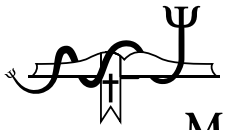
PSYCHO HERESY

REVISED & EXPANDED

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SEDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY



MARTIN AND DEIDRE BOBGAN

Scripture quotations are taken from the
Authorized King James Version of the Bible

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PsychoHeresy:
The Psychological Seduction of Christianity

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1

The Psychological Seduction of Christianity

During the last sixty years much has happened to undermine the faith of those who once believed in the sufficiency of Scripture for those issues of life that are now being addressed by psychological counseling (psychotherapy). Previous to the influx of psychological theories and therapies, Christians turned to the Scriptures to understand themselves and to live accordingly. They turned to the Bible regarding attitudes and actions. They sought God regarding personal feelings and relationships. They found solid solace, strength, and guidance during difficult circumstances. Moreover, they learned the difference between walking according to the old ways of the world and walking according to the new life they had received through Christ's death, resurrection, and gift of the Holy Spirit. Much of this has been lost as Christians have been adding the ways of the world to the way of the cross.

We have witnessed this grievous transition from faith in God and His Word to faith in the psychological systems of men for nonorganic issues of life. Dur-

ing our university years we entered the scene from the side of the world, believing that psychology had much to offer mankind. Our interest increased as one of us (Martin) with two degrees in mathematics completed a doctoral degree in educational psychology, with much of the training and research being in the area of personality theory and psychotherapy. Both of us devoured books on personality theory and psychotherapy, including those by Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Abraham Maslow, Gordon Allport, Carl Rogers, William Glasser, B.F. Skinner, John Watson, Albert Ellis, Thomas Harris, Arthur Janov, and others. However, as one theoretical system seemed to disenfranchise the next we began to wonder about the usefulness of these theories and therapies. **These men all reported great results, but when we looked into the scientific research, we found out otherwise. As we discuss in detail in this book, "mild to moderate" help for those who "need it least" seems to be the best that all these theories and therapies could offer.**

As we began to lose our faith in the psychological theories of personality and psychotherapy, we started to see a great gulf between counseling psychology and the Bible: the psychological way being limited to serving what the Bible calls the "flesh" or the "old man"; the biblical way nourishing and ministering to the new life in Christ. The difference is between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light!

From the perspective of the scientific research, one would think this entire psychotherapeutic enterprise would have faded into obscurity but, instead, it captivated the culture. From the perspec-

tive of Scripture, these psychological systems with their explanations of the nature of man and how he should change should have been rejected as an alien religion but, instead, they have invaded the church. Thus we found ourselves in disagreement with many in the church who believed that one could combine the psychological ways of the world with the biblical way of the Lord.

When we first began speaking out about our concerns and then as we began putting our concerns in writing, some listened and agreed. In fact, Bethany House Publishers, Moody Press, and Harvest House published our early books. However, within just a few years we noticed that more and more Christians were turning to the psychological wisdom of men for problems of living having to do with the soul and spirit. By the time our manuscript for the first edition of *PsychoHeresy* was ready for publication, our prior publishers, as well as others, were not interested. They were already busy publishing books by many of those who were integrating psychology with the Bible, some of whom we were criticizing in the *PsychoHeresy* manuscript. Therefore we formed our own publishing company (EastGate Publishers) and began publishing our own books.

In this book we name people in reference to what they have taught or written. Our writings are not intended to judge the hearts of individuals we name, but to examine popular and influential psychological teachings in the light of Scripture, science, and logic. We have not used as many names and examples as possible, since the number is legion. The examples in this book give only a small glimpse of an almost endless list of offenders. However, we hope that this

sampling will demonstrate that there is a tremendous amount of psychologizing in and of Christianity. **By *psychologizing* we mean teaching, trusting, and promoting unscientific and unproven psychological opinions in areas where the Bible has already spoken**.

