and to be 'bearing the marks of Christ.' It is imperative that these goals include considerations of Christian faith and experience."[77] Though Jones and Butman assert the importance of Christian holiness, they do not necessarily encourage it in psychotherapy, because holiness is contingent on the clients' "personalities, worldview, faith and value beliefs of counselors and counselee."[78] In a different work, however, Jones acknowledges that merely displaying the gospel to a client is not enough.[79]

## Personal Responsibility in Hamartiology

Personal responsibility is a significant concept that negatively shapes the integrationists' view of sin. In describing what distinguishes Christian counseling from

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[75]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," 66.

[76]They warn that "it would be easy for Christians to pursue 'growth' as defined by some therapy approach while deluding themselves into thinking that they are thus pursuing holiness as well." Ibid., 87.

[77]Ibid., 87-88.

[78]Spiritual resources "must always be used judiciously, in recognition of the complex intricacies and dynamics of the personal and professional relationship of counselor to counsel . . . the different personalities, worldview, faith and value beliefs of counselor and counselee." Butman and Jones, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," 469.

[79]He agrees with Jay Adams who believed that God is still glorified when people are helped with their problems, even if they are disinterested in the gospel. This does not mean that Jones equates the gospel to good deeds alone, because, in referencing one of Powlison's examples, he agrees that merely displaying the gospel to a client is not enough. Stanton L. Jones, "An Apologetic Apologia for the Integration of Psychology and Theology," in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology & Theology*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 75.

secular counseling, Collins stated his belief in sin as a cause of pathology but accurately

stated that Christian counselors differed "in the *extent*" that individual sins, individual

responsibility, and environmental influences may "cause problems."[80] Narramore said the

"concept of responsibility is a central issue in all forms of psychotherapy" but warned

against "blaming" all sins on personal responsibility.[81] Rather, "blame" for sin must

consider various factors, such as the sinful nature, willful choices, and other sinful

people. Collins believed that sin is a problem but disagreed that all sins result from

personal sin.[82] Some personal sins, as Crabb and Allender believe, are not "consciously

chosen."

> Personal sin may be consciously chosen, like telling a lie, or it may involve
> behaviors that the individual seemingly has no control, like sexual addiction. Some
> Christians insist that whether the sin feels chosen or not, it's still sin and
> responsibility is equal in either case. Others agree, but are willing to explore
> unnoticed sin that could lie behind the compulsive behavior.[83]

Interestingly, Carter and Narramore stated that most psychologists view sin as a "*result* of

emotional disturbance—not a *cause*," so they "frequently have difficulty reconciling their

findings to the biblical concepts of personal freedom and responsibility."[84]

McMinn contrasts how Christians tend to emphasize sin and personal

responsibility, whereas psychologists tend to emphasize sickness and remove

responsibility.[85] He seeks a balance of both. According to McMinn, integrationists have

approached sin at a macro level and biblical counselors at a micro level, exploring and

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[80]Collins, "The Distinctives of Christian Counseling," 324.

[81]Bruce Narramore, "The Concept of Responsibility in Psychopathology and Psychotherapy," *JPT* 13, no. 2 (1985): 91. He also emphasized responsibility is not about inducing guilt.

[82]Gary R. Collins, *The Biblical Basis of Christian Counseling for People Helpers* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1993), 112.

[83]Larry Crabb and Dan Allender, *Hope When You're Hurting* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 40-41.

[84]Carter and Narramore, *Integration of Psychology and Theology*, 59.

[85]Mark R. McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1996), 128-29.

discussing individual sins.[86] He contends that grace cannot be properly grasped without an understanding of sin: "Christian psychologists have been remiss in considering sin. We are right to be so attracted to grace, but how much deeper and richer our understanding of grace can be if we reclaim a Christian view of sin."[87] In this work, McMinn primarily focuses on sin and grace, recognizing the importance of balancing both. Further, McMinn cites a psychological theory on attributional style to argue for a correlation between personal responsibility and guilt and shame. This theory is used to support his case for a balanced view of sin.[88] McMinn concludes that a biblical view of sin should include both internal and external attribution: personal choice and original sin.[89] Yarhouse and Butman also caution against assuming personal sin. For instance, they write: pastoral care should be "exceedingly cautious about making moral judgments about character, choice and responsibility (again, *there but for the grace of God go I*)"[90] and elsewhere warn against narrowly defining sin as a chosen act and to consider other environmental factors, such as upbringings and poverty.[91]

Integrationists have proposed nuanced categories of sin to balance personal responsibility with the fallen nature and fallen world. Several integrationists describe sin as a "state" and "act."[92] McMinn uses these terms: sinfulness (fallen nature), sins

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[86]Mark R. McMinn, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling: An Integrative Paradigm* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 109.

[87]Ibid., 26.

[88]The attributional theory is used to show the correlation between a person's perception of problems and emotional responses. According to this theory, an internal attribution emphasizes personal responsibility, promoting shamefulness and guilt, while external attribution emphasizes the circumstances, promoting sympathy. "By attributional style, psychologists mean the way people explain good and bad events in their lives and the lives of others." McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 129. For a study on the effects of confession on psychological well-being, see Angela G. McCormick and Mark R. McMinn, "The Intrapsychic and Interpersonal Effects of Talking about Guilt," *JPC* 31, no. 4 (2012): 354-65.

[89]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 130-34.

[90] Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies*, 114.

[91]Ibid., 201.

[92]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman refer to the fallen nature that exists in all persons and the

(personal choices) and the consequences of sin (fallen world).[93] Similarly, Jones and his colleagues say a Christian understanding of sin "must maintain a balance between seeing sin as a violation of law and as a violation of relationship, of sin as individual and sin as corporate, of sin as driven by rebellion and sin as driven by anxiety, of sin as something we are in bondage to and are yet responsible for."[94] Based on ethicists' distinctions, Jones and his colleagues use the categories of moral evil, natural evil, finitude, and the satanic.[95] They believe many problems are related to natural evils, not moral evil (personal sins), which involves intentionality.

Table 5. Typology of sin in integrationist counseling

| Nature of Sin | Collins | Jones and Butman | McMinn | Nature of Problem |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intentional sin= personal responsibility | Conscious | Moral evil | Sins | Spiritual, requiring confession and repentance |
| Potential sin= Not necessarily responsible | Sinful Nature | Natural evil | Sinfulness Fallen world | Primarily Psychological, requiring psychological methods |

The interpretation of personal sins explains why confession and repentance are

willful act of turning away from God. Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," 78. McMinn and Campbell, referring to Augustine's teachings on sin, sin is an "act," "state," and a part of this sinful world. Mark R. McMinn, and Clark Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy: Toward a Comprehensive Christian Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 42-43.

[93]McMinn, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling*, 38.

[94]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," 79. Their definition is based on Reformed, neo-orthodox (i.e., Niebuhr and Tillich), and liberation theology.

[95]Finitude reflects man's limited nature—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually— that is unrelated to the fall. Satanic evil refers to Satan's opposition to God. Moral evil and natural evil began after the fall. Natural evil refers to the consequences of living in a fallen world, such as chemical imbalances or losing a loved one to cancer. Ibid., 79-82.

insufficient remedies in the minds of some integrationists. Confession and repentance are

appropriate responses for personal sins and spiritual problems, not psychological

problems. According to Collins, conscious sins and innate sinfulness are two types of

sin.[96] He suggested confession for personal sins. Crabb and Allender described personal

sin as "wrong choices; violation of moral standards; idolatry of the heart."[97] Personal sin

requires confession, repentance, and obedience. They were explicit in discussing sin but

were careful to equate sin with responsibility. According to Crabb and Allender, the

psychological order includes "dysfunctional background; emotional trauma; buried

memories; damaged sense of self" and requires "psychotherapists, counselors, and social

workers trained to uncover the roots of psychological distress and treat them."[98] But,

regardless of the nature of problem, they placed the source of true hope in God and

church community.[99] In *Understanding People*,[100] Crabb explains the necessity of

repentance for deep change.[101] In that work, he seems more explicit in suggesting sin as

the root problem: "If the root problem behind all surface problems is sin, then repentance

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[96]Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 641-42.

[97]Crabb and Allender, *Hope When You're Hurting*, 77. In addition to personal sin, Crabb and Dan Allender described five other categories to explain problems: spiritual warfare which is demonic, dysfunctional background which is psychological, biochemical disorder which is medical, undisciplined living, which is weakness, and deficient spirituality, which is distance from God (47).

[98]Ibid., 76-77.

[99]"The soul is healed not merely through more insight (dynamic therapy), deeper connection and shame-free encouragement (recovery therapy), or in greater deliverance from evil (spiritual intervention). The soul is healed as we grow in faith, hope, and love through prophetic truth, priestly community, and a kingly movement into the war of love." Ibid., 133. "Life in Christ, together: that's our hope" (205).

[100]Crabb, *Understanding People*, 126-30. Crabb discusses the problem of sin and reality of personal responsibility. He focuses on four aspects of human nature: personal, rational, volitional, and emotional. The personal aspect was discussed earlier. In this particular book, Crabb addresses *imago Dei* in more depth. For example, in explaining the "rational" aspect, Crabb says human beings must choose to renew their minds, forsaking "false hope" (140). The point here is not to critique *Understanding People* in-depth but to highlight an aspect of Crabb's understanding of sin and personal responsibility.

[101]Crabb uses the imagery of an iceberg to distinguish surface change from deep change. Deep change involves the "unconscious," underlying beliefs and motives. Crabb quotes Jeremiah 17:9 to describe the heart as an equivalent concept of the unconscious. He credits Freud for systematizing the concept of unconscious but asserts that the unconscious is also a theological concept. Ibid., 142.

must be centrally involved in all meaningful change."[102] Interestingly, in an article, Jones writes that even "dysfunctions" in psychotherapy are forms of sin, so he warned against dichotomous views such as "sin *or* low self-esteem, sin *or* narcissism, sin *or* disordered conditioned reactions," because all of these dysfunctions reflect a deeper problem of the human condition.[103] But, unlike Crabb, he does not suggest the necessity of repentance. So, yes, all problems have a spiritual aspect, but Jones clarifies they are not "only" moral and spiritual.[104]

Integrationists generally seem to assume spiritual problems involve personal sin, while non-personal sins, such as sins that occur from living in a fallen world, are not spiritual problems but psychological problems. This mentality reflects one of Benner's insights regarding psychospiritual dualism. Hence, pastoral care and the Bible are relevant for personal sins and psychological methods are relevant for non-personal sins.

Based on a few integrationist writings, the view on personal responsibility seems somewhat based on a negative view of Jay Adams' approach, which was considered confrontational, harsh, and to have focused on personal sin. Narramore believed Adams overly focused on personal sin and behavior modification.[105] Collins thought Adam's *Competent to Counsel* was "so confrontational, so directive."[106] Collins agreed with Adams that the Bible is relevant for counseling and the need for the Holy Spirit but disagreed with Adams' views on sin. An underlying assumption is that personal

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[102]Crabb asserts the necessity of God's Word, Spirit, and people for deep change. Ibid., 140.

[103]Jones, "An Apologetic Apologia for the Integration of Psychology and Theology," 71.

[104]Ibid., 69.

[105]Narramore, "The Concept of Responsibility in Psychopathology and Psychotherapy," 91, 95.

[106]Collins was probably one of the first readers of Adam's manuscript for *Competent to Counsel*. When Collins lived in Philadelphia, Adams was a seminary professor interested in learning about counseling. Collins was very surprised when Adam's book became a best seller, because he thought it was so confrontational. For clarification, Collins did not agree with the victim mentality or blaming other people for personal sufferings. He concluded that people should find hope in Christ. Collins, *The Biblical Basis of Christian Counseling for People Helpers*, 96.

responsibility leads some counselors to respond harshly and "blame" clients for their problems. Consider the following statements. In *Sin and Grace*, McMinn expresses the belief that some counselors use "direct confrontation" in attempting to "root out sin." He adds, "These counselors seem convinced that psychological problems are God's punishment for sinful behavior, much as a criminal is punished for breaking the law."[107] According to McMinn and Campbell, "Taking sin seriously does not mean that therapy becomes a place for harsh judgment and condescension. To the contrary, it is a place to honestly explore all the contours of sin and brokenness in life and to extend mercy and understanding in the midst of life's messes. Therapists do not stand above their clients, but with them."[108] They later emphasize extending mercy because all persons are sinners.[109] Overall, addressing sin is associated with harshness or condescension.

In McMinn's approach, confronting sin is unloving and least preferred.[110] McMinn suggests four approaches to confronting sin, starting with the most gentle: silence, pondering, questioning, and direct censure.[111] Direct censure is confronting the client with Scripture and is used "very sparingly" by McMinn for a few reasons.[112]

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[107]McMinn, *Sin and Grace*, 112.

[108]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 37.

[109]Ibid., 51.

[110]Rather than asking should Christian counselors confront sin, "a more appropriate question is, '*Which* clients should I confront with their sin, and *how* should I go about confronting them?'" McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 137.

[111]Silence is the least invasive method, used to encourage clients to realize their sins on their own. Pondering is another way of helping clients realize their sin by helping them to ponder their thoughts. Questioning is used to understand the client's values without imposing the counselor's values on the client. Ibid., 138-141. In addition, McMinn describes a fifth approach—not confronting. Not confronting is used to change the direction of counseling, focusing on another relevant problem (141).

[112]Ibid., 141. Here is an example of direct censure.

Client: She thinks she owns me. I am thirty-five now, and I need her to be my friend more than my mother. It's really not her business whom I date and whether I choose to sleep with him. It's my business. I will sleep with Tom whenever and wherever I feel like it.

Counselor: Your mother may not express herself well in many situations, but it's interesting that the Bible presents values that are very similar to hers.

Client: What do you mean?

McMinn says direct censure is "elevating the counselor's values to a position above the client's values." He also says it promotes behavior modification, which McMinn seems to associate with Adams' approach.[113] Moreover, it deepens a person's sense of shame and guilt. Instead, McMinn advocates "empathic confrontation," which is "an attempt not to minimize the significance of personal sin but to provide a safe, collaborative atmosphere that fosters genuine, honest self-exploration and discovery."[114] To promote self-exploration, the counselor does not impose his beliefs, including biblical truths. This approach also minimizes shame and guilt, recognizing that all persons are sinners. It can be used in silence, pondering, and questioning. Empathic confrontation promotes a "collaborative" relationship between the counselor and client, representing McMinn's emphasis on horizontal relationships.

## Case Study

In *Counseling and Christianity*, McMinn primarily uses his integrative psychotherapy that he developed with Clark Campbell and acknowledges that other integrationists may use other forms of psychotherapy. Before discussing McMinn's integrative psychotherapy, his assessment of Jake is presented.

For a holistic assessment of Jake, McMinn assesses Jake on three foundational dimensions: psychological, theological, and spiritual.[115] The psychological focuses on horizontal relationships.[116] Theological refers to biblical knowledge found in the Bible

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Counselor: God's Word instructs us that sex is only for marriage, and you and Tom aren't married. Hebrews 13:4 reads: "Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers." Perhaps that is what your mom is concerned about, too.

[113]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 150-53.

[114]Ibid., 153.

[115]Ibid., 59.

[116]Ibid., 52.

and other Christian writings; spirituality pertains to a person's relationship with God.[117] In contrast to other integrationist works that tend to view spiritual and theological as similar categories, McMinn describes theological as pertaining to knowledge of God and spiritual as pertaining to a relationship with God.[118] Spirituality is the recognition that willpower alone is inadequate to overcome sin and requires the spiritual disciplines.[119] Christian spirituality, according to Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins, "focuses on cultivating an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ."[120] It is distinct from behavior modification or "sin-management strategies," which alludes to McMinn's perception of Adams' approach to counseling.[121]

Wholeness involves the healing of all three dimensions: psychological, theological, and spiritual.[122] The relationship between the counselor and client serves as an important function (psychological) in positively affecting the client's relationship with God (spiritual). According to McMinn, Jake needs to work on the psychological and theological aspects of his life for healthy relationships.[123] Psychologically, Jake is willing to share, but he is defensive and blame shifts his problems. Theologically, Jake's

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[117]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 136-37.

[118]His distinction reflects his studies in spirituality and readings of books by Richard Foster and Dallas Willard. McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, ix.

[119]Psychologically, sin is a sickness; theologically, sin is both an act and inner disposition. Ibid., 135-37.

[120]Here is the complete definition: "Christian spirituality focuses on cultivating an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ that progressively transforms one's values, sense of purpose, beliefs, and lifestyle in the context of a faith community." "Spirituality in Counseling" in *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling*, ed. Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011), 22.

[121]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 143. Actually, Carter and Narramore believed biblical counseling had a "superficial view of sin," emphasizing the behavioral aspect without considering the heart, parents, and society. Carter and Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology*, 73-79.

[122]Healthy awareness of self is psychological, based on how God sees the client; healthy awareness of need is theological, seeking God for help; and healthy relationships are spiritual. The opposite of each healthy component is a "faulty" state. McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 59.

[123]Ibid., 91-92.

initiation in seeking therapy indicates an awareness of brokenness, but he does not understand the consequences of his brokenness in his life and others. While McMinn describes spirituality as one of the foundational dimensions, spiritual formation is not necessary in therapy because it is a primary task of the church.[124] Instead, McMinn prioritizes Jake's psychological well-being. Throughout the sessions, McMinn emphasizes a positive relationship with Jake, being careful to not pressure him spiritually. He believes therapists should be open to discussing faith with clients but should wait until a positive relationship develops or the client expresses interest. Also, he advises counselors to help the client focus less on bad feelings, such as guilt and shame, and more on God's love and good purposes.[125]

**Integrative Psychotherapy**

After assessing Jake, McMinn incorporates integrative psychotherapy to diagnose and treat Jake. According to McMinn and Campbell, integrative psychotherapy is based on cognitive therapy but incorporates a Christian view of persons.[126] Human beings were created for a relationship with God and others (creation), but sin has distorted this desire into hurtful relationships (fall), necessitating a relationship with God (redemption).[127] Integrative psychotherapy is "an integrated model of psychotherapy that relies on spiritual practices and Christian metaphysics, but the goals and procedures fit

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[124]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 88; cf. 86. If sanctification is the goal, then, according to McMinn, psychologists face a dilemma in satisfying the requirements of their state license. Expressing similar thoughts, according to Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay, the church is responsible for spiritual growth, partly because the therapist faces the challenge of receiving reimbursement from insurance companies if diagnoses and treatments are inconsistent with mental health standards. Yarhouse, Butman, and McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies*, 104.

[125]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 146.

[126]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 114. "In IP we attempt to build our understanding of human nature on a biblical and theological foundation that keeps it within a historical Christian context" (340).

[127]Ibid., 26-51.

squarely in the realm of psychotherapy."[128] Psychotherapy provides the methods to change emotions, cognitions, behaviors, and relational problems.[129]

Integrative psychotherapy consists of three interconnected domains: functional (thoughts, behavior, emotions), structural (core beliefs, schemas, and mode), and relational.[130] These categories, according to McMinn and Campbell, correspond to the typical categories that theologians use in describing the *imago Dei* and they also reflect general psychological categories. In integrative psychotherapy, the therapist typically starts with the client's functional well-being but the goal is to work towards relational healing, which is considered to be the "primary source of human dysfunction."[131]

**Functional domain.** McMinn's first priority is on functional well-being.[132] McMinn believes that the counselor should let Jake determine the direction of counseling, especially in the initial sessions.[133] The initial focus is helping Jake develop new behavior and thinking skills, primarily through cognitive therapy.[134] The functional

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[128]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 357-59. McMinn and Campbell state that integrative psychotherapy is not "a blend of psychotherapy and spiritual direction," because of ethical dilemmas with state regulating bodies. By integrative, McMinn and Campbell are referring to theological integration and theoretical integration. Theological integration means that a Christian worldview, including view of persons, is the foundation of integrative psychotherapy (15). Theoretical integration refers to the usage of various psychotherapies to help clients in the best way possible (23).

[129]For McMinn and Campbell, both faith and psychology are necessary for a comprehensive approach to addressing the whole person. "Integrationists believe that some sort of reciprocal interaction between faith and psychology is the best way to gain a comprehensive understanding of personality and counseling. This is not to say that psychology carries the same authority as the Christian faith, but that understanding and wisdom can be discovered in both." Ibid., 23. "In addition, we bring in other psychological theories because a Christian worldview demands we attend to various dimensions of human experience" (138).

[130]The purpose here is to provide an overview of the integrative psychotherapy model.

[131]Ibid., 116. McMinn and Campbell note that cognitive therapy focuses on functional and structural domains but does not view the relational domain to be significant, compared to integrative psychotherapy.

[132]This decision is partly based on McMinn's assessment that Jake is not interested in changing but feeling better. If Jake experiences functional well-being, such as completing school work, then he may decide not to continue counseling.

[133]McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 87.

[134]Various options are considered, such as cognitive-behavioral strategies to help with school assignments, cognitive rehabilitation and psychotherapy for neurological problems, cognitive therapies for

domain, according to McMinn and Campbell, is symptom-oriented, unlike "deeper" issues at the structural and spiritual levels, which are important, but some people are content with functionality.[135] For biblical support of functional well-being, the example of Jesus meeting physical needs is given.

**Structural domain.** Structurally, the goal is helping Jake change his interpretations of problems by focusing on his "core beliefs," mostly at the unconscious level.[136] According to McMinn, "the ultimate goal of Christian cognitive therapy is to free people from core beliefs that keep them from fully experiencing God's grace."[137] Therapy at the structural domain incorporates insight-oriented psychotherapies by considering the past and exploring emotions in greater depth.[138] Changing Jake's schema could initiate the process of choosing decisions that are more pleasing to God.[139] Below is one of McMinn's example.[140]

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trauma problems, and a psychiatrist to monitor medication usage. In addressing trauma, McMinn suggests Prolonged Exposure (PE) and Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) to help Jake face his past by reliving them rather than avoiding them. The goal is to help Jake "reevaluate" his past trauma. Ibid., 100. He also suggests a tool to assess Jake's suicidal risk (101-2).

[135]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 124-25.

[136]Core beliefs reside in schemas. Ibid., 128-34. A "schema is simply a structure that contains a representation of reality. Schemas are composed of thoughts, assumptions and beliefs that help us maintain a sense of personal identity in the midst of complex and ambiguous world, allowing us to simplify and understand our environment" (247). "[Schemas] in turn, reside within modes. Modes are composites of cognitive, emotional, physiological and motivational systems" (129).

[137]Ibid., 124. McMinn says that a common element of core beliefs is the desire to love and be loved. Christian counselors can point clients to Christ's unconditional love. McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 110-11. McMinn describes various techniques to help clients change faulty core beliefs, which is part of renewing the mind.

[138]McMinn rejects the belief that all problems are related to childhood upbringings. Sometimes new behavioral or thinking skills could be of great help. McMinn uses Recursive Schema Activation (RSA), a third wave of cognitive-behavior therapy, to change old schemas to new ones. McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 102-3. RSA is a method described in his book, *Integrative Psychotherapy*. RSA aims to help clients "learn from" rather than "obliterate" past schemas. This strategy involves asking questions about various aspects of his past schema, such as family relationships and military experience, to show their influence on his current life and ways to create new interpretations. In therapy, the counselor makes a statement or asks a question to make connections between Jake's comments and schemas.