Our position in brief is that the kinds of mental-emotional-behavioral problems of living (nonorganic problems) that are generally therapized by a psychotherapist (psychological counselor) should be ministered to by biblical encouragement, exhortation, preaching, teaching, evangelizing, and fellowshipping, all of which depend solely upon the truth of God's Word, without incorporating the unproven and unscientific psychological opinions of men.

The opposing position varies from the sole use of psychology without the use of any Scripture to an integration or amalgamation of the two in varying amounts, depending upon the personal judgment of the individual. **Such integration is the attempt to combine theories, techniques, ideas, and ideologies from psychotherapy, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, and their underlying theories with Scripture.** Christian integrationists use psychological opinions about the nature of man, why he does what he does, and how he can change in ways that seem to them to be compatible with their Christian faith or their view of the Bible. Nevertheless, by their integration, **they demonstrate a lack of confidence in the sufficiency of the Word of God for all matters of life and conduct**. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3-4.) Instead of searching Scripture and relying solely on what God has provided through His Word, they use the secular

psychological theories and techniques in what they would consider to be a Christian way.

While an integrationist may truly admire the Bible, his reliance on psychology demonstrates a confidence in secular theories and therapies. Adding unverified psychological theories and techniques to biblical data reveals an insufficient confidence in Scripture. It broadcasts a constant signal that the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit are not enough for life and godliness. **Such integration implies that God gave commands without providing all the necessary means of obedience until the recent advent of counseling psychology.** It indirectly faults God for leaving Israel and the church ill equipped for thousands of years until psychoanalytic, behavioristic, humanistic, and transpersonal psychologists came along with the so-called necessary insights. It seems to discount the possibility of living and ministering the Christian life solely through spiritual means provided by God in His Word and through His Holy Spirit.

SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

Integrationists face the constant dilemma of defending their dual faith in Scripture and psychology. The Bible's claim to be sufficient in all matters of life and conduct contradicts their efforts. Numerous passages extol the sufficiency, power, and excellency of God's Word. For instance 2 Peter 1:2-4 says:

> Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto

> life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

The Bible is not meant to work independently from God Himself. The Bible is sufficient because the Lord Himself works through His Word. If a person tries to use the Bible apart from Christ ruling in His heart, he may claim that the Bible lacks practical answers for life's difficulties. However, it is through the Bible that God reveals Himself and works His divine power in Christians. The Bible is more than words on a page. Every word is backed by God's mighty power, His perfect righteousness, His love, His grace, and His wisdom. Thus God not only gives precious promises and instructions for living; He enables a believer to obey His Word. That is why the Bible is sufficient for life and conduct. Paul declared that he would not depend upon the wisdom of men, but on the power and wisdom of God. (1 Cor. 1.) Not only is human wisdom foolishness in comparison with God's wisdom; human words lack the divine power necessary to transform a person into the likeness of Christ and to enable him to live the Christian life according to God's will. God uses the wisdom and power of the Scriptures to enable believers to please Him and bear fruit. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:2-8.) No psychological doctrine can even come close to that claim, nor can it add power for godly change.

While sincere integrationists believe that there are psychological theories about the nature of man and therapies for change that do not contradict Scripture, the root remains the same. Jesus was always concerned about ungodly roots and about following the traditions of men instead of the Word of God. Paul warned:

> Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Col. 2:8.)

Thus the problem always haunting the psychospiritual integrationists is the source from which they have borrowed: psychological counseling systems, recently devised by agnostics and atheists, to answer questions about the human condition without regard for the Creator and His Word.

A Christian's answer to problems of living depends on his relationship with God and obedience to His Word. If one starts with the premise of the absolute sufficiency of Scripture, then he will work out from the Bible into the world and its problems. It is a process of moving from Scripture into the world as led by the Holy Spirit. Thus, one who ministers biblically will view people and their problems through the lens of the Bible, not through the lenses of psychology. Those integrationists who use the double lenses of psychology and the Bible will only produce double vision. And how can counselors with double vision point out the right way to struggling Christians?

God does not interpret man according to such psychological ideology. Therefore the church should

not use it. Certainly God was not ignorant of these matters when He guided His servants to record His Word. Surely God does not regret that Freud, Jung, Maslow, and others did not live in the first century so that his apostles might have incorporated their notions into the Gospels and Epistles. Nor is Paul's presentation of sanctification shallow and deficient because it lacks the so-called insights of psychological theory.

The Christian psychologizers use their apologetics for integrating psychology and theology; whereas our apologetic is for "solo Scriptura." We believe in the absolute sufficiency of Scripture in all matters of life and conduct. (2 Peter 1.) Thus we regard our position as being a high view of Scripture; and we refer to the point of view we are criticizing as a high view of psychology.

Almost everywhere one turns in the church one sees psychology. The psychologizing of Christianity has reached epidemic proportions. We see it everywhere in the church, from psychologized sermons to psychologized persons. However, as we have demonstrated in our writings, **the psychologizing of the church is neither biblically nor scientifically justifiable**.

We live in an era in which those who profess faith in Jesus Christ have become followers of men just as in the Corinthian church. Therefore, to criticize one of these individuals is to put oneself in a vulnerable position. How dare anyone say anything about the teachings of such popular, influential leaders? Nevertheless, we believe that it is necessary for Christians to become discerning about what they read and hear.

There is a strong tendency to forget to be a Berean (Acts 17:11), to neglect thinking for oneself, and to receive teachings without checking with the Word of God. Rather than examining teaching with the Word of God, many Christians assume that if a particular person, whom they trust, has said something, it must be true. They often base this assumption on reputation, degrees, and institutions. Also, if a person or institution has been known for teaching correct doctrine in the past, the assumption is that current teachings must be orthodox as well. Just because a pastor or teacher quotes the Bible and says some very good things does not mean that everything said is true or biblically sound. Only the Word of God can be entirely trusted.

We often refer to research studies in our writing, because, if a case can be made for the use of psychology, it must be supported in the research. In addition, we quote various distinguished individuals, including philosophers of science, Nobel Laureates, and distinguished professors to reveal the strength of the evidence **in opposition** to the credibility of psychology and therefore **in opposition** to the integrationist stand.

However, we want to make it perfectly clear that we believe the Bible stands on its own. It does not need scientific verification or any kind of research support. Christian presuppositions begin with Scripture, and any information culled from elsewhere is answerable to Scripture, not vice versa. Therefore, we do not use results of research to prove that the Bible is right, even when they may seem to agree with Scripture. That is totally unnecessary. Scientific investigation is limited by the fact

that it is conducted by fallible humans, while the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Furthermore, as Dr. Hilton Terrell points out, "Science is irrelevant to essentially religious pronouncements about non-material concepts."[1] We do quote scientific research to demonstrate that even here the evidence **does not** support this counseling craze.

The Bible records God's revelation to humanity about Himself and about the human condition. It is very clear about its role in revealing the condition of man, why he is the way he is, and how he changes. Psychological theories offer a variety of explanations about the same concerns, but they are merely scientific-sounding opinions and speculations, as we shall demonstrate.

WORLDLY WISDOM OR THE POWER OF THE CROSS

Paul repudiated the use of such worldly wisdom and depended upon the power of the cross of Christ, the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the efficacy of the life changing Word of God in all matters of life and holiness. Paul's denunciation of worldly wisdom was no mere quibble over words. He saw the grave danger of trying to mix worldly wisdom (the opinions of men) with the way of the cross. Just as it may appear foolish today to rely solely on the cross, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit in matters of life and conduct, it certainly appeared foolish to many people back then. Paul wrote:

> For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved

> it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? **hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?** For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Cor. 1:18-21, bold added.)

No one can know God through worldly wisdom. Nor can anyone be saved that way. Yet some will say that the theories of counseling psychology are useful and even necessary for Christians in their daily lives. But, the theories and philosophies behind psychotherapy and counseling psychology were all originated by men who had turned their back on God, men who were wise in their own eyes, but foolish in the eyes of God. Christians should not trust them.