[139]Ibid., 106.

[140]Ibid., 104.

Jake: There is so much religion in this school, which is cool, I guess, but I don't understand why everyone acts like God will hold their hands and take care of everything. These guys haven't seen how awful the world can be.

Counselor: It feels like God has left you to figure everything out on your own. McMinn says the counselor should help Jake identify his schema rather than converse about God. As stated in *Integrative Psychotherapy*, "Good theology will not immediately resolve faulty core beliefs—because they are rooted in deep emotional and relational realities that are not simply dismissed with analysis and reasoning—but nonetheless discussions of faith can help reshape core beliefs."[141] Compared to "good theology," a loving therapeutic relationship and faith community would be more effective in helping someone who believes he is unlovable.[142] As a biblical metaphor for his cognitive-behavior strategy, McMinn mentions the concept of old self and new self found in Eph 4 and Col 3: "The old self may never be entirely removed, but as the new self grows in strength and confidence, Jake will be able to make better decisions and grow toward psychological and spiritual health."[143]

**Relational domain.** This domain refers to therapeutic relationships to help Jake achieve functional and structural health.[144] According to McMinn and Campbell, 40% of effective therapy is based on client factors, such as "intelligence, motivation, persistence, faith, emotional management, and so on" as well as "social, financial and community support," and the remaining factors are therapeutic relationships (30%), expectancy of improvement (15%), and techniques (15%).[145] For instance, the therapist

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[141]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 134.

[142]Ibid.

[143]McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 105.

[144]The counselor, according to McMinn and Campbell, needs to build a trusting relationship with Jake and help him develop healthier relationships with others in his life. Ibid., 105-6.

[145]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 65-71.

can help a client who struggles with insecurity by valuing her regardless of her performance.[146] The assumption is that a positive experience with the counselor could lead to a positive perception of God and more openness to God.

The emphasis on the counselor's relationship with the client is a common theme in McMinn's and other integrationist writings. For instance, Butman and Jones encourage counselors to "image God" by exemplifying compassion and serving as an "advocate."[147] Stuart Palmer says pastors need to give advice and recommend spiritual disciplines, but "most critical is the tone and nature of the ongoing interpersonal exchange with the parishioner."[148] A high view of client's choice and freedom is also consistent with cognitive therapy.[149] For evidential support, integrationists often cite psychologist Michael Lambert's research, which concluded that the client-clinician relationship is critical for success in all types of psychotherapy.[150]

## Critique of Case Study

In McMinn's case study, spiritual concerns are nominally mentioned but psychological concerns, goals, and treatments receive priority. Scripture is not even

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[146]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 116-17.

[147]Butman and Jones, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," 464-67.

[148]Here is the full statement: "Pastors need to give advice and direction as well as recommend the use of prayer, Bible reading, and devotional literature as part of their pastoral counseling, but most critical is the tone and nature of the ongoing interpersonal exchange with the parishioner." Stuart L. Palmer, "Pastoral Care and Counseling Without the 'Soul': A Consideration of Emergent Monism," in *What about the Soul? Neuroscience and Christian Anthropology*, ed. Joel B. Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 169. Palmer references David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-term Structure Model* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992).

[149]"Cognitive therapists are distinctive among the psychotherapy approaches for being open with clients about the change process and trying to enlist the client as a collaborator, a concept that carries with it a high view of the client's powers of choice and freedom." McMinn et al., "Cognitive Therapy," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 232.

[150]For further insights, see Michael Lambert, "The Efficacy and Effectiveness of Psychotherapy," in *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change*, 6th ed., ed. Michael J. Lambert (New York: Wiley, 2013), 169-213; Michael J. Lambert, "Implications of Outcome Research for Psychotherapy Integration," in *Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration*, ed. John C. Norcross and Marvin R. Goldfried (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 94-129.

mentioned as a tool to assess Jake's view of God and faith.[151]

**Emphasis on Psychological Methods**

While McMinn expresses the holistic importance of addressing the

psychological, theological, and spiritual, he focuses on the psychological dimension.

McMinn believes "the essence of health is best understood from a theological vantage

point," but "many of the treatment methods" he uses come from psychology.[152] As shown

already, the role of cognitions is central in McMinn's process of change. In one of

McMinn's earlier writings, he uses the concept of rationality to overcome temptations to

sin. "Rationality" is thinking through thoughts and emotions, such as Christ's example in

each situation, to prevent impulsive desires (temptations) from developing into sins.[153]

In response to McMinn's approach, a question is God's role in freeing people

from faulty core beliefs. A concern with McMinn's technique is its lack of spiritual

substance. For example, one of the techniques is identifying the advantages and

disadvantages of core beliefs. McMinn and Campbell give this example: "Approval is

nice, but I will not get everyone's approval—I need not base my value on others'

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[151]In assessing Jake's view of God and faith, McMinn suggests two psychological inventories: Religious Commitment Inventory and Spiritual Assessment Inventory McMinn. McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 94. In the functional domain, McMinn's uses psychological approaches for the categories, reflecting his psychological view of the issues. In another example, Butman and Jones cite a psychological tool, Maloney's religious status interview, to assess faith development: "(1) awareness of God, (2) acceptance of God's grace and steadfast love, (3) being repentant and responsible, (4) knowing God's leadership and direction, (5) involvement in organized religion, (6) experiencing fellowship, (7) being ethical, and (8) affirming openness in faith." Butman and Jones, "Christian Psychotherapy and the Person of the Christian Psychotherapist," 475.

[152]McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 97. In another book, he focuses on cognitive therapy techniques where he emphasizes "collaboration" rather than "confrontation" in changing "core beliefs." Mark R. McMinn, *Cognitive Therapy Techniques in Christian Counseling* (Dallas: Word, 1991), 125.

[153]In describing human nature, McMinn uses the terms "impulsivity" and "rationality." Impulsivity is self-centered and rationality is truth-centered. Impulsivity refers to the old self, the sin nature. Impulsivity has the "dark side" and the "glossy side." Both sides encourage sin, but the glossy side represents what seems more positive in other people's eyes, such as righteousness and perfectionism. He points out Christians tend to display the glossy side and rationality and suppress the dark side. McMinn, *Your Hidden Half*, 24-30. The goal of maturity and counseling is to overcome the "duality" created by impulsivity and rationality by seeking rationality (68). McMinn's concepts of "impulsivity" and "rationality" has Freudian tones.

opinions."[154] From a Christian perspective, however, God's approval should guide this person's decisions and give a sense of confidence in resting and working. Another example is the "continuum technique" in helping clients to gauge the severity of their beliefs on a scale, such as zero through ten.[155] This can be helpful in showing clients that their beliefs are not all zeros (the worst situation) but comparisons are based on other people, which can lead to subjective scales. Using Scripture to rate the scales would not only be more objective but also help the client to have a clearer understanding of God and his expectations.

**Emphasis on Horizontal Relationships**

McMinn's emphasis on horizontal relationships places more value on interpersonal healing than a relationship with God. As an illustration, McMinn and Campbell describe Rex who complains about his controlling wife yet does not recognize personal faults.[156] They mention the blinding effect of sin but describe Rex's blameshifting as a psychological relational problem, possibly revealing a personality disorder. They acknowledge personality disorders, such as Rex's narcissism and relational problems, as a result of the fall but rely on psychotherapy for treatment. The belief is that psychological factors, such as family dynamics and unmet needs as a child, explain the source of relationship problems. The solution to interpersonal problems is a healthy relationship with God but they emphasize "redemptive human relationships," which is "sometimes necessary before people can grasp the notion of relating to a loving, benevolent God."[157] For biblical support, in addition to the relational aspect of the *imago*

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[154]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 126.

[155]Ibid., 128-28.

[156]Ibid., 342-44.

[157]Ibid., 345.

*Dei*, they reference Jesus' interpersonal skills as an example for therapists.[158] Thus, in their minds, therapists are practicing a form of soul care when they develop healthy relationships with clients.

**Emphasis on Psychological Nature**

Conceptually, McMinn presents a holistic approach with his three dimensions of psychological, theological, and spiritual. Distinguishing theological from spiritual, however, presents a couple of potential problems. First, it gives the impression that theological and spiritual are separate dimensions. True spirituality, however, is based on a theological foundation.[159] Second, the inclusion of spirituality to avoid "sin-management" creates a potential problem of compromising the theological dimension. For example, in *SoulTalk*, Crabb discusses spiritual growth, using the terms SoulTalk and SelfTalk to contrast leading a person closer to God or merely managing problems.[160] The strength of SoulTalk is the exhortation to depend on God for true change.[161] Yet, in discussing the New Way to live, Crabb does not use the term "sin." Rather he discusses the problem of "self-serving" desires and the "battle of competing desires" in the soul.[162] In practice, sin is minimized in seeking to promote spirituality.

McMinn and Campbell claim that sin is viewed as the problem in integrative

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[158]"All persons are created to be in relationship, and so we function most fully when we treat one another in ways that honor the God-image in each of us. Jesus—the visible image of the invisible God—provides the clearest pictures of how we can relate to one another. In Jesus we see grace and truth revealed in human form. Jesus is the goal—we should set our gaze on him as the author of Hebrews reminds us (Heb 12:2). The various theories and findings of psychology can be useful as we translate the relational capacities of Christ into this specific sort of soul care known as psychotherapy." McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 381-82.

[159]See chap. 5.

[160]Larry Crabb, *SoulTalk: The Language God Longs for Us to Speak* (Nashville: Integrity. 2003), 85. This book develops his previous thoughts on relational longings.

[161]Dependence on the Spirit's power to change is "the New Way to live and to relate . . . . No longer do I need to try to do everything right when I'm talking with you—the pressure's off." Ibid., 40-41. In Crabb's New Way, he contrasts "the new way of the Spirit" and "the old way of the written code" based on Rom 7:6.

[162]Ibid., 107, 84.

psychotherapy, unlike behavioral and cognitive problems in cognitive therapy.[163] In actuality, however, behavioral, cognitive and relational issues, all belonging to the psychological dimension, seem to be the problem in integrative psychotherapy. Sin is briefly mentioned to show that behavioral, cognitive and relational problems ultimately reflect the fallen nature. Sin is not directly addressed, partly because integrative psychotherapy lets the client guide the sessions and is careful to not offend clients. McMinn even discourages the usage of the word "sin" in sessions.

> Though Christian therapists think about the problem of sin when working with clients, it is rarely wise to use the word *sin* in the session itself. It is a word that has been tarnished by coercive efforts to manipulate people or trivialized as a synonym for pleasure. But even without using the word *sin*, therapists can use words that challenge a client, leaving room for the conviction of the Holy Spirit.[164]

Moreover, McMinn seems to avoid addressing sin because of his negative perception of direct confrontation. McMinn, however, characterizes direct confrontation narrowly, portraying it as a harsh and unloving approach. McMinn's concern with sinful direct confrontation is valid but care must be taken to generalize all forms of direct confrontation. Is direct confrontation the problem or the sinful practice of it? When properly practiced, direct confrontation could exemplify a form of speaking the truth in love.

Last, the theological dimension is tertiary. For instance, when a client shares about suffering, McMinn believes a theological view is more relevant,[165] remembering that human beings are broken but keeps this thought to himself. This decision supports McMinn's approach to helping clients realize their faulty thoughts on their own rather than the counselor telling the client. Yet, in addressing suffering, McMinn uses psychological methods because the problems are considered psychological. In addition,

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[163]McMinn and Campbell, *Integrative Psychotherapy*, 139.

[164]McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*, 38; idem, *Sin and Grace*, 21.

[165]McMinn, "An Integration Approach," 85.

most Scriptural references exist in the background and are briefly mentioned to support McMinn's approach. For instance, regarding domain 1, McMinn states Jesus was concerned with physical and spiritual needs, but Jesus emphasized spiritual healing ("Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" Matt 4:17). In domain 2, McMinn mentioned the concept of old self and new self as a metaphor for RSA, but a critical difference is that God causes the change in the new self (Eph 4:22-24).

## Conclusion

Integrationists claim theological anthropology is foundational for a Christian and holistic approach to counseling, but this chapter has shown that theological anthropology is more evident in the conceptual realm than practical realm. In this chapter, I have sought to demonstrate that incoherencies exist in three specific areas: (1) a narrow view of the spiritual nature, (2) an emphasis on psychological healing, and (3) view of personal responsibility and sin. While integrationists present the spiritual nature as a core component of human nature, which is consistent with theological anthropology, the spiritual nature is secondary in comparison to the psychological nature. Jones and McMinn even claim that all problems, including psychological ones, have a spiritual basis, but they primarily focus on issues that are considered psychological. One reason is that the spiritual nature is viewed as *one* aspect of human nature. Even when integrationists acknowledge the boundary between psychological and spiritual natures are difficult to define, they still confine the spiritual nature to an aspect of human nature.

This structural view of the spiritual nature adds clarity to the integrationists' claim that the Bible is authoritative in counseling. What they mean is that the Bible is authoritative for the spiritual aspect of human nature. By implication, the Bible is sufficient for the spiritual aspect of human nature and not the non-spiritual aspects, which are considered psychological. This narrow interpretation of the spiritual nature supports their argument against the sufficiency of the Bible for counseling and that the Bible is not

a handbook on counseling.

Another key theme that emerged in this chapter is a high regard for the relational aspect of *imago Dei*, specifically the dyadic relationship between the counselor and client. Virginia Holeman, professor of counseling, asserts that the relational dynamics—client with God, counselor with God, and client with counselor—are significant in counseling.[166] Collins has stated that the goal of Christian counseling is concerned with the client's relationship with God: "Christian counseling shares many of the goals of secular counseling, but the Christian distinctive is that his or her goals concern the counsel's relationship to Jesus Christ and the acceptance of Christian values."[167] In practice, however, the horizontal relationship receives more priority than the vertical relationship. As shown in the case study, for example, McMinn bases the direction of therapy on the client's interest and primarily interprets *imago Dei* to have implications for the counselor's character. Consequently, he emphasizes a noninvasive expression of Christian faith. Is love alone sufficient for a Christian approach to counseling? Secular psychologists who display love are imaging God but their approach is not necessarily Christian.

An emphasis on the counselor's relationship with the client is connected to the priority on psychological *telos*. Underlying both factors is the belief that psychological healing prepares the way for spiritual healing or growth. Spiritual healing is not necessarily addressed, because psychological healing affects intrapersonal and interpersonal problems. Holeman sums it well.

> Because the Spirit of God superintends the counseling process *in toto*, I argue that specifically *Christian* interventions are not *necessarily required* for 'Christian counseling' to take place. Rather counselors may select interventions in terms of their consistency with the ethos of participation in God's redeemed community and

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[166]Virginia T. Holeman, "The Neuroscience of Christian Counseling?" in *What about the Soul?* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 153-57.

[167]Collins, "The Distinctives of Christian Counseling," 326.

in terms of their contribution to increasing clients' relational capacity.[168] The concern is that a Christian therapist who displays Christlikeness sufficiently represents a Christian *telos*. Moreover, the emphasis on psychological healing also promotes the belief that the "self" can be healed without spiritual healing.

In integrationist counseling, sin is understood as *a* problem but not *the* problem. On the one hand, the reality of total depravity is a theological truth, but on the other hand, biological and environmental factors add complexity to the problem of sin. One of the common concerns expressed by integrationists is the tendency to equate sin with personal responsibility, rather than discerning other factors that influence a person. To counter a simplistic view of sin, some integrationists have categorized sin to point out the nuances, but it has almost eliminated the reality of sin by overly considering psychological perspectives. Like the spiritual nature, sin is viewed narrowly, broadening the scope of non-sin or psychological issues. Even when discussing the nature of sin, integrationists claim that some sins require psychological treatment. Regardless of the nature of problems or whether sin is committed intentionally, all problems have a spiritual aspect because of total depravity. Integrationists do not adequately address the spiritual aspect.

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[168]Holeman, "The Neuroscience of Christian Counseling?" 153.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN
BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Biblical counseling is based on the premise of the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling. Epistemologically, biblical counselors do not claim that Scripture is exhaustive or an encyclopedia that reveals knowledge on all topics.[1] Rather, Scripture is sufficient for salvation and sanctification. Christian counselors generally agree that Scripture is sufficient for salvation and sanctification but disagreement exists on the nature and scope of sanctification. If sanctification is associated with the spiritual nature, which it is in all three models, then examining the spiritual nature in biblical counseling is critical to understand their position on the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling. In contrast to the other two models, biblical counselors contend the scope of the spiritual nature includes psychological mechanisms. The core and controlling aspect of human nature is spiritual. According to Heath Lambert, the presupposition is that all problems are not exclusively spiritual but have "a spiritual core."[2] Thus, the assumption in biblical counseling is that scriptural wisdom corresponds to human nature problems.

Powlison, based on Adams' core beliefs, presents the following core commitments of biblical counseling: (1) God is at the center of counseling, (2) The Bible is authoritative and all sources must submit to it, (3) Sin, in all its aspects, is the primary problem counselors must deal with, (4) The gospel of Jesus Christ is the answer, (5)

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[1]See Adams' description of special revelation to argue for the sufficiency of Scripture in counseling. Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: More than Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 16-18.

[2]Heath Lambert, "Introduction: The Sufficiency of Scripture, the Biblical Counseling Movement, and the Purpose of the Book," in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, ed. Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 9.

Change is about becoming more like Christ through progressive sanctification, (6) The situational difficulties are not the ultimate cause of sin, and (7) Counseling is fundamentally a pastoral activity and must be church-based.[3] In this chapter, all of the commitments are addressed in varying degrees, but the first, third, fifth, and sixth core commitments are primarily discussed.

## Scripture and Anthropology

The argument for the sufficiency of Scripture is based on several anthropological assumptions. In biblical counseling, the redeemed state is considered the ideal life or *telos* in counseling. Scripture is descriptive of the ideal life and prescriptive in experiencing that life. In contrast to secular theories, Adams describes the state of Adam before the fall as the standard of normalcy for human beings but the redeemed state as ideal.[4] Similarly, Powlison points to "the psychology of Jesus," in truly understanding human nature and "the standard from which to make diagnoses of defection and distortion."[5] Throughout the Bible, Christians should learn from Jesus' desires, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors for a proper perspective on reality.[6] So, Scripture is the source of knowledge for anthropological *telos* and counseling *telos*.

Scripture is also sufficient for godly living. Adams wrote that the Bible "was intended to be the textbook for helping people come to love God and their neighbors . . . [and] is the textbook for living in this world, and preeminently, for learning all that is

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[3]David Powlison, "Biblical Counseling in Recent Times," in *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, ed. John MacArthur and Wayne A. Mack (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 27-29.

[4]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 181-82.

[5]David Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 44. Powlison says that the "psychology of Jesus" is found throughout the Bible, such as the Gospels, Psalms, Proverbs and the books of the prophets.

[6]"A model that does not move within the categories of human experience that Jesus himself moved in, and by which God himself looks at life, will fundamentally disorient and misguide those who embrace it. A counseling model offers a map of reality, an interpretive framework." Ibid., 46.

necessary to change from a sinful to a righteous way of life."[7] Powlison notes that the Bible is "comprehensively sufficient" for counseling; it "guides the questions asked in data gathering; it explains and exposes the motives for . . . anger; it maps out in detail the way of peacemaking."[8] Wayne Mack, one of the early leaders of biblical counseling, references Psalm 19:7-11 to explain several facets of Scripture's sufficiency for counseling. He notes that Scripture "transforms" and "restores" the soul (v. 7) and brings forth "well-being" and "peace" (v. 8).[9] Mack also references 2 Timothy 3:16, stating Scripture is profitable "for time and eternity, for our relationship with God and our relationship with our fellow man, for our spiritual and emotional and mental well-being, for our marriages and families, for our goals and motivations, for guidance and direction, for comfort and challenge, for preventing and resolving our inner and interpersonal problems, for all of life."[10] Mack views Scripture as a comprehensive source for the whole person and a practical source for problems, including marriage and interpersonal, that might be considered non-spiritual by some Christians.

Moreover, the Spirit uses Scripture to change lives, presenting a conjunctive relationship in changing people. Paul Tripp says, "The changes God produces in his people are directly connected to the ministry of the Word."[11] The Word must be used to address the root problems of a self-focused world, where personal needs and happiness are the goals.[12] Adams also believed that the Holy Spirit is necessary to change the

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[7]Jay Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling," in *Helping People Grow: Practical Approaches to Christian Counseling*, ed. Gary R. Collins (Santa Ana, CA: Vision House, 1980), 158.

[8]David Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," *JBC* 11, no. 3 (1993): 27. "For example, James 3 and 4, Ephesians 4, Matthew 7 and 18, and Galatians 5 and 6 are *about* what is going on between Bill and Sue [a bickering couple] and between each of them and God" (28).

[9]Wayne A. Mack, "The Sufficiency of Scripture in Counseling," *Master's Seminary Journal* 9, no. 1 (1998): 78.

[10]Ibid., 80.

[11]Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 21. "God transforms people's lives" as the "Holy Spirit empowers people to bring his Word to others" (19, 35).

[12]Ibid., 24-25; 27.

personality, in contrast to behavioral change.[13]

Another aspect to the argument for the sufficiency of Scripture is the belief that Scripture provides the lens to view and interpret life from God's perspective. For Powlison, sufficiency of Scripture is not about a proof text for problems or biblicism; rather, it should challenge Christians to think critically from a biblical perspective and develop practical theology.[14] For instance, Powlison often uses the term "God-referential" to emphasize a God-centeredness in understanding the heart and nature of counseling.[15] He says "all personhood and all coherent life wisdom derive" from God.[16] Likewise, Tripp states, "Scripture gives us a radical view of life that has its roots in the gospel; every biblical perspective and principle is rooted there."[17] Adams had the same views on Scripture, which shaped his view of counseling and its place in the church. Powlison notes that Adams' problem with psychology was not merely epistemological but ecclesiastical.[18] Jeremy Pierre summarizes the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling: "Scripture is sufficient to *teach* . . . everything necessary for doctrine and salvation . . . .

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[13]Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 149-50.

[14]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," in *Care for the Soul*, 37. "Scripture is sufficient, not in that it is exhaustive, containing all knowledge, but in that it rightly aligns a coherent and comprehensive system of counseling that is radically at odds with every a-theistic model" (33; cf. 27).

[15]David Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," in *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 247.

[16]David Powlison, "Giving Reasoned Answers to Reasonable Questions," *JBC* 28, no. 3 (2014): 10.

[17]"This is a core distinctive of biblical counseling. Biblical counselors do not see the Bible as an encyclopedia of life principles that need only be followed to have a happy life." Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 297. Powlison clarifies that biblical counseling is a form of practical theology, requiring counselors to do the hard work of connecting theology to life problems. Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," in *Psychology and Christianity*, 245.

[18]"When the psychologists ritualistically charged that Adams had adopted an against-psychology position epistemologically, denying common grace and general revelation, they skirted the fact that Adams was most often exercised about the sociology of professions, not about epistemology . . . . Adams was sharply against psychology when it came to giving state-licensed and secularly trained mental health professionals the reins for face-to-face care of souls." Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 53-54. Further, for an extensive evaluation of Adams' approach to counseling, see David Powlison, *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2010).

Scripture is sufficient *to do* . . . everything necessary for people to receive/know God through the gospel of Jesus Christ . . . . Scripture is sufficient *to see* . . . all of creation from a God-ordained perspective."[19]

To summarize epistemological differences among Christian counseling models, Powlison proposes the taxonomy VITEX and COMPIN. VITEX "asserts that psychology must make a VITal EXternal contribution" and "COMPIN asserts that there are COMPrehensive INternal resources within the Christian faith for the construction of a wisely Christian model of personality, change and counseling."[20] Powlison suggests using three priorities in engaging with secular sources. The first priority is "to articulate positive biblical truth" that orients people to God.[21] Powlison contends for a "systematic practical theology": "Our doctrine must control our study, and our study must flesh out our doctrine."[22] The second priority must be "to expose, debunk and reinterpret alternative models to biblical care for souls, whether secular or religious."[23] The third priority must be "to learn what we can from defective models; we should be stimulated and informed by those with whom we disagree and whom we aim to convert."[24] Hence, interaction with secular sources is a "distinctly tertiary priority."[25] Christians can learn

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[19]Jeremy Pierre, "Scripture is Sufficient, But to do What?" in *Scripture and Counseling: God's Word for Life in a Broken World*, ed. Bob Kellemen and Jeff Forrey (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 95-96.

[20]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 32. Powlison developed them in response to polemical writings in Christian counseling, as a neutral way of distinguishing the views.

[21]Ibid., 34.

[22]Ibid., 38.

[23] For example, while Powlison appreciates Augustine, Jonathan Edwards, Gregory the Great, and William Baxter to name a few, he recognizes that not "all earlier practical theologies were created equal"; the task is to "appropriate the best and forsake the worst." Ibid., 39.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., 37. Powlison states that "all counseling attempts pastoral work, shepherding the souls of wandering, suffering sheep" by using a form of "speaking the truth in love." The source of truth varies but it is used to convert people to a certain way of living. Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 258. "Christian faith has as much to say about normative institutional structure and professional role as it does about theory of personality or counseling methodology. The classic summary passage is Eph 3:14-5:2. God calls his people to mobilize as a countercultural community characterized by transformative mutual

from secular psychology and other non-biblical sources as long as they are discerning of "faulty assumptions and explanations."[26] Similarly, Mack writes, "Secular psychology may play an *illustrative* (providing examples and details that, when carefully and radically reinterpreted, illustrate the biblical model) or *provocative* (challenging us to study the Scriptures more thoroughly to develop our model in areas we have not thought about or have neglected or misconstrued) function."[27]

The risk of elevating tertiary knowledge, according to Powlison, is a "godless" perspective on "behavior, mood, relationships, motives, cognition and so on," ultimately constricting the "scope of Christian faith" to a "spiritual sector."[28] For example, in critiquing the role of need theories, Powlison says integrationists state the intention of borrowing secular psychological theories but the "net effect in every integrationist's system is that secular error eats up biblical truth, so that false views of human nature, of Christ and of the change/counseling process control the system."[29] In Powlison's critique of Christian counseling in the twentieth century, he often asserts something along the lines of this statement: The "God of the Bible was insignificant for objectively explaining and addressing the human condition."[30]

## The Centrality of the Heart

In biblical counseling, the heart is a central concept in the anthropological framework. Among biblical counseling works, Adam's chapter on human life is one of

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counseling." Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 260.

[26]Ibid., 255.

[27]Wayne Mack, "What is Biblical Counseling?" in *Totally Sufficient: The Bible and Christian Counseling*, ed. Ed Hindson and Howard Eyrich (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2004), 51.

[28]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 41.

[29]Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," 25.

[30]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 24.

the most comprehensive works on anthropology.[31] It discusses the following aspects of human nature: material being, spiritual being, moral being, social being, and working being. According to Adams, the spiritual being and sin required "an enormous undertaking," because of their implications for counseling.[32] Regarding the spiritual being, Adams stated, "The fact of the matter is that discussion of the scriptural notion of the heart is quite illuminating (and important to counselors), and until it is fully grasped, there can be no real understanding of human nature (and especially the spiritual aspect of it). Therefore, I shall take time to discuss this vital (but neglected) subject."[33] If the "self" is central in secular psychology, then the "heart" is central in biblical counseling. A critical difference is that the biblical view of the heart is spiritual in nature.[34] In the following sections, I will show that the heart is prioritized because of a holistic view of the heart and the belief that the heart is the fundamental problem. This view of the heart explains why biblical counselors seem to focus on the spiritual nature and responsibility. At the end, I will discuss how Scott addresses the heart in the case study with Jake.

**Holistic Nature of the Heart**

Biblical counselors acknowledge various aspects of human nature, but categorize them under the heart. The heart encompasses all aspects of human nature that is not physical, such as cognitions, emotions, desires, and will. So, the heart overlaps with psychological mechanisms in Christian psychology and integrationist counseling. The heart, in Adams' view, "includes the entire inner life," such as reasoning, conscience, and

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[31]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 105-38.

[32]Ibid., 110, 139. See also Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Dennis E. Johnson, *Counsel from the Cross (Redesign): Connecting Broken People to the Love of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 183-92. The authors discuss the importance of discernment in studying anthropology.

[33]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 113. See pp. 114-17 for Adams' explanation of the heart.

[34]Powlison asserts that the heart and the self are not equivalent, because the self does not require repentance or dependence on the Holy Spirit. Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," 27.

emotions.[35] In Adams' anthropological framework, all three terms—heart, soul, and spirit—refer to the same entity, the "immaterial person" or the spiritual nature. He said the distinctions are not substantial. The heart refers to the immaterial person "in contrast to" the material aspect. The spirit refers to the immaterial aspect "out of relationship to the material"; it is the "disembodied state."[36] The soul refers to the unity of the material and immaterial as a living being. Tripp also asserts the heart includes the various aspects of human nature, such as spirit, soul, mind, emotions, and will.[37]

In an article, Winston Smith argues "cognition, emotion, and will are understood as aspects of the spiritual activity of the 'heart' rather than discrete psychological functions."[38] He adds, "This comprehensive understanding of the spiritual makes it impossible to nearly separate the spiritual from the physical and the psychological."[39] Against trichotomy, Smith supports dichotomy based on the belief that the Bible presents the "inner man" or heart as a unity. By implication, he concludes, "Christ did not come simply to rescue one-third of my being and contract the rest of it out to the psychological and medical professions. Christ came to redeem me from my fallen nature as it pervades the way I think, the way I feel, what I do, my bodily existence."[40] In Smith's argument, he says redemption affects the whole person, not just certain aspects of human nature. Moreover, Smith notes that one of the implications of trichotomy is that the spiritual realm "loses significance," because the cognition, emotion, and will are treated as psychological problems. Thus, every aspect of human nature is spiritual and

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[35]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 114-15.

[36]Ibid., 116.

[37]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 59; cf. Powlison, Questions at the Crossroads, 43.

[38]Winston Smith, "Dichotomy or Trichotomy? How the Doctrine of Man Shapes the Treatment of Depression," *JBC* 18, no. 3 (2000): 22.

[39]Ibid., 24.

[40]Ibid., 29.

inter-related. That is, emotions affect thoughts in ways that desires affect emotions. To treat each aspect of human nature in isolation is simplistic and overlooks the profound structure of human nature. The holistic view of the heart and its comparability to the spiritual nature explains why biblical counselors are primarily concerned with the heart or spiritual nature

Assuming a holistic view of the heart, biblical counselors believe changing the heart affects the other aspects of human nature. That is, spiritual healing includes psychological healing, because the heart is the core aspect of human nature. As Powlison writes, the heart is the "underlying psychodynamic in every human being"; it is the "master desire that organizes all others."[41] He adds, the "restoration of our humanity" affects "psychological functioning," such as "sense of identity, operations of conscience, thought, feeling, choice, memory, anticipation, attitudes, relationships."[42] So, the key to changing lives is changing hearts. As Kellemen states, "We are not solution focused; we are *soul-u-tion* focused—we focus on inner change at the heart level, at the soul level."[43] The belief that the heart encompasses the personality as understood by psychologists is why biblical counselors focus on changing the spiritual nature or heart.

**Fundamental Problem of the Heart**

A biblical counseling tenet is that the heart must be addressed in counseling, because the cause of sin is internal, not external. Sin is a heart problem[44] and a "condition that results in behavior."[45] Adams stated that sin starts in the heart (Mark 7:19-23; Luke

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[41]Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 267. On the same page, he writes, "Christian faith teaches a 'psychodynamic theory'—with a major twist."

[42]Ibid., 248.

[43]Robert W. Kellemen, *Gospel-Centered Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 100.

[44]Edward T. Welch, "The Bondage of Sin," *JBC* 17, no. 2 (1999): 28-30.

[45]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 10.

6:45) and so the heart must be addressed in counseling: "In fact, it is the sinful inclination of the heart (the inner, unseen life) that causes the aggravating habituation of the material body (Rom 6) that he struggles with. And, he must be shown that this bodily habituation can be overcome by proper spiritual orientation, and he is responsible for both to God."[46] Tripp writes that the heart is the "source of my sin problem," which is why behavior modification or any other systematic approaches are insufficient for transformation.[47] Powlison gives the example of Galatians 5:19-21 to demonstrate the source of sinful deeds in sinful desires, "[not nurture problems], psychosocial trauma, unmet needs, a syndrome identified in the DSM-IV, or a somatic disease process."[48] Galatians 5:21 ends with the phrase "and the like," implying the unending list of fleshly desires that manifest as sin. Powlison says Galatians 5 could translate into psychological problems: "interpersonal conflict," "substance abuse," "dysphoric emotions," and "sexual disorders" to name a few.[49] Hence, Powlison insists the absence of psychological labels in the Bible is not a valid argument against the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling.

Broadly speaking, sin is failing to love God and neighbors.[50] Sin is a worship dysfunction, not merely breaking God's law. Tripp uses the term "worship" to describe the sinful nature of human beings.[51] In essence, all persons are worshippers. The question is what or who. People express the object of their worship through their actions and attitudes. Sin occurs when people replace God with a different love or ruling desire, often called an idol in biblical counseling.[52] Romans 1:21-25 clearly demonstrates the nature of

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[46]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 107-8.

[47]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 62.

[48]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 37.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling" in *Helping People Grow*, 155.

[51]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 44-45.

[52]Ibid., 66.

idols, exchanging God for created things. The deceptive nature of idols is that it can start with good things or desires. Anything that usurps God's place in a person's life is an idol. Sin is also described as spiritual adultery, loving something other than God. Lane and Tripp reference the Ten Commandments (Deut 5:6-21) to explain the centrality of worshipping God and its effect on personal responses.[53] The first three commandments concern the object of a person's worship. When God is worshipped, a person will honor God in commandments 4-10.

Powlison explains a worship problem reveals "functional gods."[54] Powlison lists 35 x-ray questions to identify functional gods.[55] When people's functional god is not God, they need to reorient their lives to be "God-relational."[56] Human motivation changes when God is loved above all things or persons, because idols is an issue of "lordship."[57] "Human motivation is about the vertical dimension," which affects the horizontal dimension and points to the need for a "God-related solution" found in the "grace, peace, power, and presence of Jesus Christ."[58] So, change starts by reorienting a person's position before God. Powlison uses the expression "active verb" to explain human motivation in relation to God. "In sum, the human heart—the answer to why we do what we do—must be understood as an active verb with respect to God"—a

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[53]Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp, *How People Change*, 2nd ed. (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2008), 135.

[54]Functional gods refer to "what of who actually controls their particular actions, thoughts, emotions, attitudes, memories, and anticipations." David Powlison, "X-ray Questions: Drawing Out the Whys and Wherefores of Human Behavior," *JBC* 18, no. 1 (1999): 3.

[55]Here are some of the questions: "What do you love? Hate? What do you want, desire, crave, lust, and wish for? What are your goals and expectations? What do you think you need? Where do you find refuge, safety, comfort, escape, pleasure, security? What do you feel entitled to? What do you pray for?" Powlison says that many of the questions "simply derive from the *verbs* that relate you to God: love, trust, fear, hope, seek, obey, take refuge, and the like." Ibid., 4-7.

[56]Ibid., 7.

[57]David Powlison, "Idols of the Heart and 'Vanity Fair,'" *JBC* 13, no. 2 (1995): 48.

[58]Powlison, "X-ray Questions," 7.

"covenantal-relational analysis of the human heart."[59] This covenantal view of the heart explains why the fundamental problem is sin and the need for Christ's redemption.[60] A God-referential view also shapes Powlison's understanding of human motivation and position that the Bible addresses human motivation: "God defines the issues of the heart as pervasively with-respect-to-God or, in other words, 'covenantal.'"[61] Hence, Powlison disagrees with Jones and Butman's claim that the Bible does not address human motivation, asserting that Jones and Butman interpret motivation from psychological nomenclature rather than a biblical one. When people love God with their whole being (motivation), they are able to love others as themselves (behavioral).

A subset of this worship explanation is the common biblical counseling expression "idols of the heart," coined by Powlison. Lambert expresses a concern that some biblical counselors have overly focused on idols as the problem. Powlison agrees, as indicated in an email to Lambert, saying that it is "overused among biblical counselors."[62] Rather, according to Lambert, idols are "manifestations of the deeper problem," which is self-exaltation.[63] He states, "As the counseling movement moves into a third generation, it is necessary to look at idols and ask, clearly and with specificity, why. The answer is that humans long for the glory that is due to God. A heart that longs for this glory lusts after idols that provide it."[64]

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[59]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 47. The "entirety of human 'psychology' takes place God-referentially whether or not we are aware of it, whether or not our theories and therapies comprehend it." Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 196.

[60]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 47. "The Bible locates the core motivational dynamic in covenantal space, not in psychological, physiological or psychosocial space."

[61]"The Bible that I read is fundamentally and pervasively *about* human motivation!" Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," 26.

[62]Heath Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement After Adams* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 150.

[63]Ibid., 148.

[64]Ibid., 151.

In a previous article, Powlison conveys the deeper problem of worshipping the self or pride that Lambert claims. Powlison presents a three level framework in thinking about the dynamics of sin: (1) The Bible uses general terms, such as "pride, self, self-centeredness, self-trust, autonomy, flesh, old nature, fool, and evil," (2) The Bible also refers to themes, such as "self-exaltation, control, fear of man, mammon, physical pleasure or comfort, self-righteousness, and false religions," and (3) The Bible also describes specific, individual sins.[65] The three levels portray a nuanced analysis of sin rather than generalizing sins as idols of the heart. Powlison also notes the creative nature of lusts. For instance, one lust could develop into several sins and one sin could be rooted in several lusts. He quotes 1 Timothy 6:10: "The love of money is a root of all sorts of evil." "The craving for money . . . is an organizing theme for symptomatic sins as diverse as anxiety, theft, compulsive shopping . . . and so forth."[66] Moreover, one sin, such as sexual immorality, might occur for different reasons: "erotic pleasure, financial advantage, revenge on a spouse or parent . . . the quest for social status or career advancement . . . and so forth."[67]

Powlison notes that Scripture "never separates motive and behavior" (root and fruit).[68] In several writings, Powlison often explains human motivation or the why aspect with lusts of the flesh: "Specific ruling desires—lusts, cravings or pleasures—create bad fruit."[69] He describes how seemingly good desires can turn into lusts, portraying the deceptive and "plausible" nature of lusts.[70] On the surface, these desires seem harmless

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[65]David Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2003), 157-58.

[66]Ibid., 152.

[67]Ibid., 153.

[68]Powlison, "X-ray Questions," 8.

[69]Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes*, 147. Powlison clarifies that the term "lust" can refer to sexual desires and also cravings or pleasures (1 John 2:16). Ibid., 148.

[70]"Our desires deceive us because they present themselves as so plausible. Natural affections become warped and monstrous, and so blind us . . . . The things people desire [such as good health, a loving spouse, success on the job, etc.] are delightful as blessings received from God, but terrible as rulers. They

and acceptable but can rule people.

**Heart and the Body**

While the heart is central, biblical counselors acknowledge the body and soul are psychosomatic[71]. They describe psychosomatic problems in relation to God. For example, Adams described the psychosomatic effects of unconfessed sin,[72] citing David's sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. In both Psalm 32 and 38, David experiences physical and emotional suffering while hiding his sin and living with guilt but has peace after seeking God's forgiveness. Welch also discusses psychosomatic dynamics but relates it to discerning sin from sickness. He states, (1) "Any behavior that does not conform to biblical commands or any behavior that transgresses biblical prohibitions proceeds from the heart and is sin," (2) "Any behavior that is more accurately called a weakness proceeds from the body and is sickness or suffering. Sickness or suffering can also be caused by specific sin, but we must be very careful to have ample justification before we make such a link."[73] "Weaknesses," such as hallucinations or delusions, are not sinful but they can become a source of temptation to sin.[74] The body can be strong or weak, but regardless of the body's condition, Welch advises a comprehensive approach that includes the body and soul (heart), where moral decisions are made.

A common psychosomatic problem is depression. In *Good Mood, Bad Mood*, family physician and biblical counselor Charles Hodges states in the introduction, "I

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make good goods but bad gods. They beguile, promising blessing, but delivering sin and death." Ibid., 151.

[71]Welch uses the term "interactionism." Edward T. Welch, *Blame It on the Brain: Distinguishing Chemical Imbalances, Brain Disorders, and Disobedience* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1998), 29.

[72]Adams, *Competent to Counsel,* 114-15. "Depressed persons whose symptoms fail to show any sign of a biochemical root should be counseled on the assumption that they are depressed by guilt." Ibid., 126.

[73]Welch, *Blame It on the Brain*, 43-44.

[74]Ibid., 41.

found that the way we diagnose and treat depression is at the heart of the problem."[75] He discusses the changes in the way that depression has been diagnosed. In particular, he cites the research of psychiatrists Alan Horwitz and Jerome Wakefield who distinguish between normal sadness and depression.[76] Hodges states, "The problem is that the tools given to us by the creators of the DSM . . . are unable to distinguish between normal and disordered sadness."[77] In counseling a woman named Eve who was struggling with depression and anger, Hodges addresses her body and soul. Hodges suggested exercising regularly, watching less television, eating healthier foods, completing homework, attending church, fellowshipping with Christians, studying Scripture, and serving others. He concludes that it "would not have been possible to help Eve out of her trouble by artificially dividing her into her thinking, acting, and emotional parts. Those three aspects of her personhood were working together in her life—and not working well until she decided to change all of them."[78] Notice that spiritual disciplines were a part of Hodges' method in addressing depression and anger. Eve needed help focusing less on herself and worshipping God. Hodges also acknowledges diseases that could be accompanied by a depressed mood and need medical attention.[79]

The issue of medication is not a primary concern in biblical counseling because of the focus on the heart. The general consensus among biblical counselors is

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[75]Charles D. Hodges, *Good Mood Bad Mood: Help and Hope for Depression and Bipolar Depression* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2013), 9.

[76]Ibid., 62. Hodges adds, "There are many biblical examples of problem-induced sadness that would today be diagnosed as mood disorder" (77). For further background, see Alan Horwitz and Jerome Wakefield, *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder* (New York: Oxford University, 2007).

[77]Ibid., 64.

[78]Ibid., 127.

[79]For example, hyper and hypothyroidism, hyperparathyroidism, low serum potassium or hypokalemia, low serum sodium or hyponatremia, Cushing's disease, Addison's disease, hypopituitarism, porphyria, Wilson's disease, infectious diseases, neurologic disease, and other problems, such as cancer, lupus, congestive heart failure, and sleep deprivation. Some medications and drugs could cause depression. Ibid., 189-91.

that medication itself is not sinful but can be used to avoid addressing heart issues. Laura

Hendrickson sums it well.

> I believe we can agree that our bodies play an important role in our emotions
> without insisting that all painful feelings are due to a disease. I also don't think that
> it's a sin or an admission of weakness to take psychiatric drugs. But taking a
> medication without considering spiritual issues may leave the most important factor
> unaddressed. In fact, it's been my experience, through twenty years of psychiatric
> and biblical counseling practice, that a medicine-only approach doesn't resolve
> emotional pain completely or permanently in most cases.[80]

Still, biblical counselors should be careful of giving the impression that taking

medication is sinful or reducing a holistic approach to the soul only, minimizing the

psychosomatic interplay. Adams even suggested counselors "to study the fundamental

functions of the human body" for a better understanding of psychosomatic unity.[81] In his

footnote, he stated, "Pastors must not prescribe medical treatments or meddle in matters

about which they know little or nothing, but they must always consider the biblical

implications of medical treatment."[82] Biblical counselors could, however, give the

impression that medication is sinful when they minimally discuss it compared to the

heart. In some cases, family members pressure individuals to stop taking medications,

which only adds to existing guilt.[83] Aside from writings that specifically address

medication in counseling, such as Hodges' and Hendrickson's books,[84] biblical

counselors seem to briefly mention medication when writing about various problems. It

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[80]Laura Hendrickson, "The Complex Mind/Body Connection," in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 415. See also Mike Emlet, "Listening to Prozac . . . and to the Scriptures: A Primer on Psychoactive Medications," *JBC* 26, no. 1 (2012): 11-22.

[81]Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, 439.

[82]Ibid., 438n. A few sentences later, he wrote, "One way of viewing the matter (although somewhat simplistic) is to say that the counselor is concerned about *what the counselee does to the body* and that the doctor is concerned about the breakdown of the body and *what the body does to itself*."

[83]For example, in a real case study, the husband "strongly desired that his wife be free of psychiatric medications, believing that a growing Christian should be able to handle life without them." His wife was not ready and felt guilty. Robert D. Jones, "Julie and Addictions and Adultery," in *Counseling the Hard Cases* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 280.

[84]Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Laura W. Hendrickson, *Will Medicine Stop the Pain? Finding God's Healing for Depression, Anxiety, and Other Troubling Emotions* (Chicago: Moody, 2006).

might be helpful for biblical counselors to devote a section on medication when addressing problems so that misunderstandings occur less, especially because the issue of medication is a sensitive or controversial topic for some people. In sum, as appropriate to the counseling problem, biblical counselors should state explicitly that it is not necessarily sinful to take medication. Medication should not be a divisive issue in biblical counseling, because it is not the core issue from a biblical counseling perspective.

## Sin and Responsibility

Sin occurs from a volitional decision, but it also exists as a result of living in a fallen world with fallen human beings.[85] In biblical counseling, the concept of responsibility is associated closely with the concepts of volition and choice. People cannot necessarily control external sources of sin, but they have volition in how they respond to other sinful people and the fallen world. In that sense, people are responsible beings. Take for example an adult who grew up with abusive parents. Adams said Christians were responsible for their sinful responses, not their parents' sins.[86] According to Smith, "[The] Bible never uses the weaknesses and sufferings of the outer man as a trump card that overrides the responsibility of the inner man to respond in faith and obedience."[87] The adult might have been influenced negatively by his family, but he chose to sin. Powlison clarifies, "Sin emerges from within the person . . . . The occasions of a lust are never its cause. Temptations and sufferings do push our buttons, but they don't create those buttons. That brings huge hope for change in the present by the grace

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[85]Robert Jones and Brad Hambrick, "The Problem of Sin," in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, ed. James MacDonald, Bob Kellemen, and Steve Viars (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 140-41.