Paul relied on "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:24.) He continued his letter:

> Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are

> not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Cor. 1:25-31.)

If indeed Jesus "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," one wonders why any Christian would desire to look in the ash heap of secular opinions posing as science. What else is necessary for living the Christian life, when His very presence provides all that we require for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? All is provided in Jesus, mediated to us by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

One sentence that may get lost in the passage quoted above is this: "That no flesh should glory in his presence." When a believer turns to theories and therapies of worldly wisdom, there is a strong tendency to give at least part of the credit to someone other than the Lord. On the other hand, when a believer turns to God and His Word, trusts God to work His good pleasure in one's life, and obeys God's Word through the wisdom and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the praise, gratitude and glory go to Him.

The rise of psychological solutions to life's problems within the church is symptomatic of the failure to follow the Lord and His way regarding the issues of life. **It is doubly dreadful that Christianity's attachment to the psychological way is**

both umbilical and unbiblical. The attachment is umbilical in that the church has become tied to psychology and believes that it needs the nurturance of psychology to survive. The attachment is unbiblical because psychological ideas have displaced, distorted, replaced or unnecessarily augmented long-held biblical understandings and solutions for the problems of living. It is our desire to cut the therapeutic psychological cord so that the church might once again seek only the Lord and follow His Word in confronting the issues of life.

PSYCHOHERESY BRIEFS

Over the years we have been asked to provide some brief statements that our readers could quickly read and use as support for our charge of psychoheresy and, in some instances, pass on to pastors, church leaders, and others to reveal to them biblical and academic reasons to oppose the psychologizing of the faith. The following are some cogent reasons to turn away from the love of psychology, which is so strongly embraced in the church. The following do not all apply to all of the psychologizers. However, we find that the following, **some of which will be repeated later**, should be considered when reading what these psychologizers have written or listening to what they say.

Biblical Briefs

Beneath all the biblical reasons why Christians should not pursue psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies is this one fact: The use of psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies denies the

sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life normally taken to a psychotherapist. (2 Peter 1:3-4.)

- "Sola Scriptura" for the issues of life needs no assistance from the broken cisterns of psychology. (Isaiah 55:1-3.)

- The Bible has truth about mankind, whereas psychotherapy has only the very wisdom of men about which God warns His people. (1 Cor. 1:19-21; 2:4-6.)

- One of the flagrant failures of the 20th century church and now the 21st century church is the promotion of counseling psychology and its underlying personality and therapeutic theories and techniques.[2]

- The words *Christian* and *psychology* (as it is used today) do not go together. They are different religions. Therefore there is no legitimate practice of "Christian psychology."[3]

- People who attempt to integrate psychology with Christianity are like the Israelites adding idols to their worship of God. (Jer. 2:11:13; Eze. 6:6; 14:6-8; 20:31, 39.)

- Christians who practice psychotherapy have hijacked the true faith and used it to their financial advantage and to the spiritual detriment of themselves and others.

- For Christians there are no psychotherapies that should be used instead of the Bible or as an adjunct to the Bible because they are limited to the "old man" or the flesh, whereas born-again Christians have been given new life in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17.)

- Psychotherapy does not and cannot deal with the most important issues of life, namely sin, salvation, sanctification and glorification, and any licensed Christian psychotherapist who deals with any of these biblical doctrines during counseling is in violation of the restraints of the state license.

- Psychotherapy is "science falsely so called." (1 Tim. 6:20.)

- No one has ever proved that psychotherapy produces better results than the biblical ministry done in the church from the day of Pentecost onward.

- Because psychotherapy is problem-centered, its conversations regularly violate Scriptural teaching.[4]

- Problem-centered counseling, which is normally done by both psychological and biblical counselors, inevitably leads to sinful, evil speaking.

- A little over 50 years ago Christians handled personal and interpersonal problems primarily in the family, with close friends, or in the church, rather than with strangers.