[86]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 138-39.

[87]Smith, "Dichotomy or Trichotomy? How the Doctrine of Man Shapes the Treatment of Depression," 24. He gives the example of Christ who never succumbed to temptation, despite the lack of food and water in the wilderness.

of God."[88] According to Mack, historical data is valuable in identifying other influential factors, from both past and present, though sinful responses should not be excused or overlooked. Mack writes,

> The biblical counselor does not approach such situations [of abuse, mistreatment] by ignoring what occurred in the past, but listens attentively to their history, identifies with the pain they have experienced, then lovingly and patiently deals with their sinful responses and seeks to refocus their attention on their resources in Christ and His way of dealing with their past.[89]

In his book, Stephen Viars describes a practical way of responding to the past by using the categories of "innocent past" and "guilty past" to differentiate suffering from sin[90] Viars understands the various dynamics that complicate a person's past. Depending on whether the person is innocent or guilty for the past, the appropriate response might be forgiveness or confession of sin.

To explain the dynamics of sin and the environment, Lane and Tripp use what they call "the big picture." The big picture is based on an imagery in Jeremiah 17:5-10, with four elements: heat, thorns, cross, and fruit.[91] Heat is the person's situation, thorns are the ungodly responses, cross is the shifting the focus to God, and fruit is the godly response. Regarding thorns, they caution against blaming other people, the past, and physiological problems. While all of these issues can influence people to sin, they are not the cause of sin. They state,

> While external conditions can be very influential in our lives and should not be ignored, the Bible says that they are only the occasion for sin, not the cause. Difficulties in life do not cause the sin. Our background, relationships, situation, and physical condition only provide the opportunity for our thoughts, words, and actions

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[88]Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes*, 155.

[89]Wayne A. Mack, "Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data," in *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, ed. John MacArthur and Wayne A. Mack (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 139.

[90]Stephen Viars, *Putting Your Past in its Place: Moving Forward in Freedom and Forgiveness* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011).

[91]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 83-84. As an example, they use 1 Cor 10:1-13 and 2 Cor 1:3-11 to identify elements of the big picture (85-90). Lane and Tripp clarify that the big picture is "a" biblical model that can be used as a "diagnostic tool, telling you what is wrong inside; a map that helps you see where you are and how to get where you need to go" (82).

to reveal whatever is already in our hearts. Our hearts are always the ultimate cause of our responses, and where the true spiritual battle is fought.[92]

Unlike external causes of problems that do not require Christ's help, Lane and Tripp assert that a heart problem requires Christ for help.[93] Does this mean that the heart is the only problem? Lane and Tripp agree physical and circumstantial problems should be addressed, such as in abuse cases, but the heart is always the deeper problem: "But at the end of the day, Jesus knew that there was a deeper issue to be addressed. He never bypassed a person's heart (Luke 6:43-45). Taking someone's suffering seriously and ministering to them with Christ's compassion will never, by itself, be enough."[94] Lane and Tripp remind Christians change is possible with new hearts and with the power of the Holy Spirit.[95] Christians are no longer subjected to the power of sin. Essential to the change process is faith and repentance,[96] turning away from sin and turning to Christ. Consequently, a cross-centered life leads to godly responses (fruit), such as humility, love, forgiveness, and so forth.[97]

Some Christian counselors claim Adams blamed all problems on personal sin. For example, "It would be naive and unwise to assume, as Adams (1977), that all stresses are brought on by personal sins and irresponsibility."[98] The authors then give an example

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[92]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 132-33.

[93]Ibid., 133.

[94]Ibid., 134.

[95]Ibid.,149-57. For an extensive work on the importance of all aspects of the heart (cognition, affection, and volition) and the necessity of faith in Christ for human functioning, see Jeremy Paul Pierre, "Trust in the Lord with All your Heart: The Centrality of Faith in Christ to the Restoration of Human Functioning" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010).

[96]"Faith keeps us laying hold of the grace and mercy of Christ and thereby avoiding despair. Repentance keeps us facing our ongoing struggle with sin and thereby avoiding pride." Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 161. Lane and Tripp also emphasize identity in Christ and its powerful effect on responses to life. "All of us live our lives based on some identity, some functional sense of who we are, what we are like, and what we are worth" (159).

[97]Ibid., 180-81.

[98]Paul D. Meier et al., *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 274.

of a mother who seeks grief counseling because her child is dying from leukemia. They

say that the mother should not be told that her child is dying because of her sins. This

example, however, is not consistent with Adams' view on sin. In actuality, Adams refutes

the claim that "nouthetic counseling considers all human problems the direct result of

actual sins of particular counselees" and calls it "gross misrepresentation of the facts."[99]

Adams explains that a "*quid pro quo*" understanding of sin does not exist.

> While *all* human misery—disability, sickness, etc.—does go back to Adam's
> sin…that is not the same as saying that a *quid pro quo* relationship between each
> counselee's misery and his own personal sins exists. *That* as I quickly deny. It *may*
> be true in one given instance, but not in another. Neither is it true that all the
> suffering that some deserve they get in this life. Nor is it true that all the suffering
> that others receive in this life they bring upon themselves. Suffering, in a world of
> sin, comes to all in one way or another in the providence of God, but before
> investigating each case, that is all that may be said about it. Apparent
> inequities…can be resolved only in the purposes of God, who hasn't yet been
> pleased to reveal to us everything we'd *like* to know. We have all that we *need* to
> know—which is quite sufficient. The counselor's talk, therefore, is to summon
> counsels to (1) trust in God's providence (1 Pet. 2:23; 4:19) and (2) develop a
> proper perspective on suffering," contrasting "present suffering with eternal
> glory.[100]

According to Adams, the church is responsible for "*hamartiagenic* sickness," literally

meaning "sin-engendered" sickness, which is non-organic in nature.[101] He states, "While

all sickness stems ultimately from Adam's sin, and in that indirect sense is

*hamartiagenic*, some sicknesses are the direct result of particular sins."[102] Adams was

referring to the latter meaning. In his extensive critique, Lambert notes that Adams

commented on the problem of suffering but did not address it in-depth compared to his

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[99]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 139-40. For support, he cited *Competent to Counsel*, 108-9, where he mentioned Job and the man born blind (John 9:1).

[100]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 140. Adams wrote, "It is plain that the Scriptures never represent all sickness as the result of immediate sin or even sinful patterns of life . . . The Bible teaches that the existence of all sickness, however, goes back to Adam's sin, and in that sense all sickness may be said to be the result of sin; but only in that sense." Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 108.

[101]Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling," 155.

[102]Adams, *Competent to Counsel,* 105. He also believed God could use sickness as a way of disciplining Christians for their sins (John 5:14; 1 Cor 11:30). Ibid., 109.

treatment of sin.[103] According to Lambert, Adams' focus on sin and responsibility was necessary for his counseling context because of the psychologized approaches that had become prevalent in the church.[104] Adams asserted personal responsibility for sin had become negative to counselors who were influenced by Freud, Rogers, or Skinner. Freud "legitimized" blame-shifting, Rogers focused on the client's feelings, and Skinner did not believe in human responsibility.[105]

Indeed, the problem of sin is unavoidable because of total depravity. Too often, Christians limit sin to conscious willful acts, but total depravity affects the whole person. Adams stated, "Man is not a sinner because he sins; he sins because he is a sinner."[106] Consequently, according to Adams, a moral problem exists in reference to each aspect of human nature.[107] He counters the view that an amoral aspect of human nature, "the so-called psychological," exists.[108] Adams' problem with an amoral aspect is that it denies total depravity and the need for a new heart. Hence, all human problems are affected by total depravity or an "elaboration of sin and misery," according to Powlison.[109] So, sin must be properly understood to recognize its presence in psychological diagnoses of problems. A superficial view of sin results in creating other categories, such as "emotional or psychological problems, demons, mental illness, addiction, inner wounding, unmet needs and longings, adjustment reactions, or some DSM-IV

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[103]Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement After Adams*, 50-56. For a fuller treatment of how biblical counseling has advanced in the areas of sin and suffering, and human motivation, see chap. 2. Lambert compares Adams' views to the second generation of biblical counselors, noting several areas of advancement.

[104]Ibid., 55-56.

[105]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 136

[106]Ibid., 142.

[107]Ibid., 141.

[108]Ibid., 141. He cites Clyde Narramore for teaching this view.

[109]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 43. See also John MacArthur, "Counseling and the Sinfulness of Humanity," in *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, ed. John F. MacArthur and Wayne A. Mack (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 1994).

syndrome," to explain human problems.[110] Powlison gives an apt illustration: "When the deacon gets drunk and sleeps with his secretary, he sins. But when the drunkard and pornography habitué succumbs, he suffers alcoholism and sexual addiction."

Therefore, based on this analysis of sin, biblical counselors disagree that human needs and longings explain problems. Powlison contends integrationists have a "man-centered view of what is 'deep' in the 'core' of man" and a "revised gospel that makes Christ the servant of the emotional and psychological 'needs' of human beings."[111] He gives the example of Crabb's *Understanding People*, which identifies needs for relational love and significance to underlie sin. Powlison critiques integrationists for neglecting sin as "*the* specific issue that underlies problems in living."[112] After discussing the pervasive nature of sin, Powlison asserts, "VITEX has paid lip service to sin, treating it generally and placing it in the remote background."[113]

> In particular, why have 'need' theories that define significance, love and self-esteem as the standard needs been so prominent when they are so alien to the gaze of God and the psychological experience of Jesus?" . . . . "Why do integrationist theories fail to take seriously the specific, omnipresent nature of sin as the chief and most immediate problem in the hearts of those we counsel?" . . . . "Why do Christian counselors so often override the biblical view of the active heart by considering suffering (socialization, trauma, unmet needs, biochemistry and genetics) to be determinative and causative?" . . . . "Why do they treat sin vaguely while they consider other factors to be deeper, more significant and more interesting for both theory development and therapeutic attention?[114]

If biblical counselors assume that the core issue is spiritual, how do they interpret psychological problems, such as defense mechanisms and self-esteem theories? As shown here, the spiritual aspect is still relevant and critical to address. According to

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[110]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 49.

[111]Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," 28.

[112]Ibid., 29. Powlison continues, "They baptize certain lusts of the flesh as 'needs.' As need theories, rather than sin theories, they typically focus attention on supposed basic needs for love or to feel good about ourselves or to accomplish something worthwhile."

[113]Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads," 51.

[114]Ibid.

Powlison, defense mechanisms are symptomatic of a relational problem with God. The Bible views human problems "as relational or ethical at their cores": "Problems exist *between* man and God and *between* man and man."[115] Hence, Powlison says that human defensiveness as understood by ego psychology and behavioral psychology are inadequate, because they solely focus on intrapsychic mechanisms. Powlison suggests human defensiveness as an outworking of sin and the relational component.[116] Moreover, he states that human defensiveness is a "theological issue," "consciously or unconsciously seeking to live autonomously from the Creator and Redeemer."[117] The presence of sin and its "inner hold on human life" makes it difficult to distinguish the conscious from unconscious.[118] According to Powlison, a view of sin as merely willful actions is rooted in Pelagianism, which promotes the usage of psychological categories to explain non-willful problems. Like other problems, human defensiveness requires the gospel: "It is exactly the truth—of the radical and denominating nature of sin and of the radical and reorienting power of the forgiving love of Christ—that defensive people need and respect."[119] Moreover, he says theories on human defensiveness minimize human responsibility. He gives the example of a woman who had a horrible upbringing and has multiple personalities. In her case, the counselor should acknowledge the sins committed against her and point her to Jesus' compassion and care for her. In addition, the woman needs divine help in being freed from her sins.[120]

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[115]David Powlison, "Human Defensiveness: The Third Way," *JPP*, 8, no. 1 (1985): 48. "Accuracy about human defensiveness only comes from a proper understanding of the relationship between man and God." Ibid., 42.

[116]Ibid., 48.

[117]Ibid., 53.

[118]Ibid., 49.

[119]Ibid., 51.

[120]She "lives multiple lies, is ruled by fear and bitterness, gives nothing to others, manipulates, has blasphemous ideas about God, and does not trust in Jesus." Ibid., 52.

Regarding self-esteem theories, Lane and Tripp are explicit that not loving yourself enough is not the problem. In their view, self-love rightfully produces guilt and shame, showing the inadequacy of finding fulfillment in the self.[121] Hence, guilt and shame are treated in a superficial way until they are connected to sin and rebellion against God. In doing so, people discover their identity in Christ and the freedom of knowing God holds them responsible only for their sins, not other people's sins. They warn Jesus is not a therapist to meet personal needs and fill emptiness but a Redeemer. Theories that focus on the self can distort God's love into "something that only serves me."[122] According to Welch, "psychological emptiness and needs" reveal insatiable cravings of the heart.[123] In an article critiquing psychological needs, Welch critiques the concept of psychological needs, such as "significance, acceptance, respect, admiration, love, belonging, meaning, self-esteem," and argues they are not biblical constructs.[124] Rather, human beings are created to bring glory to God. In helping a person who believes low self-esteem is the problem, Powlison suggests the following: (1) Gather lots of data about this person's thoughts, emotions, family, and so forth, to identify unbiblical themes, (2) Help the person to love God and others more than self, (3) Share God's truth to open the person's eyes to God's way of living.[125] He states, "The Bible never teaches that 'low self-esteem' is the critical issue . . . . The Bible never teaches that we have a need to love ourselves. It assumes we love ourselves inordinately and are self-absorbed (in when we 'hate' ourselves). We *need* to learn to love God and neighbor."[126]

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[121]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change,* 23.

[122]Ibid., 24.

[123]Welch, "The Bondage of Sin," 26.

[124]Ed Welch, "Who Are We? Needs, Longings, and the Image of God in Man," *JBC* 13, no.1 (1994): 32-34.

[125]Powlison, "Critiquing Modern Integrationists," 33-34.

[126]Ibid.

## Case Study

In Scott's case study, the primary goal is helping Jake spiritually while addressing other problems. According to Scott, "biblical counseling is the appropriation of God's truth and God's resources, for true change, for God's glory, from the inside out."[127] Scott refers to Christ as the ideal example of human functioning: "Only in Christ and by his truth can we begin to change this wrongness from the inside out."[128] True change cannot occur without faith in Christ, but Scott says biblical counseling should continue as long as Jake is open to "exploring God and the gospel."[129]

At a broad level, Scott says the counselor should reflect Christ in character, message, and methods.[130] These three aspects are based on Tripp's *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*. The counselor is God's ambassador, speaking God's message, considering God's methods, and displaying God's character.[131] Both message and methods distinguish biblical counseling from the other counseling models, because they are explicitly in reference to God. Tripp describes four ways to serve as God's ambassador: love, know, speak, and do.[132] Love points to the significance of vertical and

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[127]Stuart W. Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches*, ed. Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 161.

[128]Ibid., 164.

[129]Ibid., 161.

[130]Ibid., 160. "For these reasons Jake's counselor's help will only be as good as his own relationship with the Lord, is biblical knowledge and his integrity toward the Scriptures (Romans 15:14)."

[131]Tripp describes them in the following way:

1. Message: "What does my Lord want to communicate to this person in this situation? What truths should shape my response? What goals should motivate me?"

2. Methods: "How does the Lord bring change in me, and in others? How did he respond to people here on earth? What responses are consistent with the goals and resources of the gospel?"

3. Character: "Why does the Lord do what he does? How can I faithfully represent the character that motivates his redemptive work?" Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 107. In counseling Jake, Scott also mentions compassion as a part of the counselor's character. Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 167.

[132]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 112. The rest of the book expands on these four aspects of ministry.

horizontal relationships, especially a relationship with God for change to occur.[133] Know refers to a deep understanding of someone's heart, so that proper wisdom can be shared. Speak is sharing God's truth in love, so that the person will learn God's perspective. Do is applying God's Word and making necessary changes. Love, know, speak, and do summarizes the approach of biblical counselors. In other words, both grace and truth are necessary for the Christian life: "If grace addresses the moral results of the Fall (our rebellion and inability) then truth addresses the *noetic* effects of the Fall, sin's impact on how we think about life and interpret it."[134]

**Spiritual Conceptualization of Jake's Problems**

In assessing Jake's problems, Scott focuses on the spiritual aspect but also explores other aspects of Jake's problems. An assessment of Jake includes gathering comprehensive data on various aspects of life, including school, work, past counseling, family relationships, emotional upsets, health, and particularly spirituality, such as "church involvement, knowledge of God and the gospel, his relationship to God, and what he thinks about the Bible."[135] Adams uses the term "total restructuring" to identify how a problem affects all areas of life, such as church, work, physical health, relationships, and finances.[136] Each area has to be oriented to God for change to occur. The whole person, says Scott, has physical and spiritual components that interact with each other. This means that the counselor should consider physical limitations and brain

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[133]As mentioned in chap. 3, integrationists have described Adams' approach as unloving. Adams, however, wrote that love should drive the change and confrontation process. According to Adams, *nouthesia* in the context of counseling is based on three interrelated elements: change in the counselee, confrontation of the counsel, and concern for the counselee. "Love, then, is the motivating factor in Nouthetic Counseling—love by the counselor that seeks to promote love for God and neighbor in the counsel." Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling," 155. As appropriate, counselors should be willing to share painful moments from their own lives. Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 124.

[134]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 100.

[135]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 162-63; 167.

[136]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 156.

injuries as well as spiritual principles.[137] Biblical counselors are not medical doctors but knowing physical data can reveal certain connections to other problems.

Scott organizes Jake's problems into six categories: (1) critical and immediate problems,[138] (2) basic spiritual problems, (3) cognitive and emotional problems, (4) behavioral problems, (5) relational problems, and (6) medical and physical problems. For each category, Scott conceptualizes Jake's problems in relation to God. The assumption is that Jake's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and relationships will change as he reorients his life to God.[139] For basic spiritual problems, the counselor could help Jake understand his problems in reference to God, guide Jake in identifying and repenting of heart idols, teach the implications of his union with Christ, teach the nature of sanctification, and encourage Jake to find a biblical church.[140] For cognitive and emotional problems, the counselor helps Jake renew his thoughts and emotions by applying biblical principles to gain God's perspective.[141] For behavioral problems, the counselor helps Jake to replace sin with Christlikeness while addressing the heart.[142] For relational problems, Jake learns to focus less on himself and reconcile with others.[143] For medical and physical problems, the counselor should keep Jake accountable in following through the recommendations made by Jake's doctors and rehabilitation professionals.[144]

While Scott emphasizes the significance of the spiritual nature for change and

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[137]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 162.

[138]Examples are school counseling, suicide assessment, student life assistance, and medical treatment for brain or other physiological problems. Ibid., 159-60, 173-74.

[139]Ibid., 169.

[140]Ibid., 174-75.

[141]Ibid., 175-76.

[142]Ibid., 176-77.

[143]Ibid., 177-78.

[144]Ibid., 178-79.

addresses each category in relation to God, his categorization of Jake's problems could give the impression that the spiritual nature is not holistic. As discussed earlier, biblical counselors focus on the heart or spiritual nature because of its holistic nature. In Scott's categories, basic spiritual problems are separated from the other problems, but this separation seems inconsistent with how biblical counselors claim the heart encompasses cognitions and emotions. Identifying various categories, such as emotional and cognitive, could be useful in showing the complexity of human nature, but it would be more consistent with biblical counseling's view of the heart to show the various categories as aspects or functions of the heart. So, as Jake grows spiritually, his cognitions, emotions, behavior, and relationships change in direction from worshipping self to worshipping God. This view of spiritual growth is described by Scott, but the distinct category of spiritual problems does not support the all-encompassing view of the spiritual nature.

To demonstrate the holistic nature of the heart, it would be more accurate to portray various aspects of the problem as aspects of the spiritual nature or heart. That way, a cognitive response reflects a spiritual response, and an emotional response reflects a spiritual response. As a result, the spiritual nature is understood and approached as an all-encompassing aspect of the heart, rather than one aspect of human nature. In addition, including the various aspects under the spiritual category stresses the foundation of the heart or spiritual nature for change. It supports biblical counseling's belief that behavioral and relational aspects are not truly affected unless the spiritual nature changes. Stressing the spiritual nature guards against behaviorism or cognitivism. Placing the aspects of the heart under the spiritual category would also avoid a structural approach to counseling.

The potential weakness of creating separate categories for aspects of the spiritual nature is also found in other biblical counseling works.[145] Mack has suggested a

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[145]For another example, see Kellemen, *Gospel-Centered Counseling*, 100-113. In his chapter on the spiritual anatomy of the soul, Kellemen asserts the centrality of the heart for change but separates the spiritual aspect from the other aspects. He writes, "The innermost *core* of our being is our spirituality—our capacity for relationship with God" (101). He uses concentric circles to illustrate the various aspects of the

diagnostic approach that considers the whole person by gathering data in the following areas: physical (e.g., sleep, diet, exercise, illness, medication); resources (e.g., spiritual, intellectual, educational, experiential, and social); emotions; actions; concepts (e.g., thoughts and desires); and historical data.[146] As evident in Mack's categories, the spiritual area is distinct from emotions and concepts. The spiritual area refers to a person's relationship with God, which Mack considers to be critical for change. Even though the spiritual area is listed separately, Mack considers emotions, actions, and concepts as aspects of the spiritual nature. Emotions can serve as critical data, because they are like a "smoke detector," warning about the primary problem.[147] Actions that align with God's Word reveal a willingness to please God. Mack says changing concepts (i.e., thoughts and desires) by renewing the mind are critical for long-term change (Eph 4:23).

**Changing the Heart for Transformation**

While social and physiological factors influence people, Scott asserts the fundamental problem is Jake's heart. He writes, "Issues of the past, of suffering and hopelessness, and of destructive thinking and behavior are all issues stemming from the heart."[148] Scott also acknowledges the difficulty of distinguishing personal sin and genuine suffering. According to Scott, all problems are not the "direct result of personal sin," but they "can lead to it."[149] He focuses mainly on Jake's responses to his situation and the hope of the gospel: "While compassion is an absolute must on the part of the

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heart. Starting from the center, Kellemen identifies the following aspects: (1) relational, which includes the spiritual, social, and self-aware aspects, (2) rational, (3) volitional, (4) emotional, (5) embodied, (6) embedded, and (7) everlasting. As shown here, Kellemen distinguishes the spiritual aspect from the other aspects.

[146]Mack, "Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data," in *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, 132-40.

[147]Ibid., 135.

[148]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 181; cf. 167-69.

[149]Ibid., 171.

counselor, Jake will be profoundly helped by recognizing his own responses, confessing them (if sin) and discovering the biblical principles he needs in order to change."[150]

Social and physiological factors may influence people, but biblical counselors believe that the ultimate problem and choice still resides in the heart. According to Lane and Tripp, the "real problem is not psychological (low self-esteem or unmet needs), social (bad relationships and influences), historical (my past), or physiological (my body). They are significant influences, but my real problem is spiritual (my straying heart and my need for Christ) . . . . Ultimately, my real problem is a worship disorder."[151] They also state, "As we talk about the heart as the wellspring for all of our responses to life, we must never minimize suffering—ours or anyone else's. Nevertheless, we must make the important distinction between the occasion for sin and the ultimate cause of sin . . . . If your problem is ultimately outside you, Christ is not needed."[152]

Jake's affections, cognition, and volition are aspects of the heart. These aspects, especially at the behavioral level, are revealing indicators of what Jake worships or desires more than God. Therefore, Scott's approach to Jake is based primarily on spiritual resources: "a Christian worldview (embracing the purpose of creation and the gospel) along with God's Spirit, his Word personally and specifically applied, and Christ's church are together sufficient to deal with Jake's personal issues, the impact of his circumstances, his suffering and his sins."[153]

An emphasis on the spiritual aspect is also found in other biblical counseling case studies. The book *Counseling the Hard Cases* is filled with case studies that address "psychological" problems, ranging from bipolar disorder to dissociative identity

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[150]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 171.

[151]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change*, 134.

[152]Ibid., 133.

[153]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 161.

disorder.[154] One of its goals is to counter arguments that complicating problems are outside the realm of spiritual help. In another example, Powlison describes a man, Clyde, experiencing fear, anger, depression, and other stressful situations.[155] After listening to Clyde's story and gathering data, Powlison at some point discusses Psalm 40 to give Clyde hope and a realization of his need for God. Powlison also brainstorms with Clyde to think of practical steps of change regarding his stressful work situation. This small change leads to bigger changes as other life problems, such as drinking and pornography, eventually ends. Powlison admits that he gave a "relatively simple case" to fit his short chapter, but he reiterates his argument that God can help any person, no matter what the complicating factors might be. He states, "A counselor will always adapt—always—but *never* need jettison what is true."[156] The wisdom of God is an explicit part of helping people to change. As Christians seek God, their desires will change to align with God's will.[157] Similarly, Tripp says people need to shift their worship of self to God;[158] later, he asserts that a focus on God produces an eternal perspective, which "makes sense of the present moment."[159]

Only a personal transformation, rooted in the Christian's union with Christ, leads to what Smith calls authentic morality: "Authentic morality is doing what is right, not just because you are supposed to do it, or because you want to be noticed, but because it's a natural expression of who you are in Christ."[160] In contrast to mere external change,

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[154]Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert, eds., *Counseling the Hard Cases* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012). The aim of the book is to demonstrate the sufficiency of Scripture for hard cases, so successful cases are intentionally included.

[155]Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 262-71.

[156]Ibid., 272.

[157]Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes*, 160-61.

[158]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 99.

[159]Ibid., 101.

[160]Winston T. Smith, "Authentic Morality: The Living Values in First John," *JBC* 23, no. 4 (2005): 45.

Smith explains that the apostle Paul exhorts Christians to be transformed by the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2). Change starts from the inner man or the heart and extends to behavior, attitudes, and speech: "What comes out of a person is what defiles him" (Mark 7:20). Jesus then proceeds to list various sins that originate from the heart (Mark 7:21-23). As Adams states, God is not in the business of "reforming" lives but "renewing" his image in people.[161] The goal of sanctification explains why Adams said Christian counseling is only for Christians.[162] Adams recognized the opportunity to share the gospel with unbelievers and to help them in difficult times, but ultimately counseling starts when that person becomes a believer. The process of change is growing into the image of God by relying on the Holy Spirit to put off old patterns of life and put on biblical patterns. Adams warned that some clients are fine with "short-term satisfaction" but redemption is the underlying need.[163] In another work, Adams asserts that Christ offers "more than redemption": "The Christian counselor does not believe, *strictly* speaking, in mere renewal, or restoration or redemption (of what was lost); biblically, he believes in *more* than redemption" (Rom 8:20: "But where sin abounded, grace far more abounded").[164]

According to Lane and Tripp, most Christians forget or are ignorant about the implications of the gospel for the present life. They call this "the gospel gap."[165]

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[161]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 120; cf. Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 74.

[162]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 120; cf. 143.

[163]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 150-51.

[164]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 179. Adams explains, "Grace (and its effects) is greater than sin and its effects. Therefore, what Jesus Christ obtained for His people in salvation is not merely what Satan took away from Adam . . . Adam was created 'a little lower than the angels.' By his sin, he plunged himself and all his posterity (Christ excepted) into the depths of sin and its associated miseries, and was brought far lower . . . But in Christ, humanity has been raised . . . far above principalities and powers . . . into the heavenlies to sit at the right hand of God" (180-81).

[165]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change*, 2-3. "Our goal is to bring the old, old story of the gospel to your heart and life in a way that has been heart- and life-changing for us. Often there has been too much of a separation between the theology we say we believe and the world we struggle in every day. The purpose of this book is to bridge that gap" (13).

Referencing 2 Peter 1:3-9, they point out people who are "nearsighted and blind" (v. 9), oblivious to eternal values, which they call "gospel blindness."[166] Only Christ can fill this gospel gap with his divine power for life and godliness (v. 1). Lane and Tripp clarify that godliness refers to the present life, so Christians have everything they need in Christ to live a godly life. Elsewhere, according to Tripp, the "gospel gives us a true sense of self, of God, and of process."[167] By true sense of self, they mean that the gospel helps people to clearly see indwelling sin in their hearts (Rom 7 and Jas 4), rather than blaming others or the past. By "sense of God," the gospel reminds people of God's character, presence, and promises; God must be functional in people's lives. It is easy to forget God in the midst of suffering and pain. Last, by "sense of process," the gospel is relevant at both justification and sanctification; that is, people need an understanding of progressive sanctification and God's purposes for life.

In addition to a heart change, Scott says Jake has to put off sin and put on righteousness.[168] Change involves the heart (inner man) and actions (outer man). While the concepts of putting off sin and putting on righteousness are biblical (Eph 4:20-32), they are imperatives that must be rooted in the indicatives. In a different work, Scott explains the need for a balance of both indicatives and imperatives for a gospel-centered approach to counseling. According to Scott, the indicatives refer to our position and identity in Christ; the imperatives refer to our practice.[169] In other words, Christians must depend on God for change while also taking appropriate steps of change. Scott suggests three elements of a gospel-centered approach: (1) gospel truths applied (the truth about

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[166]Lane and Tripp, *How People Change*, 4.

[167]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 294-96.

[168]Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," 170.

[169]Stuart Scott, "The Gospel in Balance," in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, ed. James MacDonald, Bob Kellemen, and Steve Viars (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 169. See also Fitzpatrick, *Counsel from the Cross*.

God, our identity in Christ), (2) heart/worship issues, and (3) active elements of change (put off/put on).[170] While both divine responsibility and human responsibility are involved in all three points, the first point focuses more on God and the third point focuses more on human efforts with God's help. The second point reveals human choice of worship and the problems of worshipping something else than God.

Some biblical counselors commit the imbalance of overly focusing on putting off sin and putting on righteousness in counseling. The danger of this overemphasis is a change process that becomes behavioral. If biblical counselors are not careful, they could promote behavioral change rather than a heart change. A brief background on putting off sin and putting on righteousness is presented here, because they are significant concepts in biblical counseling. Adams could be credited for establishing the concepts of putting off and putting on in biblical counseling. While he believed in the profound nature of the heart, as discussed earlier, in *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, he focused more on habits ("dehabituation" and "rehabituation") to explain the change process.[171] Hence, some Christian counselors have described Adams' approach as behavioral.[172] The concept of habits is crucial in understanding Adams' description of sin and process of change. Adams wrote "both the natural world and sinfully habituated human flesh" cause problems.[173] Based on Romans 6, Adams believed the body commits sin that is

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[170]Scott, "The Gospel in Balance," in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 168.

[171]Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual: The Practice of Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 171-216.

[172]Worthington believes that Adams' *Christian Counselor's Manual* was "ironic" because it was behavioral. It "seemed to be based on a filter model, [but] his writing and preaching railed against it." Everett L. Worthington, Jr., *Coming to Peace with Psychology: What Christians Can Learn from Psychological Science* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 37. Powlison notes the influence of psychologist O. Hobart Mowrer on Adams' model. Powlison notes that Adams studied with Mowrer during the summer of 1965 and was influenced by Mowrer's belief that human beings were "responsible for their behavior." Powlison, *The Biblical Counseling Movement*, 4, 36. See also Welch's critique of Adams' view of sin, later in this chapter. Adams was aware that Mowrer used words like "religion, sin, and guilt" without a Christian understanding. He critiques Mowrer's assumption that "man's problems stem from bad behavior." Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, 86.

[173]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 106. Both the body and soul are tainted by sin.

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"preconditioned" as a result of sinful habits.[174] "Preconditioning problems," as coined by Adams, is when the "client has programmed himself by his past activity to act in certain ways in response to given stimuli."[175] For example, he described homosexuality as an "act" of sinful nature, a "learned behavior."[176] According to Adams, the old man, prior to redemption, has developed sinful habits, which needs to be put off and replaced with righteousness through consistent practice. In Romans 7, Adams claimed the battle was between Paul's spiritual desire and bodily desire.[177] The Spirit helps the body put off sin and put on righteousness through "training."[178] The Spirit uses Scripture to change human nature. Briefly, it should be noted that Adams' view of the flesh has created discussions on the nature of the flesh. Critiquing Adam's interpretation of the flesh, Welch disagrees that the flesh is the body programmed to sin. Welch contends the flesh is the sinful nature.[179]

## Conclusion

This chapter explained that the heart is a key anthropological concept in understanding the spiritual nature in biblical counseling. The heart is equivalent to the personality in the field of psychology. Both psychologists and biblical counselors study human personality but define it differently. In biblical counseling, personality is

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[174]The "sin-habituated *body* becomes corrupt, generates sinful acts" (Rom 6:12, 13, 16, 19). Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 142.

[175]Ibid., 149. Adams partly emphasized behaviors, because behaviors are associated with the voluntary side of the nervous system and emotions with the involuntary side. "Thus actions affect emotions" (197).

[176]Ibid., 139.

[177]The bodily desires refer to "ingrained habits of the past (programmed in the nervous system and manifested in the body)." Ibid., 134.

[178]Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 160; cf. Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 151. For biblical support on training, Adams cited 2 Pet 2:14, Heb 5:14, and 2 Tim 3:16. Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 162.

[179]Edward Welch, "How Theology Shapes Ministry: Jay Adams's View of the Flesh and an Alternative," *JBC* 20, no. 3 (2002): 16-25. For a summary of this disagreement, see Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement After Adams*, 71-74. For Adams' response, see p. 165-70.

associated with the heart and comprehensively spiritual. With this perspective, Powlison is accurate: "Christian faith *is* a psychology"[180] and "Christian ministry *is* a psychotherapy."

Based on the biblical view of the heart, biblical counselors argue that the heart is holistic and a core aspect of human nature. The heart is holistic, encompassing psychological domains, such as emotions, thoughts, desires, and behavior, which is why biblical counselors contend the scope of the spiritual nature includes psychological mechanisms. The heart is also the core aspect of the inner person, influencing all of the various domains. Using a biblical analogy, the heart is like a tree, controlling the quality of fruit (Luke 6:43-45). For example, a bad fruit could be anger, anxiety, or envy. By implication, changing the heart affects the psychological domains, which is why biblical counselors emphasize the heart in counseling.

As mentioned in the case study, the holistic aspect of the spiritual nature or heart could be more explicit by placing various aspects of human nature under the spiritual category. That way, the various aspects, such as emotions and cognitions, are not viewed separately from the spiritual nature but shown to be intrinsically spiritual. Illustrating the spiritual category as an all-encompassing nature also reinforces the significance of the spiritual nature for true change to occur.

The heart is also a critical concept in biblical counseling's argument for the sufficiency of Scripture. The assumption is that the wisdom of Scripture corresponds to the nature of problems, because all problems have a spiritual aspect. For example, a person struggling with depression may have circumstantial stress, a painful history, or even biological factors associated with a certain disease. In biblical counseling, all of these factors are explored but they are not the primary problems. Yes, the counselor will try to provide practical help for the circumstantial stress, gather information about the

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[180]Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," 245.

past, and encourage the person to seek appropriate medical attention. In addition, the biblical counselor will help the person interpret their problems in light of God's perspective found in Scripture and show how to respond in a way that glorifies God. An emphatic conclusion in biblical counseling is the relevance of God and His Word for all problems.

True healing and transformation is dependent on a relationship with Christ, which is why the counselor's role is to help people draw closer to God and seek his help for change. At the beginning of *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, Tripp establishes the biblical narrative of creation, sin, and redemption. He states redemption is the goal of counseling, specifically pointing people to a Redeemer: "We must not offer people a *system* of redemption, a set of insights and principles. We offer people a *Redeemer*."[181] Tripp is emphatic that the "good news" is not "freedom from hardship, suffering, and loss" but a Redeemer who rescues us from ourselves.[182] The centrality of a Redeemer in counseling is based partly on the view that only Christ can change the core problem—sin.

In biblical counseling, psychological research serves as supplemental knowledge, not foundational knowledge. Though biblical counselors acknowledge the influence of biological and social factors, they could engage more with psychological research, especially at the academic level. This engagement could be useful for comparative and discernment purposes, recognizing common grace and its limitation. In addition to biblical research, biblical counselors with empirical training could study the effectiveness of various practices in biblical counseling.

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[181]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 6-8.

[182]Ibid., 16.

CHAPTER 5

CRITIQUE OF THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN
THREE MODELS

All three counseling models support *imago Dei*, but this research reveals

different emphases among the three models that are inadequate for theo-anthropological

holism. In this chapter, I will use the three aspects of *imago Dei*—structural, functional,

and relational[1]—to categorize and evaluate the themes from chapters 2, 3, and 4. At the

end, I present a covenantal schema of *imago Dei* as a theological schema that promotes

theo-anthropological holism. I demonstrate how a covenantal schema is consistent with

theological anthropology and supports a holistic approach. A covenantal schema

recognizes God's faithfulness in fulfilling his purposes in each person's life and through

each person. It emphasizes the centrality of a relationship with God for holistic change.

**Ontological and Structural Emphases**

Theologians generally concur that the Bible is more focused on the unity of

human nature than the components of human nature. Technically speaking, the Bible

does refer to specific aspects of human nature, as reflected in terms such as soul, spirit,

mind, will and heart, but often in the context of emphasizing the whole person. Bible

scholars, W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, note that the heart, soul, and mind in Matthew

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[1]For a critique on the strengths and weaknesses of all three dimensions, see Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 18-27. Note that structural and ontological will be used indistinguishably, unless specified otherwise. Cortez includes seven elements of Christian anthropology: Christocentrism, relative uniqueness, mystery, relationality, responsibility, embodiment, and brokenness. He claims that any theory of human ontology that coherently affirms the seven assertions should be "viewed as theologically adequate and worth pursuing more fully" (38-40).

22:37 is referring to the entire person for "total allegiance" to God.[2] According to Wayne

Grudem, the "word 'soul' seems to stand for the entire nonphysical part of man."[3] The

focus is on the unity of man and not on a hierarchical view of human nature. An example

is the term "bodies" in Romans 12:1. The term "bodies" refers to the whole person, not

just the physical body.[4] The most holistic term is "heart," because it is the source of

personality and includes thoughts, emotions, and will.[5]

A Christian anthropology that is holistic considers both the body and soul as a

psychosomatic unity.[6] In the Hebrew thought, the body and soul were viewed as a unity.[7]

Christian theologians, philosophers, and counselors have proposed different terms to

express the unity of man. G. C. Berkouwer prefers "duality" over "dualism," Anthony

Hoekema prefers "psychosomatic unity," and John Cooper uses "holistic dualism."[8] The

main point is that the composition of human beings consists of both body and soul, and

they are inter-related. In explaining the elements of the heart, Robert Saucy says that

thoughts, emotions, and will are inseparable and inter-related to behaviors.[9] According to

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[2]W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew 19-28*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T&T Clark, 1997), 241-42. Berkouwer also notes, "The Scriptural anthropological concepts which vary so extremely never occur in a context which is concerned with the composition of man as such, in himself. God's revelation directs our glance towards man in his totality." G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, trans. Dirk W. Jellema (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 199.

[3]Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 475. For more on his explanation from a biblical perspective, see chap. 23.

[4]"But the word 'bodies' here refers to the whole person and stresses that consecration to God involves the whole person." Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 644.

[5]Anthony Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 211.

[6]Other synonymous terms are material and immaterial, and outer man and inner man.

[7]H. D. McDonald, *The Christian View of Man* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981), 42.

[8]For the discussion on duality and dualism, see Berkouwer, *Man*, 211-12. In short, duality points to the unity of body and soul and dualism presents a "polar tension" between the body and soul. See also Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 217; John Cooper, *Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), xxvii.

John Frame, the body and soul "equally describe the whole person" and are "equally in need of redemption."[10] By implication, psychosomatic unity opposes any form of gnosticism, devaluing the body.[11]

In theology, the structural aspect of *imago Dei* is defined in terms of the parts of man: (in Greek, διχα "in two" and τεμνω "to cut") and trichotomy (τριχα "in three").[12] Are the soul and spirit two separate substances (trichotomy) or two aspects of the same substance (dichotomy)?[13] The common view among reformed theologians is dichotomy.[14] Trichotomists often cite 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 to support their position, but scholars generally concur these verses refer to the whole person.[15] A trichotomous view is rooted in a structural view of human nature, emphasizing the parts

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[9]Robert Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," in *Christian Perspectives on Being Human: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Integration*, ed. J. P. Moreland and David M. Ciocchi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 42-43.

[10]John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 801.

[11]For an explanation of the importance of human embodiment, see Gregg Allison, "Toward a Theology of Human Embodiment," *SBJT* 13, no. 2 (2009): 4-17. See also D. J. A. Clines, "The Image of God in Man," *TynBul* 19 (1968): 86.

[12]Dichotomy is the view that "man is made up of two parts (body and soul/spirit)," and trichotomy is the view that "man is made up of three parts (body, soul, and spirit)." Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 472. These two views are centuries old. Irenaeus is credited for trichotomy and Tertullian is credited for dichotomy. Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 323-24. A trichotomous perspective is rooted in Plato's theory. McDonald, *The Christian View of Man*, 75.

[13]Two common passages used by trichotomists are Heb 4:12 and 1 Thess 5:23, but the general consensus is that both passages are referring not to the separate parts of man but the whole person. Moreover, Frame says that the "trichotomist view that sin shuts down the spirit and that redemption reawakens it is without biblical basis. Further, it contradicts the biblical emphasis that the whole person is fallen into sin (e.g., Gen. 6:5) and needs the deliverance of Christ." Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 801. An ontological view that does not differentiate psychological from spiritual problems is emergent monism. It is concerned with a person's relationship with others and God, so it emphasizes the role of the community. Stuart L. Palmer, "Pastoral Care and Counseling Without the 'Soul': A Consideration of Emergent Monism," in *What about the Soul?* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 167-70.

[14]Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 206. Dichotomy versus trichotomy is a classic theological debate, which is beyond the scope of this work. Christian scholars generally agree that an ontological emphasis in anthropology is more consistent with a Greek understanding of persons. Historically, the church has rejected trichotomy for its origination in Greek philosophy and separation of man's parts. Berkouwer, *Man*, 208; Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 800-801.

[15]For a clear explanation, see John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1977), 2:29-33.

of human nature rather than the whole person.

The spiritual nature is not "an" aspect but all-encompassing. Machen explicitly

argues against the separation of the spirit from the soul.

> But I am inclined to think that . . . today the 'soul' is thought of as comprising
> faculties of man including some of the faculties of intellect, feeling and will, which
> are distinctly human faculties, but do not include some still higher part of man's
> nature by which he enters into communion with God. But is this theory correct?
> Does not this passage [1 Cor 2:14] clearly distinguish the spirit of man from the soul
> of man? The answer is most emphatically 'No.'[16]

Later, he adds,

> [It] encourages what may be called an 'empty-room' view of the presence of God in
> the redeemed man—the notion that before a man becomes a Christian he is pretty
> much all right except that there is one room in him that is vacant, the room that
> ought to be a temple of God. It encourages . . . the notion that what happens when a
> man becomes a Christian is merely that one part of the man's nature, the 'spiritual'
> part, a part previously neglected, is developed and given the place which it ought to
> have in human life.[17]

Likewise, in a footnote, Grudem gives a crucial clarification on the spiritual nature. He

clarifies that the spiritual nature "is not a separate aspect of our likeness to God . . . [or]

one part of what it means to be in his image," but it is an aspect that enables Christians to

fellowship with God and be illumined by the Holy Spirit in understanding the Bible.[18]

Later, he states, "It is not just that one part of us (called the spirit) has been made alive;

we as whole persons are a 'new creation' in Christ (2 Cor 5:17)"[19]

Interestingly, to avoid such confusion, Boyd prefers the term "soul" over

"spirit" in referring to the inner man and to prevent a trichotomous approach in

counseling.

> Soul is a better word than spirit for apologetics. If theologians speak of the inner or
> subjective person as the 'spirit' they are understood by Americans to be encouraging

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[16]J. Gresham Machen, *The Christian View of Man* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1937), 141.

[17]Ibid., 143.

[18]Grudem, *Systematic Theology,* 446.

[19]Ibid., 481.

that well-established pattern whereby Americans take spiritual problems to clergy and psychological problems to psychiatric experts, and the two have nothing in common. There is a Berlin Wall down the center of the American mind, dividing it into a small sacred and a large psychological compartment. From a psychiatric viewpoint, the mind cannot be so divided. A house divided against itself cannot stand (Mark 3:25, Luke 11:17). The term soul has many strengths from an apologetic viewpoint. In the first place, it breaks down the Berlin Wall. The soul is that which secular psychotherapists treat. In other words, the entire human belongs to God, not just the 'spiritual' fragment.[20]

Boyd's comment is insightful for describing how the typical American conceptualizes the term "spirit" and makes assumptions accordingly. Such assumptions reinforce a dualistic approach to spiritual and psychological problems. When people limit spiritual problems to an "aspect" of human nature, the tendency is to limit the relevance, and thus, authority of Scripture for that aspect. Consequently, the rest of human nature, which is not spiritual, is viewed to belong to the domain of "professionals," such as psychologists.

While not denying the usefulness of a structural approach, it inadequately approaches problems and people in a holistic manner. In evaluating the structural, functional, and relational aspects of *imago Dei*, Cortez concludes that the structural aspect is the weakest out of the three from a biblical perspective.[21] Specifically, a structural emphasis in the divine image, according to Stanley Grenz, is concerning because of its tendency to promote an inward solution, by focusing on "an aspect of human nature, such as emotions or thoughts," rather than a Godward focus.[22] A potential weakness of the structural view is overlooking a person's relationship with God. When methods focus on aspects of human nature without regarding God, they fall short of changing the core person. Further, a structural view promotes epistemological dualism—

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[20]Jeffrey H. Boyd, "Losing Soul: How and Why Theologians Created the Mental Health Movement," *CTJ* 30 (1995): 490.

[21]Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*, 30.