- Psychotherapy cannot save a person from sin or produce new life in Christ. It cannot save, justify, sanctify, or glorify. It cannot help to conform a person to the image of Christ. It is limited to the flesh or old nature.

- The Last Days' lovers-of-self era in which we live has led to an era in which we have a plethora of personal and relational problems for which Scripture provides true spiritual answers and psychotherapy provides false fleshly answers. (2 Tim. 3.)

- It is detrimental to add psychology to God's Word or to use psychology in place of the Bible.
- The Christian psychologizer generally knows less about the Word and its application to problems of living than a pastor.
- There is almost no psychological idea that cannot be made to sound biblical.
- The Christian psychologizer often interprets Scripture from a psychological perspective rather than evaluating psychology from a biblical perspective.
- If someone is improved or delivered from his problems, competent biblical ministry could have done better.
- For every psychological solution suggested there is a better biblical solution available.
- Psychological explanations about life and psychological solutions to life's problems are not only unnecessary for Christians but spiritually detrimental.

Psychological (Psychotherapeutic) Briefs

While the Biblical reasons to avoid such secular psychological therapy are all that are needed as the Bible needs no such support, it is worth noting that the very science the psychotherapists call upon does not support their practices.

- Witchdoctors and psychotherapists have common roots for their work.[5]
- "Psychotherapy is most helpful to those who need it the least."[6]

- Psychotherapy is made up of the guesses, opinions, and unscientific theories about who man is and how he changes. It is not science.[7]

- Many of the almost 500 psychotherapeutic approaches available and thousands of techniques often contradict one another.[8]

- These different psychotherapeutic approaches seem to work (equal outcomes phenomenon), but they have only a mild to moderate effect. "Whether the magnitude of the psychotherapy effect is medium or small remains a moot point; no one has claimed that it is large."[9] Dr. Martin Seligman, a past president of the American Psychological Association, says that "by and large, we produce only mild to moderate relief."[10]

- Detrimental effects do occur as a result of using psychotherapy to deal with problems of living with some very negative effects occurring with some very popular approaches.

- Psychological explanations about life and psychological solutions to life's problems are questionable at best, detrimental at worst, and spiritual counterfeits at least.

- Scientific research has already debunked the popular use of psychotherapy, but not put a stop to its proliferation. Because of the research, Alexander Astin contends that "psychotherapy should have died out. But it did not. It did not even waver. Psychotherapy had, it appeared, achieved *functional autonomy*" (emphasis his). Functional autonomy occurs when a practice continues after the circumstances which supported it are gone.[11]

- Psychotherapy is a religion in disguise that poses as science and sometimes as medicine.[12]

- The two main precursors of modern-day psychotherapy are mesmerism and Freudian psychoanalysis.[13]

- "There is no positive evidence supporting the efficacy [effectiveness] of professional psychology."[14]

- "Psychotherapy may be known in the future as the greatest hoax of the twentieth century."[15]

- It has not been demonstrated in the plethora of research to date that educated, degreed, licensed psychotherapists do any better at assisting those in need than amateurs.

- "Evaluating the efficacy [effectiveness] of psychotherapy has led us to conclude that professional psychologists are no better psychotherapists than anyone else with minimal training—sometimes those without any training at all; the professionals are merely more expensive."[16]

- Measurement of success in psychotherapy is whether one **feels** better, but it should be whether one **lives** better.

- The popularity of psychotherapy is not due to science but rather to politics.[17]

- Psychotherapists live off the "spontaneous remission" rate, i.e., disappearance of symptoms without formal treatment.[18]

- Counseling is essentially a female-friendly activity, largely loathed by men as counselees, with the women currently being the large majority of counselors and counselees.[19]

- Degrees, licenses, experience, and education in the field of counseling do not make the psychologizers experts on human behavior.[20]

- Christians who are licensed psychotherapists must follow a non-discrimination policy, which means they cannot proselytize or refuse professional service to anyone on the basis of race, gender, identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic or marital status.[21]

- What a psychologizer says is often contrary to what numerous other psychologizers say.[22]

- Case histories or successful examples are not generally representative of what normally happens.[23]

- Successes claimed have less to do with the counselor's psychological training, licenses, and experience than with factors in the client's own life.[24]

- Successes claimed in counseling could easily be matched by persons not receiving psychological counseling.[25]

- Successes in psychological counseling are often short-term.