[22]A structural anthropology in counseling tends to focus on an aspect of human nature, such as emotions or thoughts, for wholeness. For a discussion on the inward, individualistic self versus a relational self, see Stanley J. Grenz, "The Social God and the Relational Self: Toward a Theology of the Imago Dei in the Postmodern Context," in *Personal Identity in Theological Perspective*, ed. Richard Lints, Michael S. Horton, and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 71-77.

a different source of help for each aspect of human nature. As theologian John Murray notes, "the psychical aspect of man, from whatever angle it may be viewed, comes under the sanctifying operations of the God of peace (1 Thess 5:23) and under the searching scrutiny of the Word of God."[23]

**Structural Critique:**
**Trichotomy in Christian Counseling**

All three models support the unity of human nature but disagree on dichotomy and trichotomy. In general, Christian psychologists and integrationists are associated with trichotomy and biblical counselors with dichotomy.[24] Among Christian counselors, Adams uses "duplex" (meaning twofold), Stanton and Jones prefer "bipartite" over "dichotomous."[25] Proponents of dichotomy believe that the soul and spirit are not separate substances, so the distinction between psychological and spiritual natures does not exist. Interestingly, Stanton and Jones advocate a "bipartite" view to express the unity of human nature yet argue for both psychological and spiritual components.

In contrast to the common view of dichotomy in theology, trichotomy is prevalent in Christian counseling. Green notes, "Outside of scholarly discussion, a trichotomous view is more prevalent."[26] In counseling, a trichotomous view is evident when the soul is separated from the spirit, resulting in separate spiritual and psychological domains. The psychological domain is treated as a distinct aspect of human

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[23]Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, 32.

[24]For a concise explanation of dichotomy and trichotomy in counseling, see Dennis Swanson, "Frequently Asked Questions about Biblical Counseling," in *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, ed. John MacArthur and Wayne Mack (Nashville: W Publishing, 1994), 376-77.

[25]Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 1979), 110. Stanton L. Jones, Laura Miguélez, and Richard E. Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," in *Modern Psychopathologies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2005), 69. Important to note is that a proponent of dichotomy is not necessarily a proponent of biblical counseling.

[26]Joel B. Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 13.

nature in both Christian psychology and integrationist counseling. In Christian counseling, Clyde Narramore is credited with promoting a trichotomous approach: (1) The medical doctor treats the body, (2) The pastor addresses the spiritual nature, and (3) The psychologist is necessary for the soul.[27] According to Powlison, Narramore's division of human nature gave "legitimacy" to a new profession in evangelical circles.[28] Another integrationist, Carter, however, placed a trichotomist approach under the category of "Scripture *Parallels* Psychology," not "Scripture *Integrates* Psychology."[29] In that sense, Narramore and Carter seemed to differ on a trichotomous view of human nature, at least in theory. Further, in the "Scripture *Of* Psychology" category, which leaned towards psychology, Carter says the "basic psychological assumption" is that psychology "has discovered the basic principles of emotional health, maturity, and good interpersonal functioning."[30] Hence, functionally, integrationist counselors promote a trichotomous view, relying on psychologists for emotional health. A trichotomous view is evident in at least two ways: the inclusion of the biopsychosocial model and support for epistemological dualism.

**Biopsychosocial model**. Some secular medical practitioners and psychologists have realized the benefits of a holistic approach, as proposed in George Engel's biopsychosocial model.[31] Actually, Engel's argument for a holistic approach was partly

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[27]Adams cites Clyde Narramore for promoting such view. Adams, *Theology of Christian Counseling*, 110. Also, psychologist David Benner mentions Frank Minirth's trichotomous view as an example of psychospiritual dualism. Frank Minirth, *Christian Psychiatry* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1977), quoted in David G. Benner, *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 38.

[28]Clyde Narramore, *Encyclopedia of Psychological Problems* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1966), 14, quoted in David Powlison, "Integration or Inundation?" in *Power Religion*, ed. Michael Horton (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 194.

[29]Here are the exact words: "Scripture problems should be dealt with by the pastor; emotional problems by a psychologist or psychiatrist." John D. Carter, "Secular and Sacred Models of Psychology and Religion," *JPT* 5, no. 3 (1977): 204.

[30]Ibid.

[31]George L. Engel, "The Need for a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine,"

based on his psychosomatic research.[32] The biological considers physiological

components, such as genes and neuroscience. The psychological considers the non-

physiological components, such as motivations and cognitions. The social considers the

external factors, such as the environment and childhood upbringings. The

biopsychosocial model is more holistic than other approaches that tend to focus on an

aspect of human nature, such as behavioral therapy or self-actualization. According to

Entwistle, the biopsychosocial model is a psychological perspective of human nature.[33]

Christian psychologists and integrationists support the biopsychosocial model

for its holistic approach but suggest incorporating the spiritual component for a Christian

holistic approach. They acknowledge the influence of the spiritual aspect on the other

aspects, calling it a "downward"[34] influence or "top-down" effect. This view is based on

a structural assumption of human nature, where the aspects are separate but interrelated.

The concern, however, is that merely adding the spiritual component does not result in a

holistic approach, especially at the functional level. A fragmented approach still exists if

the spiritual component is not integrated into the biological, psychological, and social

components. This potential weakness provides further support for a view that emphasizes

ontological unity, such as dichotomy. While Christian psychologists and integrationists

state the necessity of the spiritual component in the theoretical description, the spiritual

component is still considered separate, meaning that biopsychosocial approaches

potentially become the primary methods for change. Functionally, then, the spiritual

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*Science* 196, no. 4286 (1977): 129-36; idem, "The Clinical Application of the Biopsychosocial Model," *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 137, no. 2 (1980): 535-44.

[32]Francesc Borrell-Carrió, Anthony L. Suchman, and Ronald M. Epstein, "The Biopsychosocial Model 25 Years Later: Principles, Practice, and Scientific Inquiry," *Annals of Family Medicine* 2, no. 6 (2004): 576-82.

[33]David N. Entwistle, *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity: An Introduction to Worldview Issues, Philosophical Foundations, and Models of Integration* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 131.

[34]Jones, Miguélez, and Butman, "A Christian View of Persons," in *Modern Psychopathologies*, 71.

effect is not substantial unless the therapist is intentional in addressing spiritual concerns. Compared to integrationist counselors, Johnson and Roberts generally seem more intentional in doing so.[35] Some Christian psychologists, as evidenced in Langberg's case study, are not as intentional or explicit in addressing spiritual issues. Further, in Johnson's four orders, the psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual orders seems to reveal sufficient overlaps from a theological perspective that such distinctions of orders, in actuality, resemble the biblical understanding of the heart.

**Epistemological dualism**. All three models view the Bible as the relevant source for spiritual issues, so a dichotomous or trichotomous view of human nature affects the scope of the Bible in counseling. A trichotomous view tends to promote epistemological dualism, using the Bible for spiritual problems and psychological methods for psychological problems. In a way, epistemological dualism is similar to the levels-of-explanation model at the functional level. That is, each domain is separate in nature and should be addressed separately. As mentioned in chapters 2 and 3, Christian psychologists and integrationists claim the Bible is not a textbook on human nature. This claim is both an epistemological and anthropological statement, revealing a structural understanding of human nature. The textbook argument is based on the assumption that problems researched in psychology, such as anxiety or memory processes, are distinct from the spiritual nature. They are "complex," necessitating psychological research. So, the assertion is the Bible does not offer details on how to change or how to treat such problems.[36] On a related note, is "complex" the best term to describe psychological problems? The implication is that psychological problems are more complicating than

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[35]For example, in Johnson's case study, he suggests praying with Ted and asking about his spiritual life. Eric L. Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 378.

[36]Butman and Jones, Richard E. Butman and Stanton L. Jones, "Responsible Eclecticism and the Challenges of Contemporary Practice," in *Modern Psychotherapies*, 436.

spiritual problems. If so, are psychological methods more penetrating than Scripture? According to Hebrews 4:12, God's word penetrates "the deepest" and "inmost" recesses of the heart.[37]

**Addressing the whole heart**. In biblical counseling, the potential for a structural emphasis exists in a different way. Overly focusing on the aspects of the heart could result in an imbalanced approached that is not holistic. For example, renewing the mind is a common element in biblical counseling. While the Bible does exhort Christians to renew their minds (Rom 12:2) and to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor 10:5), merely renewing the mind is not a holistic approach. Granted, renewing the mind is critical for transformation but, if not carefully understood, some Christians could misplace their faith in mind renewal. Second, "putting off" sin and "putting on" righteousness is another common element in biblical counseling. Again, these principles are found in Scripture (Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:9-10) but they are not "the" method of change. As mentioned in chapter 4, the indicatives must provide the context and motivation for the imperatives, such as "put off" and "put on." Collins' critique on the rise of psychology in the church is somewhat relevant here. Collins believed the church overly taught "transactional theology" and not enough on "relational theology." The former focuses on atonement, regeneration, and sanctification, and the latter focuses on practical applications of theology to life problems.[38] Though Collins' words are from three decades ago, the substance of his thought is relevant for all times. In particular, his words

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[37]"The author uses figurative and compelling imagery to convey the idea that God's word is able to penetrate the deepest recesses of the human personality . . . . into the closest spaces and finds the most subtle 'divisions' of the human being . . . . the word of God sifts and judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart in a thoroughgoing and comprehensive manner." Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 176-77. "That the word of God probes the inmost recesses of our spiritual being and brings the subconscious motives to light is what is meant." F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 113.

[38]Gary Collins, *Psychology and Theology: Prospects for Integration*, ed. H. Newton Malony (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 80-82.

are a good reminder and exhortation for biblical counselors who focus on theology as the basis of counseling methodology.

In summary, all three models, in different ways, must guard against focusing more on the aspects of human nature rather than the whole person. As mentioned in the theological section, an emphasis on the structural aspect of the *imago Dei* promotes an inward focus, which could lead to human-centered efforts to change. All methods in counseling must depend on God for change. Otherwise, the method, whether psychological or spiritual, replaces God as the source of change.

### *Telos* **Is** *Coram Deo*

In a sense, teleology may be the most important aspect of anthropology. Every counseling theory's methodology is driven by the question of what is the ideal person? I have categorized the *telos* as a somewhat equivalent category to the functional aspect of the *imago Dei*, because counseling theories are assuming that healthy functioning occurs when the *telos* is achieved.[39] According to Hoekema, "[The] image of God in the narrower sense means man's proper functioning in harmony with God's will for him."[40] From a Christian view, healthy functioning occurs when living in a way that glorifies God. Hence, the goal of counseling is not primarily on well-being but glorifying God, which results in well-being.

Theological anthropology starts with the understanding that all persons are created in the image of God but Christ is the true image of God. In his detailed explanation of the image of God, D. J. A. Clines concluded, "In Christ man sees what manhood was meant to be. In the Old Testament all men are the image of God; in the New, where Christ is the one true image, men are image of God in so far as they are like

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[39]*Coram deo* means in Latin "before the face of God."

[40]Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 72.

Christ. The image is fully realized only through obedience to Christ; this is how man, the image of God, who is already man, already the image of God, can become fully man, fully the image of God."[41] As Clines pointed out, Christ is the divine example that all Christians should strive to imitate. In contrast to psychological theories, the "true" self is realized in the new self in Christ.

According to Hoekema, a healthy self-image should develop when a person is renewed in Christ. His explanation of a healthy self-image is included, because Christians tend to believe two extreme views: self-image is not biblical and sinful to discuss, or self-image is about loving yourself. A Christian view of self-image is not self-centered, as found in the denotations of "self-esteem" or "self-love," but it is "seeing ourselves . . . as we are by grace."[42] Aware of the self-centered usage of a term like self-image, Hoekema makes the following clarifications. The Christian self-image "goes hand in hand with a deep conviction of sin and a recognition that we are still far from what we ought to be. It means glorifying not in self but in Christ. The Christian self-image is never an end in itself. It is always a means to the end of living for God, for others, and for the preservation and development of God's creation."[43]

The Christian *telos* of health, happiness, or wholeness is based on the hope found in the person and work of Christ. In the Bible, wholeness is defined soteriologically. The apostle Paul says that people without Christ are without hope (Eph 2:12-13). The only way for true healing and peace is a restored relationship with God. For instance, Psalm 1:1-2 teaches that a happy or blessed person knows and fears God. Such a person meditates on God's Word. From a biblical view, happiness is not the direct pursuit but a result of pursuing God. In contrast to most counseling theories, happiness is

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[41]D. J. A. Clines, "The Image of God in Man," *TynBul* 19 (1968): 102-3.

[42]Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 103.

[43]Ibid., 111.

not the goal of life. This distinction is critical, because wholeness or happiness itself is not the raison d'être of Christian counseling. The *telos* of counseling is more than realizing health at the functional, structural or relational levels. It is not centered on the self but God.

**Functional Critique:**
**Missing Christ in the *Telos***

Conceptually, the three models state spiritual maturity or Christlikeness are the ultimate goals for Christians. Practically, Christlikeness is not necessarily the priority, especially in integrationist counseling. In integrationist counseling, psychological healing or well-being seems to be the primary goal. The assumption is that psychological well-being could lead to spiritual well-being by healing psychological mechanisms. In biblical counseling, however, the belief is that spiritual healing affects the other aspects of human nature. Johnson also supports the priority of the spiritual order in his framework. Christlikeness is also evident in Roberts' focus on virtues. As discussed in chapter 2 and above, Christlikeness must be based on a relationship with God. Theologian Graeme Goldsworthy explicitly makes this point, "The New Testament's primary call to Christians is that we should become more like Christ . . . . But even the imitation of Christ can be a destructive concept it is removed from its foundation in the unique substitutionary and representative role of Christ."[44]

In all three counseling models, the motivation for change must center on pleasing God. Christian counselors, especially integrationist counselors, must guard against committing a "teleological ethics" error. Frame explains that a teleologist "seeks to evaluate all human behavior by judging what that behavior contributes to happiness or pleasure" but is "far too open to the principle that the end justifies the means."[45] In the

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[44]Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 32.

[45]Well-known examples of teleologists are Epicureans and utilitarian John Stuart Mill. John

counseling context, teleological ethics occur when the effectiveness or priority of methods are based on results, especially immediate ones.

## Relational Emphasis

Contrary to a structural emphasis, the Bible is not concerned with the "aspects" of man but the "actual" nature of man, understood in relation to God. Several theologians support a relational perspective of human nature.[46] Berkouwer, in particular, has written that the various parts of human nature are important but the "Word of God is concerned precisely with the whole man in relation to God."[47] Likewise, theologian Saucy acknowledges the various aspects of human nature, but he concludes wholeness involves the "total self" in relation to God.

> While it is no doubt possible to see different circumstances as related more to one aspect of life than the others, it is finally impossible to radically isolate human experiences into physical, emotional, or spiritual compartments. This would be especially true of the relationship between the emotional and spiritual since both relate primarily to the inner person. Wholeness in the spiritual or emotional realms can only be achieved when the total self is involved. Moreover, since the human person is defined primarily as the image of God, wholeness in any realm cannot be finally achieved apart from a relation to God.[48]

Similarly, Hoekema asserts, "Any view of the human being that fails to see him or her as centrally related to, totally dependent on, and primarily responsible to God falls short of the truth."[49] According to Frame, the Bible does "analyze" man but in reference to his

Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 189-90.

[46]Trinitarian theology is sometimes used to explicate the relational aspect of human nature. For example, see Ray Anderson, *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); Shirley C. Guthrie Jr., "Pastoral Counseling, Trinitarian Theology, and Christian Anthropology," *Interpretation* 33, no. 2 (1979): 130. For a relational emphasis in human development, see Jack O. Balswick, Pamela Ebstyne King, and Kevin S. Reimer, *The Reciprocating Self: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005). Balswick, King, and Reimer present their relational model of human development and examine relational aspects of various human developmental theories.

[47]Berkouwer, *Man,* 200; see also Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 204.

[48]Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," 40.

[49]Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 6. "Gen 2:7 refers to God forming Adam 'from the dust of the ground' and breathing 'into his nostrils the breath of life', so that man becomes a 'living being'. The word 'being' . . . should rather be understood in its own context within the OT as indicative of men and

apostasy, mortality, and sin "before God."[50] Philosopher R. LeRon Shults also argues for

"relationality," using his term, in reforming theological anthropology.[51] Referring to

church history, Shults claims that relationality, not substance dualism, is consistent with

theological anthropology's focus on man's relationship with God. For example, he writes,

"Both of these early Reformers [Luther and Calvin] were less interested in critiquing the

underlying presuppositions of sixteenth-century anthropology than they were in

underlining the dependence of persons on divine grace for being brought into a right

relationship with God."[52]

Further, theologian Charles Cameron claims the question "what is man" in

Psalm 8:4, a classic Scriptural reference in theological anthropology, is known by

answering "who is God."[53] He explains,

> When, in Psalm 8:4, the Psalmist asks the question, 'What is man that you are
> mindful of him that you care for him', he is not asking the anthropological question
> in the way that the contemporary researcher might ask it. He is not giving the kind
> of answers that we might be looking for. He is not providing a description of various
> characteristics of human life. He is bowing before God in worship, praising him for
> his continuing love. Finding the question, 'what is man . . .?', within a psalm of
> praise to the God of constant love, serves to remind us that our deepest significance

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women as living beings or persons in relationship to God and other people." John E. Colwell,
"Anthropology," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair Ferguson, D. F. Wright, and J. I. Packer
(Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988).

[50]"Without thereby in any sense detracting from the full creaturely reality of being human, we
may say that we never encounter in the Bible an independently existing abstract, ontological, structural
interest in man. In the Bible man is indeed analyzed, but in a very special sort of analysis, a basic sort,
which exposes man in his evil and apostasy, in his mortality and rebellion, his sin and guilt. It deals fully
with the actuality of humanness, but it is an actuality before God." Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 196.

[51]The "turn to relationality" in philosophy and science leads him to see the necessity for it in
theological anthropology, in particular human nature, sin and the image of God. He argues that substance
dualism is outdated in light of scientific and philosophical research. F. Leron Shults, *Reforming
Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 166, 184-85.

[52]Ibid., 172-73. Though Shults critiques substance dualism and faculty psychology (i.e.,
intellect, will, and affections) primarily from a philosophical perspective, his research is pertinent in
identifying problems with substance dualism (163-78).

[53]"Highlighting the relationship between Creator and creature, the Bible raises both the
anthropological question - 'What is man?' - and the theological question - 'Who is God?'. The
anthropological question is asked in relation to God, and the theological question is asked in relation to
humanity. Charles Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," *Evangel* 23, no. 2 (2005): 54.

lies not in ourselves but in God our Creator.[54]

In other words, anthropology ("the study of man") cannot be isolated from theology ("the study of God"). Berkouwer asserted that theological anthropology "is thus concerned with the light thrown by revelation on that which is *central* and *integral* in man's being; it sees him not as *placed* in that light (as a previously defined entity), but as *seen* in that light."[55] Cameron accurately states the consequence of excluding God in making sense of life: "Where God is excluded from anthropology everything is viewed in terms of the horizontal dimension."[56]

The premise of the relational aspect is God must be central for a proper understanding of human nature. In essence, the vertical relationship between human beings and God is foundational in restoring the *imago Dei*. It is also foundational for the fulfillment of the greatest commandments (Matt 22:37-39) and essential for harmonious horizontal relationships (Eph 4-6).

**Relational Critique:**
**Emphasis on the Self**

The relational aspect is evident in the three models but the vertical relationship is not necessarily of priority. In Christian psychology, the vertical relationship is seen in Johnson's "inwardness" and Roberts' "attachment." In contrast to secular views on attachment, Roberts identifies the concept of attachment in the Bible (Rom 8:15-16; Matt 6:21) and explicitly states God as the source of attachment.[57] In Langberg's case study, however, the horizontal relationship between the therapist and client is prioritized. A similar emphasis is found in integrationist writings, so the following critique applies to an

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[54]Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," 54.

[55]Berkouwer, *Man*, 32.

[56]Ibid., 56.

[57]Robert C. Roberts, "Attachment: Bowlby and the Bible," in *Limning the Psyche: Explorations in Christian Psychology*, ed. Robert C. Roberts and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 208.

emphasis on horizontal relationships.

Focusing on the Christian ethos of love, one of the underlying assumptions is that a Christian demeanor of love and care could lead to clients developing an interest in spiritual issues. In response, it raises the question of what if the client never expresses such interest? Should the therapist not share anything about God? The concern is that displaying the Christian message is viewed as an adequate "Christian" component, rather than verbalizing the Christian message. After all, secular counselors are capable of displaying love, kindness, and support.

For a counseling approach that is distinctly Christian, the Christian message needs to be explicit in the counseling process, giving clients something to consider even if they choose not to believe. Moreover, a horizontal emphasis places more confidence on human ability to effect changes. Biblical counselors, on the other hand, emphasize the vertical relationship and are more intentional in discussing the gospel. Still, caution must be used to ensure that merely verbalizing the message is not viewed as an adequate Christian approach. Counselors need to help others understand the Person behind the message. Otherwise, the heart is not transformed. In summary, overly focusing on horizontal relationships could overlook the vertical context, which is foundational for true transformation and a holistic approach.

## Sufficiency of Scripture for the *Imago Dei*

As mentioned in chapter 1, the debate on the sufficiency of Scripture is inter-related to anthropological views. The three models agree Scripture is sufficient for spiritual issues. Depending on the scope of the spiritual nature, Scripture is considered a sufficient source for counseling. Now that the nature and scope of the spiritual nature has been defined for each model, I will explain how the spiritual nature affects the position of the three models on the sufficiency of Scripture.

The debate on sufficiency has often centered on exhaustive knowledge.

Christian psychologists and integrationists argue Scripture is not an exhaustive source of knowledge for counseling. Biblical counselors would agree but argue that Scripture is comprehensive, as Powlison says, for counseling. If exhaustive knowledge is defined in terms of everything from surgery to fixing a car, then Scripture is not an exhaustive source of knowledge, thereby not sufficient for counseling. All three models agree Scripture is not exhaustive in this sense. Sufficiency is a theological claim, so a theological explanation is summarized briefly.

Two central and debated biblical texts are 2 Timothy 3:16-17[58] and 2 Peter 1:3.[59] Biblical counselors frequently cite both passages to argue for the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling, but Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors contend the passages are in reference to spiritual issues, not every counseling issue. In essence, the debate is whether Scripture is relevant for spiritual issues or all counseling issues. In Philip Towner's commentary, he explains that all of Scripture is "useful" for the Christian life.[60] He suggests teaching and reproof refer to knowledge while correction and training in righteousness refer to right conduct. In contrast to evil people and false teachers mentioned earlier in chapter 3, Paul instructs Timothy to continue in what he has learned from the sacred writings (v. 15). Interestingly, the characteristics of evil people in verses 2-5 also describe common counseling problems, such as lovers of self, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to parents, reckless, and lovers of pleasure. In verse 5, evil people have the appearance of godliness but deny its power. They lack the power for godliness because they do not know God. This power, as Towner points out, is not found in

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[58]Second Timothy 3:16-17 states, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

[59]Second Peter 1:3 states, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence."

[60]George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 449.

Scripture but known and experienced as a result of salvation, which is revealed through Scripture (v. 15). Based on 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the following points seem accurate to assume: (1) A relationship with God is necessary to realize the "usefulness" of Scripture for right knowledge and conduct, (2) This knowledge and conduct pertains to all of life for Christians, and (3) Scripture, as the source of divine words, is necessary for right knowledge and conduct.

Regarding 2 Peter 1:3, according to Thomas Schreiner, the divine power more likely refers to Christ, the source of eternal life and godliness.[61] Hence, knowing Christ is foundational to practicing the imperatives in verses 5-7. Without Christ, moral living is merely another form of morality. As discussed in the previous chapters, Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors believe that the divine power is limited to spiritual issues, but biblical counselors believe it extends to every area of human life. If godliness includes moral living, as Schreiner asserts, then divine power is critical for more than salvation. Any form of transformation, which includes psychological and spiritual aspects, requires divine power. By implication, salvation is paramount in counseling for transformation to occur. In Roberts' writings on virtues, he correctly associates virtues with the new person in Christ. While virtues or imperatives are reflective of Christian living, proper attention must be given to salvation or indicatives.

Second Peter 1:3 is also used by Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors to argue that God is sufficient, not Scripture. As a result, they are more inclusive of non-biblical sources for a holistic approach. A concern is minimizing the divine nature of Scripture. In his book on Scripture, Saucy warns against prioritizing the person of Christ above the Word of God or separating Christ from the Word of God.

Even some evangelical writers place more emphasis on Christ as God's Word than

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[61] "The immediate antecedent in v. 2 is Christ rather than God, and hence a reference to Christ would be natural." Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 291.

on the Bible . . . . But we must be careful that we don't inordinately divide a person from his words . . . . the truth that Christ is the final and ultimate revelation of God does not make God's previous forms of revelation something other than His revelatory Word . . . In fact, Scripture itself refers to both Christ and the written Scriptures as the Word of God, with no qualitative distinction between them. For example, the Scriptures are 'living and active' (Heb 4:12), and Jesus said His own words are 'spirit and . . . life' (John 6:63; see also 1 Pet 1:23).[62]

When Jones and Butman claim that God is sufficient and not Scripture, they seem to commit the error that Saucy is describing. The different definitions on sufficiency and view of the spiritual nature partly explain why Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors claim both theology and psychology are essential for counseling.

Another important clarification is that the criterion for sufficiency is not based on whether the Bible contains everything on a specific discipline. Frame states,

Certainly Scripture contains more specific information relevant to theology than to dentistry. But sufficiency in the present context is not sufficiency of specific information but sufficiency of divine words. *Scripture contains divine words sufficient for all of life.* It has all the divine words that the plumber needs, and all the divine words that the theologian needs. So it is just as sufficient for plumbing as it is for theology. And in that sense, it is sufficient for science and ethics as well (italics added).[63]

Notice Frame's emphasis on God's "divine words sufficient for all of life." Frame's point that sufficiency is not about "specific information" is crucial, because the debate on the sufficiency of Scripture is reduced often to the relevance of Scripture for counseling issues. In some ways, this talk about relevance can indicate a symptom of the sacred versus secular mentality. That is, in counseling, the Bible is relevant for the sacred realm (spiritual issues) but not the secular (psychological issues). This dualistic division creates the problem of ascertaining what is sacred and what is secular. Such divisions, however, contradicts the Christian belief that all of life is under the authority of God.[64] For support,

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[62]Robert L. Saucy, *Scripture: Its Power, Authority, and Relevance* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 101.

[63]Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 619.

[64]In discussing the purpose of Scripture, Frame writes, "1. Scripture does not distinguish in any general way between the sacred and the secular; between matters of salvation and mere worldly matters. 2. Scripture speaks not only of salvation, but also of the nature of God, creation, and providence as the

Frame refers to the Westminster Confession of Faith 1.6: "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture."[65] Frame's explanation is helpful, because it does not define sufficiency of Scripture solely based on explicit or relevant information for an issue. Scripture also provides the lens concerning all things related to life.

On a related point, Saucy asserts,

> Scripture reveals much not only about God, but also about the nature of humanity. This revelation is not exhaustive in answering all queries of anthropology. Its focus is on that which is central to human life, namely, life before God. But in dealing with this centrality, Scripture speaks to the fundamental questions concerning our nature as human beings. In doing so, it provides the foundation upon which all other anthropological studies must build.[66]

These descriptions regarding Scripture present a caution to biblical counselors. Biblical counselors affirm sufficiency of Scripture based on the belief that God has revealed foundational knowledge in Scripture for the Christian life. The caution is for biblical counselors to guard against confusing the sufficiency of "divine words" with "biblical methods." While biblical methods are based on divine words, they are not equivalent to divine words. Hence, merely incorporating Scripture does not elevate a counseling method over others. Proper exegesis and hermeneutics are essential in interpreting and applying Scripture, thereby giving biblical counselors a proper framework to interpret extrabiblical sources.

## Covenantal Schema for Theo-Anthropological Holism

A covenantal schema is appealing for several reasons: (1) It promotes the

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presuppositions of salvation. But these deal with everything in the world and with all areas of human life." Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 602.

[65]Frame uses the Westminster Confession of Faith statement to explain sufficiency. Ibid., 618.

[66]Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," 17.

centrality of God in counseling, (2) It addresses the problem of sin, (3) It maintains accountability to God, and (4) It emphasizes salvation for true hope and holistic transformation. Together, these aspects of a covenantal schema reveal a gospel-centered approach to counseling.

**Centrality of God**

Compared to the relational view of *imago Dei*, a covenantal schema emphasizes the vertical relationship between human beings and God, whereas the relational view, if not intentionally defined, seems to result in a horizontal emphasis. So, in a covenantal schema, horizontal relationships are assessed in the context of a vertical relationship with God. It also minimizes the self from becoming the focus.

Foundational to structural and functional restoration is a new covenant with God. All human beings are "in Adam" (covenant of works) or "in Christ" (covenant of grace).[67] Theologians Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum explain Genesis 1:26 defines a covenantal relationship vertically, between God and human beings, and horizontally, between human beings and creation.[68] Similarly, theologian Michael Horton says the image of God is "ultimately a narrative-ethical rather than a metaphysical-ontological question. It cannot be named apart from the drama of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation . . . the satisfactory answer to that question of humanity is to point to Jesus Christ."[69] According to Horton, it is not the ontological sense of "what is man" but an

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[67]Michael S. Horton, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 93-94. "Because human beings are by nature created in covenant with God, self-identity itself depends on one's relation to God, even if one denies any such relations or is not rightly related to God in Christ" (119).

[68]Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenant* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 200.

[69]Note that Horton uses the term "ontological" differently from Gentry and Wellum. Horton uses ontological to refer to structural, "inner states or essences." By narrative, Horton is referring to the drama of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Michael S. Horton, "Image and Office: Human Personhood and the Covenant," in *Personal Identity in Theological Perspective*, ed. Richard Lints, Michael S. Horton, and Mark R. Talbot (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 181. Furthermore, Horton says that covenant theology is "eschatologically oriented," so we should focus on the new covenant rather than the

"ethical reply" that best images God. Human "existence is human regardless, but it is 'very good' insofar as humans answer back according to the purpose of their existence."[70] Further, Cortez argues that a covenantal perspective is more explicit in demonstrating God's presence and relationship with people after critiquing the structural, functional, and relational perspectives on the *imago Dei*.[71] Cortez defines the image of God this way, "God manifesting his personal presence in creation through his covenantal relationships with human persons, whom he has constituted as personal beings to serve as his representatives in creation and to whom he remains faithful despite their sinful rejection of him."[72]

In reference to Ephesians 4:15, Gentry and Wellum contend, "speaking the truth in love" is central in the new community, or horizontal relationships. The basis of speaking the truth in love is the new covenant: "The conduct of the new humanity must reflect the character and conduct of God himself," or simply stated, "our actions and our words come from who we are."[73] Reiterating the centrality of a covenantal perspective, "Paul mentions holiness, knowledge, and righteousness, (e.g, Eph 4:24; Col 3:10) not because one can identify ethical or mental or spiritual qualities as *elements* of the divine image, but because these terms are covenantal and describe a *covenantal* relationship."[74] Expressing the foundational aspect of being in Adam or in Christ, theologian Paul Wells

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old covenant, which was a part of the original creation. Horton, "Post-Reformation Reformed Anthropology," in *Personal Identity in Theological Perspective*, 58-59; cf. Michael S. Horton, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 94.

[70]Horton, *Lord and Servant*, 97-98. Horton uses "Here I am" as an example of an ethical reply and to argue against an autonomous self (113-19).

[71]Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*, 36-37.

[72]Ibid., 37.

[73]Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 572. For a fuller explanation, see pp. 565-87.

[74]Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 202. "Thus the New Testament supports the explanation of the divine image in Genesis 1:26 advanced here. The divine image indicates man's relationship and spiritual fellowship with God." Ibid.

concludes in his article, "The human image of God exists within a relationship: either in Adam or in Christ, and within them, there is relationship with God, one's neighbor, and other creatures. In the NT, the image refers essentially to the new community in Christ."[75] Like the other theologians, Wells asserts the necessity of being in Christ for changes in relationships with other people and creatures. By implication, for the counseling context, broken relationships among human beings reveals a spiritual problem that is covenantal in nature.

**Nature and Agency of Sin**

A covenantal approach to counseling takes sin seriously. Sin is a powerful reminder of man's inability to fix himself.[76] Dietrich Bonhoeffer wisely stated that the "most experienced psychologist or observer of human nature knows infinitely less of the human heart than the simplest Christian who lives beneath the Cross of Jesus. The greatest psychological insight, ability, and experience cannot grasp this one thing: what sin is."[77] Bonhoeffer's father was a well-known psychiatrist, yet Bonhoeffer discerned that sin is a profound problem outside the scope of psychiatry. Christians limit the problem of sin when it is confined to the transgression of God's law, both in the sense of commission and omission. Transgression of God's law is an important dimension of sin, but the relational aspect cannot be overlooked.

Sin is personal and relational, because it is against God. Shults affirms a relational view of sin in comparison to an ontological one: "To claim today that sin really

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[75]Paul Wells, "In Search of the Image of God: Theology of a Lost Paradigm?" *Themelios* 30, no. 1 (2004): 38. Wells' article provides an informative overview of different approaches to the image of God.

[76]In church history, the pendulum has swung from emphasizing acts of sin to innate sinfulness. For example, the medieval church focused on acts of sin and Protestant Reformers focused on innate sinfulness. Gerald Bray, "Sin in Historical Theology," in *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 163-87.

[77]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 118-19.

has to do with our essence as persons requires that we speak of personhood in relational and not merely substantial terms."[78] Sin is "ethical," creating "an estrangement with another person."[79] As Cornelius Plantinga explains in his book, sin is "breaking of covenant with one's savior."[80] Plantinga explains sin in the context of breaking shalom. The Hebrew understanding of shalom is not merely peace but, more profoundly, "universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight" or "the way things ought to be."[81] Hence, separation from God is the primary explanation for brokenness.

If sin is against God, then by implication, sin is for "self." The Bible calls the worship of self a form of idolatry. As Millard Erickson states, "sin is failure to let God be God and placing something or someone in God's rightful place of supremacy."[82] Schreiner writes, the "root sin is idolatry, and idolatry manifests itself in human boasting and pride."[83] Schreiner also lists disobedience to God, failure to worship God, and legalism.[84] Out of the three models, biblical counselors have written extensively on idolatry.[85] Roberts addresses the concept of idolatry in his writings on attachment and association. McMinn briefly discusses idolatry in his book. He writes, "our hearts are idolatrous because we tend to put ourselves in front of God and neighbor."[86] He

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[78]Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 214.

[79]Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 848. See also Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Christian Life: A Doctrinal Introduction* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2009).

[80]Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 12.

[81]Ibid., 10.

[82]Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 579.

[83]Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 544.

[84]For a detailed summary, see ibid., 509-45.

[85]Integrationist Dan Allender has co-written a book on idolatry. The book identifies common idols and uses the book of Ecclesiastes to address them. Dan B. Allender and Tremper Longman III, *Breaking the Idols of Your Heart: How to Navigate the Temptations of Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007).

[86]Mark McMinn, *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling: An Integrative Paradigm* (Downers

acknowledges the biblical concept of idolatry but also believes "idols of the heart" oversimplifies problems. Actually, his conclusion about "idols of the heart" is similar to Lambert's critique of idols.

People sin because they are sinners; sinning does not make them sinners. McDonald words it well: "Man *qua* man *is* a sinner; his nature is expressed in his sinning."[87] So, yes, the problem is sin, but it indicates the bigger problem of the sinner.[88] On a related note, this theological view explains the problem of the expression, "God loves the sinner but hates the sin." The essential problem is assuming the separation of sin from the essence of the person. The Bible counters such assumption. As theologian Mahoney states, all acts of sin "reflect who we are." [89] "The bad tree bears bad fruit" (Matt 7:17), revealing the condition of the heart (Matt 15:18-20). When the focus is on "sin" apart from the "sinner," the effort is not too different from secular psychology's focus on the topical problem, not the underlying problem. Indeed, the profound problem is rooted in the soul. Therefore, unless the soul is affected, a holistic transformation cannot occur. Schreiner reminds Christians of the serious problem of sin. He writes, sin is "not merely a matter of peccadillos or mistakes," because "human beings are fiercely rebellious and stubborn."[90] He states the "supreme manifestation of sin is the refusal to believe in Jesus."[91] Schreiner's description of sin affirms the need to address sin in counseling and share the gospel in an intentional manner, trusting God to change hearts.

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Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 117.

[87]McDonald, *The Christian View of Man*, 27.

[88]Like Luther, Christians must understand that "Jesus had not died for sins (as things) but for sinners (as persons)." Bray, "Sin in Historical Theology," 176.

[89]John W. Mahoney, "A Theology of Sin for Today," in *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 196.

[90]Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 544.

[91]Ibid., 519.

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Christian scholar, Robbie Castleman, provides an insightful observation on the potentially harmful effects of minimizing sin. She comments: "When Christians reduce salvation to sin-management and living self-controlled lives, the Savior becomes just a part of self-esteem therapy and grace is swallowed like a 'happy pill.'"[92] As examples, she shares three situations involving adultery, abortion, and divorce. The person in each situation claimed that low self-esteem resulted in the choices. Castleman observes that each person overlooked the reality of the sin nature and its powerful influence in life. She says that Christians think similar self-deceptive thoughts when they view themselves as incapable of committing the crimes shown on nightly news. She states, the "problem is a deep ontological problem—a problem with a sin-nature that makes all of us capable of the very worst and deserving objects of God's wrath."[93] She concludes with the glorious reminder of the hope found in Christ alone.

**Accountability to God**

A covenantal schema rightfully reminds human beings of their accountability to God. All three models acknowledge the fallen nature, fallen world, and human beings are not responsible for all sins in their lives. Representatives of all three models would generally agree with Carter's statement: "All problems are, in principle, a result of the Fall but not, in fact, the result of immediate conscious acts."[94] Yet, why does it seem that biblical counselors are all about sin and Christian psychologists and integrationists are less concerned about sin? As demonstrated in their respective chapters, personal responsibility is a significant factor. For example, Johnson uses the term "weakness," Roberts uses "inherited sin," and integrationist counselors discuss personal sin. Christian

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[92]Robbie Castleman, "The Soothing Sin of Self-Esteem," *Themelios* 30, no. 2 (2005): 52.

[93]Ibid., 53.

[94]Carter, "Secular and Sacred Models of Psychology and Religion," 204.

psychologists and integrationist counselors uphold the view that sinful influences lessen a person's responsibility for sin. The issue of personal responsibility forces Christians to address sin with more wisdom, but it should not minimize personal accountability to God.

Several theologians have studied the relationship between sin and personal responsibility. In Mahoney's description of sin, "natural evil" is not within a person's control but "moral evil" involves human volition. Mahoney makes an important point that whether moral evil is committed intentionally or unintentionally, it still renders a person guilty before God and requires atonement (Lev 4:2, 22, 27; Lev 6).[95] Hence, the posture before God is to seek transparency of even "hidden faults," not just "presumptuous sins" (Ps 19:12). By implication, it seems accurate to say that sinful influences do not change the fact that a person committed sin. Moreover, as Saucy states, people are responsible for "directing" their hearts, "controlling what goes into and stays in the heart" (Prov 4:23).[96]

John Murray expresses similar thoughts in explaining free agency, emphasizing the correlation between a person's "disposition" or "moral character" and volition. He writes, "Action is self-action, volition is self-volition, determined by what the person is, and not by any compulsion or coercion extraneous to the person" (Jas 1:13-14).[97] He later adds a clarifying point regarding external influences: "This is not to deny the influences brought to bear upon man for good or for evil, influences of suasion to good or of temptation to evil. The consideration is simply that the person must come to acquiesce in that which the solicitation involves."[98] Murray's discussion on Satan's

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[95]Mahoney, "A Theology of Sin for Today," 200.

[96]Prov 4:23 states, "Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," 42.

[97]Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, 62; cf. 69.

[98]Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, 62-63.

influence on Adam is relevant as well. Murray clearly states that Adam alone was responsible for his sin, though Satan was guilty for tempting Adam. "There was no necessity arising from his physical condition, nor from his moral nature, nor from the nature of his environment, why he should sin . . . . To use Laidlaw's words, 'It arose with an external suggestion, and upon an external occasion, but it was an inward crisis.'"[99] Based on these points, external influences do not minimize personal responsibility, but a person's heart or "disposition" are powerful influences in "directing" a person's volition and action.

Practically, then, some people will need more guidance in choosing to please God, possibly counseling, but they are still responsible for their choices. A person is held accountable for sins, regardless of personal upbringing or past history. The concept of generational sin is applicable here. Consequences from living with ungodly parents are real and possibly influential, but God punishes people for individual sins (Exod 34:7; cf. Deut 24:16; Ezek 18:20).[100] This biblical clarity gives hope for individuals who grew up in sin-filled homes because they have a choice in their way of living. On a related note, Schreiner writes, "judgment will be meted out to those who are lawbreakers and cause others to sin (Matt 13:41, 49).[101] His comment affirms God's individualistic focus in judging people for their sins.

Associating personal responsibility with sin presents another concern, namely using personal responsibility to determine whether a problem is spiritual. Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors describe sin as a spiritual problem and other

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[99]Ibid., 69. Murray quotes John Laidlaw, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1879), 142. Murray succinctly states, "No external power or influence can cause a rational being to sin." Ibid.

[100]For a clear explanation of generational sin, see J. Carl Laney, "God's Self-Revelation in Exodus 34:6-8," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (January-March 2001): 48-51.

[101]Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 512.

disorders as psychological problems. Personal responsibility is not a defining factor of spiritual problems. Even when personal responsibility is not involved, the presenting problem still reveals a spiritual aspect to the problem. For example, negative self-image might involve sinful influences of other people but it also points to a spiritual problem, such as finding self-worth in Christ. A person with negative self-image is not responsible for external sinful influences but is accountable to God to believe God's truth about self-worth. The concept of personal responsibility needs to be understood more broadly. Christians are not responsible for sin only but also righteousness. God desires Christians to bear good fruit and increase in the knowledge of him (Col 1:9-12). So, personal responsibility is not limited to problems of sin.

Another concern is the influence of psychological studies and anecdotes in defining sin and determining the role of sin in counseling. This concern is evident when discussing guilt and shame, and the concept of confrontation. All three models oppose using guilt as a form of manipulation in counseling but Christian psychologists, specifically Johnson and Roberts, and biblical counselors recognize that guilt itself is not unhealthy when it is associated with sin. Integrationist counselors, however, seem to place more weight on psychological research on the unhealthiness of guilt and shame, which is used to support their view on personal responsibility. In terms of confrontation, Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors are averse to addressing sin explicitly because of its negative connotations. Examples are harshness or even abuse, legalism, and authoritarianism. Bringing up sin, in their minds, contradicts a Christian pathos— love. The question is whether human experiences or anecdotes should determine the role of sin in counseling? Overlooking or minimizing sin creates another problem from a biblical perspective. The challenge for Christian counselors is to recognize the complexity of sin without neglecting to speak the truth in love.

Overall, Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors express valid concerns regarding personal responsibility, but the weakness is minimizing or potentially

overlooking sin because of external influences. What has resulted is a narrower view of sin. Discerning the extent of sinful influences on a person's choice is impossible, humanly speaking. In a way, that is what Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors seem to attempt in their analysis of personal responsibility. Rather, a more helpful approach might be "personal accountability" to God, reminding people of the relational nature of sin and their covenantal status before God. Because of a covenantal relationship with God, people can approach God without fear or shame. The term "accountability" also brings to mind God's personal relationship with each person and individualistic response to people. God knows perfectly each person's history, story, struggles, and efforts.

**Necessity of Salvation**
**for Holistic Transformation**

In a covenantal schema, salvation is essential for the restoration and renewal of the divine image in human beings. Theologian Gerald Bray says the image of God "makes our salvation a matter of supreme concern to God."[102] In biblical anthropology, the ideal state is the redeemed being, not created being. As Cameron states, "A truly theological anthropology will lead the 'heart' to the Lord. If God is excluded, the 'heart' will remain with the world."[103] Theologian Timothy Jones states the necessity of Christian faith for Christian formation.[104] Citing John Calvin's *sensus divinitati* ("sense of divinity"), Jones asserts that *sensus* alone is inadequate and necessitates faith in Christ for salvation. Only then can true transformation or Christian formation initiate and develop. Thus, salvation is the highlight in counseling.

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[102]Gerald L. Bray, "Image of God," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 576.

[103]Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," 58.

[104]Timothy P. Jones, "James W. Fowler's Stages of Faith and Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* as Spiritual Transcendence: An Evangelical Rethinking of Fowler's Model of Faith Development," *MJT* 3 (Spring 2005): 59-71.

The Bible portrays the radical nature of spiritual transformation by contrasting the life before and after salvation with the terms old man and new man (Rom 6:6; Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:9-10). Berkouwer makes an important clarification that biblical concepts of the old man and new man are references to a "soteriological viewpoint," not a structural one.[105] The remnants of the old life are replaced with new dispositions and desires that please God. Similarly, according to Schreiner, the "flesh" (Rom 7:5; cf. Gal 5:24) includes anthropological components, such as sinful desires and thoughts, but more importantly it "denotes" a redemptive-historical reality.[106] Indeed, the transition is ontological, from "self" to "soul," and soteriological. Only then can a person live *coram Deo*.

Salvation is also necessary for holistic transformation. Change rooted in the gospel is holistic, "not about a tinkering with this or that aspect of human life."[107] It is about growing up "in all aspects into him" (Eph 4:15). Frame explicitly states that every aspect of human nature is affected by salvation: "The salvation that Scripture talks about is a comprehensive renewal of human life, extending to every aspect of human life and thought. So no area of human life is beyond the concern of Scripture."[108] Likewise, Grudem states,

> [A] healthy emphasis on dichotomy within an overall unity reminds us that
> Christian growth must include all aspects of our lives. We are continually to

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[105]"We do not further include the distinction between the old man and the new man, since that obviously does not concern an anthropological distinction within man's general humanness, but refers rather to man from a historical-soteriological viewpoint." Berkouwer, *Man*, 198.

[106]Schreiner, *Romans*, 354.

[107]Here is Cameron's complete statement: "It begins, however, with the inner transformation - receiving the 'new life' which comes from 'his Spirit who lives in you' (Rom 6:4; 8:11). We are called 'to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness' (Eph 4:24). This is not about a tinkering with this or that aspect of human life. It is the reproduction of the divine character within his human creation. This personal transformation involves the understanding, the emotions, and the will." Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," 57.