- For every success mentioned there are many failures.

- There is definitely a harm rate for every psychological system of men.[26]

- What the psychologizer says about human relationships and problems of living is personal opinion rather than scientific fact.[27, 28]

- Psychotherapy is not a coherent science in principle or in theory, diagnosis, or treatment.[29]

The Lord Himself is the Christian's source for living and for dealing with problems of living normally taken to a psychologically trained counselor. The Bible gives the only accurate understanding of why man is the way he is and how he is to change. The concerns of **how Christians are to live and change and also how to overcome the trials, tribulations, and sufferings of life are spiritual, not psychological matters**. Nevertheless Christians throughout the church look to what psychologists say about how to live, how to relate to others, and how to meet the challenges of life. On the one hand there is enough biblical and scientific evidence to shut down the secular Psychology Industry and with it the Christian Psychology Industry. On the other hand, we are not naive enough to believe that the overwhelming evidence supporting their demise will be heeded by the majority of Christians.[30] The roots and shoots of all of this psychoheresy with all of its variations and combinations comprise a massive seduction of Christianity. **Two very important chapters, which reveal the extent of psychoheresy throughout the church and which name individuals, churches, schools, and ministries that are guilty, are Chapter 13, "Amalgamania," and Chapter 14, "More Amalgamania."**

2

Leaven in the Loaf

The world offers all kinds of ideas that clearly stand in opposition to the Bible. However, the greatest problems for Christians are not those of clear contradiction, such as direct denial of God or blatant atheism. Jesus warned:

> Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. (Matt. 16:6.)
>
> Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? (I Cor. 5:6.)

One of the most subtle and dangerous deceptions today is a slow-acting, poisonous leaven which is permeating the church. The leaven easily entered the liberal branches of Christendom under the guise of science and medicine. It gave people something to hang onto as their faith in the inspired Word of God flagged. The leaven then spread to conservative churches, parachurch organizations, Bible colleges, Christian schools and universities, seminaries, and mission agencies.

In their desire to help the sheep and expand church growth, many pastors are now adding that

same leaven to the Word of God. They have been taking what falsely appears to be good for the bleeding sheep and feeding it to the entire flock in one form or another. The leaven has been like a food additive which seems to have positive benefits, but which eventually weakens the flock.

WHAT IS THIS LEAVEN?

What is this insidious leaven and why would pastors, church leaders, and others who truly care for their flocks be promoting this leaven in the church? This leaven is counseling psychology. Psychological leaven consists of secular theories and techniques which are according to "the tradition of men." (Mark 7:8.) They are man-made ideas which offer substitutes for salvation and sanctification.

When we speak of the leaven of psychology **we are not referring to the entire field of psychological study**. Instead, we are referring to that part of psychology which deals with the nature of man, how he should live, and how he can change. It involves ethics, values, attitudes, and behavior. **We will be using the words *counseling psychology, psychological counseling, the psychological way, and psychotherapy* interchangeably when referring to such man-made systems of understanding and treatment.**

Psychology is a broad field that covers many disciplines. The American Psychological Association (APA) has over fifty divisions. When we say "psychology," we are referring to those divisions of the APA that include psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies. This also includes personality theo-

ries and tests. Psychotherapy is conducted by psychotherapists, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, marriage & family counselors, and social workers.

We begin with the following assumption: the Bible is sufficient to minister to the personal, marital, and family problems of living normally taken to a psychotherapist. No matter how firmly Christian psychotherapists adhere to the inerrancy of Scripture, they all must deny its sufficiency. We demonstrate that:

(1) Psychotherapy with its underlying psychologies is a worldly, fleshly counterfeit for what God has already provided in His Word. Simply said, the Bible is the wisdom of God; psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies are the wisdom of men about which God warns His people. (1 Cor. 2.)