[108]Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 602.

'cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God' (2 Cor 7:1). We are to be 'increasing in the knowledge of God' (Col 1:10), and our emotions and desires are to conform increasingly to the 'desires of the Spirit' (Gal 5:17), including an increase in godly emotions such as peace, joy, love, and so forth (Gal 5:22).[109]

Theologian Bruce Demarest describes the "holistic results of regeneration": (1) Intellectually, the mind is able to discern spiritual truths, (2) Volitionally, the will is freed from "moral bondage," (3) Emotionally, affections and feelings "are far more capable of manifesting love, empathy, compassion," (4) Morally and ethically, fruits of the Spirit develop, and (5) Relationally, the vertical relationship is restored and horizontal relationships are meaningful.[110] Based on all of these statements, the assertion that spiritual nature is limited to an aspect of human nature is theologically incoherent. Moreover, Demarest's inclusion of the mind, emotions, and ethics in spiritual change challenges the placement of such "aspects" in the psychological category. Thus, a covenantal schema addresses the weakness of dividing the spiritual nature from the psychological nature.

Critical to this radical transformation is the work of the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:1-11; 2 Cor 3:18). People need the indwelling Holy Spirit to image God both functionally and relationally. Anthropologist Sherwood Lingenfelter points out the significance of the Holy Spirit in enabling humans to choose moral living. He says the "moral qualities described in Colossians 3 do not stem from the achievement of certain reasoning processes as described by Kohlberg, but rather in the act of faith and the will to obey God on these matters as set forth in the Word."[111]

The necessity of the Spirit is dependent on how problems are diagnosed.

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[109]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 482.

[110]Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 297-98.

[111]Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, "Mind, Emotion, Culture, and the Person: Perspectives from Cultural Anthropology and Scripture," in *Christian Perspectives on Being Human: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Integration*, ed. J. P. Moreland and David M. Ciocchi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 130-31.

Galatians 6:19 lists the works of the flesh as "sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these." In Christian psychology and integrationist counseling, "the works of the flesh" are often categorized as psychological problems that are emotional and relational in nature. In that sense, their categorization of problems is more consistent with psychology than theology. Relatedly, some Christian counselors claim Scripture reveals God's will for Christian living and not the "how" element, because Scripture is not as detailed as psychological methods. In Galatians 6:16, however, Paul says, "walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh." Based on whether the works of the flesh are considered spiritual or psychological, the Spirit's role and relevance are determined accordingly.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I organized the key themes from chapters 2 through 4, using the theological anthropological constructs of structural, functional, and relational. In doing so, I was able to evaluate the themes for theological coherency. After identifying potential weaknesses in the structural, functional, and relational constructs, I suggested a covenantal schema for a holistic approach based on at least four reasons: (1) It promotes the centrality of God in counseling, (2) It emphasizes the main problem of sin, (3) It maintains accountability to God, and (4) It promotes salvation for true hope and holistic transformation. I showed how a covenantal schema could strengthen the weaknesses identified in the three models.

One of the points of this chapter was to show that a coherent relationship must exist between a holistic understanding of human nature and a holistic approach to change. For example, proponents of all three models might acknowledge sanctification or Christlikeness for holistic healing but confining the spiritual nature to an aspect of human nature limits sanctification to that realm. In theological anthropology, the spiritual nature

is a core and all-encompassing aspect of human nature that is healed by God.

The differences among the models occur primarily at the functional level. After reviewing the anthropological frameworks, it seems aspects of human nature, often referred to as psychological areas, are elevated above the spiritual aspect. When psychological aspects are defined more broadly than the spiritual nature, logically spiritual problems become a smaller piece of the puzzle and spiritual resources are less essential. The scope of the spiritual nature also affects the relevance of sin, because sin is viewed often as a spiritual problem.

Any holistic approach that excludes the presence and power of God is incomplete. Hence, theo-anthropological holism presupposes the foundation of a covenantal relationship with God for holistic changes. To discuss true changes in counseling or the new man without a soteriological foundation is holistically inadequate.[112] In a sense, it is comparable to Cushman's critique of society's construction and treatment of the "empty self." He said that unless the sociohistorical element is included, treatments offered by psychologists and advertisers continue to promote and fix a superficial problem. Similarly, it is inadequate holistically to focus on aspects of human nature, such as emotions and thoughts, without placing them in the broader context of a covenantal relationship with God. Only then can new relational dynamics become a reality in a person's life.

A holistic approach centered on God, rooted in faith, is necessary for true transformation and flourishing of human beings, as designed by God, and, ultimately, for the glory of God, supporting the Christian *telos*. Structurally, the whole person is restored in the image of God as Christlikeness is pursued. Functionally, the new person in Christ responds "ethically" as a result of a new relationship with God. Theo-anthropological

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[112]Philip Cushman, "Why the Self is Empty: Toward a Historically Situated Psychology," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 5 (May 1990): 599-611.

holism also affirms the necessity of Scripture in counseling. While Scripture is not a magical wand that fixes people's problems, risking moralism, it is the primary tool used by the Holy Spirit to change people.

This research has revealed that a holistic approach to counseling is not equivalent to comprehensive sources in counseling. In the effort towards integration, broadly used here, Christians should seek to maintain a true integration, which allows "dialogue and confrontations" between psychology and theology; otherwise, integration results in an "artificial project," overlooking "differences in presuppositions, content, and methodologies."[113] The overlap between psychology and theology requires critical discernment and humility by depending on God to understand the true nature of human beings.

While psychology and theology might be integrated for a comprehensive approach, a holistic approach does not necessarily occur if God is not central. Thus, integration must guard against "functional atheism," which "concedes God's existence but denies his relevance to personal conduct," in counseling.[114] In counseling, a form of "functional theism" is evident when the spiritual nature and sin are nominally discussed. The key aspects of theological anthropology are not the controlling concerns. J. I. Packer's wisdom on evangelism is relevant to integration in counseling. He wrote, "Our business is to present the Christian faith clothed in modern terms, not to propagate

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[113]Timothy Weber, "Coincidence of Opposites: The Meeting of Psychology and Theology" (1978), in Collins, *Psychology and Theology*, 104-5. For a fuller critique of integration, see Collins, *Psychology and Theology*, 100-9.

[114]Functional atheism seems a fitting expression here. It was used in the "Creation and Fall" section of a chapter that listed core evangelical beliefs. For context, here is the full statement, "Because of Adam's fall, all became sinners and stand under God's righteous judgment. Human rebellion against God shows itself today in many ways: such as in atheistic denials of God's existence; in functional atheism that concedes God's existence but denies his relevance to personal conduct; in oppression of the poor and helpless; in occult concepts of reality; in the abuse of earth's resources; and in theories of an accidental naturalistic evolutionary origin of the universe and human life; and in many other ways." Kenneth S. Kantzer and Carl F. H. Henry, eds., *Evangelical Affirmations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 31.

modern thought clothed in Christian terms. Our business is to interpret and criticize

modern thought by the gospel, not *vice versa*."[115] Likewise, integration efforts in

counseling must propagate gospel priorities and concerns more than psychological ones.

Only then can holistic transformation based on the gospel become a "functional" reality.

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[115]J. I. Packer, *"Fundamentalism" and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1958), 136, quoted in Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 362.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

All three counseling approaches advocate holistic approaches and acknowledge the significance of theological anthropology but propose different holistic approaches. The differences are partly based on the description of the spiritual nature and sin. Exploring these differences has demonstrated that the description of the spiritual nature and sin is consequential in practicing a holistic Christian approach to counseling.

The three counseling approaches primarily associate God with the spiritual nature, so the description of the spiritual nature affects the relevance of God and Scripture in interpreting the nature of problems and solution to problems. Specifically, the spiritual nature must be all-encompassing for God to be central. I used the term "theo-anthropological holism" to highlight the centrality of God in understanding human nature and for a holistic approach to counseling. Theo-anthropological holism also promotes the gospel, nurturing true transformation and guarding against a human-centered approach that emphasizes the self. For theo-anthropological holism, merely including a theological foundation is inadequate for theological coherency and functional holism.

**Summary of Findings**

As explained in chapter 5, in theological anthropology, the spiritual nature is an all-encompassing realm, often referred to as the "heart" in the Bible. Practically, however, the centrality of the heart or spiritual nature seems to be minimized when a structural approach or framework is used, reflecting a psychological paradigm. A structural approach creates anthropological divisions that tend to isolate the spiritual nature from the other aspects, minimizing the spiritual component of life problems. It

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also categorizes emotions, desires, and will as psychological aspects, removing the spiritual component. One implication is that conclusions on the Bible's relevance to "psychological" problems should not be based on terminology alone. For instance, the absence of "psyche" in the Bible cannot be construed as a silent issue in the Bible. Sometimes, the choice of terms is based on the category of problems, spiritual or psychological.

Another concern with a structural approach is potentially creating dualism between psychological and spiritual realms. That is, psychology is considered as the relevant source of knowledge for emotional problems and "personality" problems. In particular, this dualism is evident in how integrationist counselors separate psychological well-being or healing from spiritual well-being. This dualistic approach to well-being is not consistent with an all-encompassing view of the spiritual nature. The incorporation of non-spiritual methods is not the issue here but the anthropological assumption in separating psychological and spiritual well-being. This separation has no theological basis. If theological anthropology is significant, then anthropological assumptions in any model should be theologically coherent. Practically, psychological well-being receives priority over spiritual well-being, promoting the "self" rather than God in counseling. This psychological priority probably explains the prevalence of psychological values on the "self," such as need theories and the dyadic relationship between counselors and clients.

In Christian psychology, Johnson and Roberts promote the spiritual nature in different ways but express very similar thoughts on sin. Johnson uses a structural framework to discuss the significance of the spiritual nature and Roberts approaches the conversation through the lens of virtues. Both approaches to the spiritual nature present strengths and weaknesses. A structural approach provides an organized way of understanding the elements of human nature but it could also result in overanalyzing the elements and losing a theocentric focus if the spiritual nature is not incorporated

intentionally. In Johnson's model, the four orders provided a structural understanding of human nature and problems. One primary concern is the separation of the spiritual order from the other orders, despite Johnson's "subvenient effects." Theologically, this separation is not consistent with the pervasive aspect of the spiritual nature. I suggested incorporating a spiritual component to each structural element for a more intentional focus on the spiritual nature and thus dependence on God for all problems. For instance, cognitive and behavioral problems are not merely "psychosocial," as found in Johnson's order, but also spiritual. This suggestion would support Christian psychology's mission of engaging with various disciplines while emphasizing the spiritual aspect. In Roberts' case, virtues complement Christian teachings on godliness, so they are easier to accept but could misdirect the focus from God if virtues themselves become the *telos*. The focus on virtues could result in a counseling approach that highlights character development more than godliness. On the surface, character development and godliness seem similar but godliness is explicitly based on a relationship with God. Hence, godliness requires salvation and spiritual growth. The focus on virtues also complements the tenets of positive psychology, explaining why Charry and other Christian counselors welcome it.

In addition, this research revealed explicit and implicit forms of addressing the spiritual nature. Out of the three models, biblical counseling is the most explicit in promoting theological content and godly care. Johnson and Roberts seem more explicit compared to other Christian psychologists, such as Charry and Langberg, but they also discussed the acceptability of implicit forms. Broadly, integrationist counselors seemed to promote an implicit approach though explicit forms were idealized. Understanding the views on implicit form of care partly explains why a counseling model could conceptually argue for the importance of theological anthropology yet practice psychological methods.

While the three models claim the significance of theological anthropology, psychological priorities or approaches seemed more evident at times, at the practical

level. For example, God might be mentioned as the source of power for change but psychological methods were used to help people. In particular, integrationists advocate spiritual healing but promote a psychological *telos*. Psychological knowledge seems to dominate their methods, even though theological anthropology is included in their Christian framework. Psychology is viewed as a more practical source of knowledge. More importantly, psychology is viewed as a relevant source of knowledge, because of the anthropological framework where psychological domains are associated with emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Hence, the anthropology almost seems de facto psychological with the spiritual nature added for a Christian framework.

The three models promote a Christian *telos* of glorifying God by growing in Christlikeness, especially biblical counselors and Christian psychologists Johnson and Roberts. In contrast to a Christian *telos* is a functional self ("my needs," "my happiness"). From a theological view, however, human needs are primarily presented in relation to God. When people are restored in their covenantal relationship with God, their primary "need" is met and true happiness is known. Subsequently, other needs, such as horizontal relationships, are properly shaped by a relationship with God. For example, good desires for relationships and security are rooted in God's unchanging nature rather than human beings. Thus, the functional self organically results from a healthy relationship with God.

Further, understanding how each model describes the psychological and spiritual dynamics has added clarity to the epistemological differences among Christian counselors. Is the Bible essential and central? The solution is not theological ghetto[1] but a proper understanding of the spiritual nature. If spiritual issues are only one aspect of

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[1]Roger Trigg, *Rationality and Religion: Does Faith Need Reason?* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), quoted in Marc Cortez, *Embodied Souls, Ensouled Bodies: An Exercise in Christological Anthropology and its Significance for the Mind/Body Debate* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 8. By theological ghetto, Trigg is referring to the isolation of theology from other domains.

human nature, then the relevance of the Bible is limited to those problems rather than for all problems. As demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3, limiting the relevance of Scripture to an aspect of human nature that is considered spiritual results in epistemological dualism. Functionally, psychology becomes the epistemic priority, because the spiritual nature is confined to an aspect of human nature while the psychological nature encompasses the other aspects. For example, Jones and Butman advocate a Christian view of persons in their description of anthropology but primarily use psychological methods. Though Christian psychologists claim the Bible is too general compared to psychology's practicality, they have not offered sufficient case studies to substantiate their claim. Epistemological dualism presents a potential problem in relying more on psychotherapies as a core form of treatment and viewing non-spiritual issues as primary issues. Moreover, the discussion on whether psychotherapies are essential tools is related to the *telos* of Christological change.

Interestingly, in chapters 2 and 3, various proponents have expressed the belief that all problems are ultimately spiritual. They could further the dialogue by clarifying the implications of the spiritual nature, especially through case studies. As stated in chapter 1, each model exists for different purposes and audiences. Hence, the aim is not applicational uniformity but theological coherence. For Christian counselors, such as Christian psychologists and integrationist counselors, who work in non-Christian environments, explicitly practicing theological anthropology is challenging, if not illegal. For these reasons, they have discussed implicit ways of incorporating Christian values in how they display Christlikeness and view clients as people created in the image of God. Indeed, the solution is not simple.

Another favorable reason for a holistic view of the spiritual nature is its consistency with the doctrine on sin, in particular total depravity. Thus, the description of sin was examined rather than vague terms, such as "pathology" and "dysfunctional," that could refer to spiritual or psychological problems. In both Christian psychology and

integrationist counseling, personal responsibility is a significant issue in their description of sin. One of their primary concerns is misattributing fault by overlooking external factors of influence. In trying to balance personal responsibility, however, the slippery slope is overlooking or minimizing sin in counseling. Ultimately, the issue is whether a person is fully responsible for personal choices, even when sinful influences have affected that person. As discussed in chapter 5, Scripture does not seem to create tiers of personal responsibility. Instead, God reveals his will in Scripture and empowers Christians to glorify him.

In essence, people are spiritually broken, in all aspects of the *imago Dei*, structurally, functionally, and relationally (Gen 3). So, holistic transformation and human flourishing, as designed by God, cannot occur without addressing the spiritual nature. A holistic view of the spiritual nature also affirms the theological belief in sin as the greatest problem of human nature. Thus, a Christian counseling approach that minimizes the spiritual nature and sin does not provide holistic care. Rather, it supports a functional self, focusing on the self. In Christian counseling, both the story of sin and the story of glory should be evident and are necessary for true wholeness. Both stories are essential components for a holistic approach to counseling, because the problem of sin affects all persons and true hope is found in Christ alone.

## A Covenantal Schema for Jake's Case Study

In Jake's life, several complicating factors exist, but he is still a person created in the image of God. This theological perspective is important to keep in mind from the beginning stage of assessing his life and throughout the planning stage of addressing his problems. It reminds the counselor that Jake is more than a list of problems to fix. He is a person with a soul. The *imago Dei* perspective is foundational in a covenantal schema, because Jake is perceived in relation to God. Jake is either "in Adam" or "in Christ."

Based on a covenantal schema, Jake's broken relationship with God is the

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priority, not relationships with other people. Jake is fixated on restoring a relationship with his ex-girlfriend but this desire results in empty hope. Jake already has broken relationships with family, friends, and classmates, resulting in disappointment and pain. The counselor could give Jake true hope by introducing him to a true understanding of God. Throughout Jake's initial meetings, he expressed thoughts about God and the Christian life, though distorted.[2] Jake clearly has a low view of God, blaming him for personal choices in leaving his ex-girlfriend. These comments give the counselor an opportunity to discuss Jake's view of God and relationship with him. A structural approach, on the other hand, would limit a relationship with God to the spiritual domain and place emotional and social problems in the psychological domain. As a result, each domain would be treated separately with the psychological domain most likely as a priority.

While Jake's relationship with God is the priority, the counselor's example of Christlikeness can be influential in Jake's life. Christian counselors, especially integrationists, have written about the counselor imaging God or serving as his ambassador. Sometimes, this discussion portrays a counselor who loves by primarily listening and not talking about sin, but such a counselor would not accurately display Christlikeness. Christ knew how to speak his truth in love. Likewise, a Christlike counselor will learn to love Jake by caring for him but will not avoid speaking the truth in love, even when it requires confronting sin.

One of Jake's main problems is his self-centeredness, which has led to despair and self-destructive thoughts. He overly focuses on what's wrong with his life and what he deserves. Jake's search for happiness or peace has led to school, drugs, and sex.

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[2]His Army chaplain wrote that Jake was "hungry to grow in his faith." Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore, "Moving Models in Practice," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches*, ed. Stephen P. Greggo and Timothy A. Sisemore (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 51. "Jake argued that if God really is such a great God, he should fix his problems immediately and give him all of his life back" (52). Jake says it is the "Christian thing to do" when he tells the counselor that his ex-girlfriend's family should forgive him (56).

Biblically speaking, he is a sinner living a sinful life. A covenantal schema, however, addresses Jake's sin by focusing on his relationship with God. While sin is a problem, the sinner is the bigger problem. Hence, the counselor is not satisfied with behavioral change or even words of repentance. Until Jake realizes his problems and unhappiness are symptoms of a broken relationship with God, true transformation cannot happen.

The problem of sin has implications for structural, functional, and relational approaches. Structurally, Jake is not whole until his relationship with God is restored. Functionally, his source of happiness has to be in God. Relationally, he needs to love God so that he can properly love others. The temptation in counseling is to be satisfied with any of these approaches, but holistic transformation is based on a covenantal relationship with God.

Meanwhile, the counselor is sensitive to Jake's academic and medical problems. Regarding academics, it seems Jake is not serious about receiving help,[3] and in light of his many struggles, it might be more wise to pursue school after he is more stable or reduce his course load. Medically, Jake should continue to meet with doctors and other health professionals who could develop a holistic approach that includes rehabilitation for his brain injury. Jake has already complained about taking too many medications in the past. The counselor is not a doctor but could follow-up with Jake on the effectiveness of his medical treatments.

## Suggestions for Future Research

This research focused on the spiritual nature and sin among the three counseling models, but more research on the implications of theological anthropology is needed. For example, as research in neuroscience continues to develop, Christians will need to think more critically about theological anthropology, such as the spiritual nature

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[3]Jake misses his tutoring appointments and does not follow through on suggestions for academic work. Greggo and Sisemore, "Moving Models in Practice," in *Counseling and Christianity*, 56.

and sin.[4] Moreover, theological anthropology has implications for issues related to gender, marriage, human genome studies, and the role of medications. Demonstrating the implications would strengthen the presence of theological anthropology. For example, mental health is often defined as a psychological problem, even among Christians. Does mental health issues lie outside the purview of theological anthropology? How does theological anthropology affect this discussion? The discussion on theological anthropology in counseling will continue to become more thoughtful and remain relevant as Christian counselors explicitly discuss the implications of theological anthropology for various counseling problems.

Based on the emphasis on horizontal relationships in integrationist counseling, it would be interesting if empirical research was conducted on the effectiveness of focusing on horizontal relationships for gospel opportunities. One of the premises of integrationist counseling is that horizontal relationships could lead to vertical relationships. Another research opportunity is studying the concept of sin and confrontation in real Christian counseling contexts, comparing it to the biblical concept of speaking the truth in love. Research comparing the views of sin in each counseling model to theological views in church history would also be descriptive, both theologically and historically.

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[4]For example, see Michael Stanford, *The Biology of Sin: Grace, Hope and Healing for Those Who Feel Trapped* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010). Stanford, a Christian psychologist and professor, discusses the spiritual and biological aspects of various addictions.

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**Dissertations**

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THEOLOGICAL
ANTHROPOLOGIES IN SELECTED CHRISTIAN
COUNSELING MODELS

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Chapter 1 introduces the significance of theological anthropology in counseling for theological coherency. Specifically, I discuss the anthropological issues of the spiritual nature and sin and their implications for what I call theo-anthropological holism. The epistemology of the three counseling models is summarized to establish background context in examining their anthropology in chapters 2 through 4.

Chapter 2 highlights the anthropological framework of Christian psychology. Specifically, it examines Eric Johnson's structural anthropological framework and Robert Roberts' emphasis on virtues for an understanding of their holistic approaches to anthropology. Their views on personal responsibility and sin shapes their understanding of the spiritual nature.

Chapter 3 reveals a distinct form of anthropological dualism between the spiritual and psychological nature in integrationist counseling. The psychological nature is emphasized based on at least three factors: (1) a narrow view of the spiritual nature, (2) a priority on psychological healing, and (3) the view on personal responsibility and sin.

Chapter 4 explains why biblical counselors argue for the sufficiency of Scripture from an anthropological perspective. Based on the biblical view of the heart, biblical counselors view the spiritual and psychological natures as a part of the heart. Their view of the heart also shapes their view of sin and the holistic nature of

sanctification.

Chapter 5 evaluates the key anthropological themes from the three counseling models based on the structural, functional, and relational aspects of the image of God. I describe a covenantal schema as a holistic approach that supports theo-anthropological holism. A covenantal schema is appealing for its coherency with theological anthropology and emphasis on a relationship with God for spiritual renewal.

Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by summarizing my research findings and offering future areas of research. I also present a case study with "Jake", based on a covenantal schema to highlight key components and contrast it with the other three counseling models.

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PUBLICATIONS
>"Biblical Counseling, the Church, and the Academy," with Jeremy Pierre. In *Biblical Counseling and the Church*, ed. Kevin Carson and Robert Kellemen. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015.
>"Speaking the Truth in Love," with Jonathan Holmes. In *Scripture and Counseling: God's Word for Life in a Broken World*, ed. Jeff Forrey and Robert Kellemen. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.
>"When a Parent Fails," *The Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry* 2, no. 2 (2012): 56-58.
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>Review of *Christian Nurture*, by Horace Bushnell. *The Journal of Family Ministry* 1 no.1 (2010): 58-59.
>Four Views of the End Times: Leader's Guide, with W. Ryan Steenburg. Torrance, CA: Rose, 2010.

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