(2) Psychotherapy with its underlying psychologies is one of the biggest deceptions in the church today!

Because testimonials of success and happiness abound, many eagerly follow the promises of the psychological way. However, we will be taking a hard look at what psychological systems for understanding and helping people really have to offer. We all hear and read about testimonials that claim marvelous help from psychology. However, few hear or read about the failures. The research that will be cited later in this book will illustrate the fact that **psychological explanations about life and psychological solutions to life's problems are questionable at best, detrimental at worst, and spiritual counterfeits at least**.

Although some have recognized the contradictions, failures, and false promises, many continue to

think in psychological terms and turn to psychology for answers to life. Our twenty-first-century culture is steeped in psychological theories and ideas. In fact, most people do not even think twice about the origin of some of the psychological ideas they take for granted.

WHAT ABOUT "CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY"?

But, how does all of this relate to the church? Just because secular psychologies out in the world reek of anti-Christian bias, contradictions, and failures, does it follow that psychology in the church is also contaminated? Unfortunately what has been labeled "Christian psychology" is made up of the very same confusion of contradictory theories and techniques. P**sychologists who profess Christianity have merely borrowed the theories and techniques from secular psychology.** They dispense what they believe to be the perfect blend of psychology and Christianity. Nevertheless, the psychology they use is the same as that used by non-Christian psychologists and psychiatrists. They use the theories and techniques devised by such men as Freud, Jung, Adler, Rogers, Ellis, Fromm, Maslow, and others, none of whom embraced Christianity or developed a psychological system from the Word of God. Adding psychotherapy with its underlying psychologies to the Bible is syncretism and contradicts the sufficiency of Scripture.

The Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS) is a group that includes psychologists and psychological counselors who are profess-

ing Christians. At one of their meetings the following was said:

> We are often asked if we are "Christian psychologists" and find it difficult to answer since we don't know what the question implies. We are Christians who are psychologists but at the present time there is no acceptable Christian psychology that is markedly different from non-Christian psychology. It is difficult to imply that we function in a manner that is fundamentally distinct from our non-Christian colleagues ... as yet there is not an acceptable theory, mode of research or treatment methodology that is distinctly Christian.[1]

Although Christian psychological counselors claim to have taken only those elements of psychology that fit with Christianity, anything can appear to be made to fit the Bible, no matter how silly or even satanic it is. Christian therapists individually bring their own combination of psychological theories and therapies they have borrowed from the world to the Bible and rationalize their use with the Word. What they use comes from the bankrupt systems of ungodly and unscientific theories and techniques.

Christians who seek to integrate psychology with Christianity have actually turned to secular, ungodly sources for help. And, because these unbiblical, unsubstantiated theories and techniques have been blended into the dough, they are well hidden in the loaf. Thus many Christians honestly believe that they are using only a purified, Christianized psychology. Instead, we are left with a contaminated

loaf, not with the unleavened bread of the Word of God. A. W. Tozer declares:

> At the heart of the Christian system lies the cross of Christ with its divine paradox. The power of Christianity appears in its antipathy toward, never in its agreement with, the ways of fallen men.... The cross stands in bold opposition to the natural man. Its philosophy runs contrary to the processes of the unregenerate mind, so that Paul could say bluntly that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. To try to find a common ground between the message of the cross and man's fallen reason is to try the impossible, and if persisted in must result in an impaired reason, a meaningless cross and a powerless Christianity.[2]

PSYCHOHERESY

The psychological seduction of Christianity is a most subtle and widespread leaven in the church. It has permeated the entire loaf and is stealthily starving the sheep. It promises far more than it can deliver and what it does deliver is not the food that nourishes Christians. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John 6:35.) Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), not Freud, Jung, Adler, Rogers, Ellis, Fromm, Maslow, or any other such men. Jesus, the apostles, and the early church did not send the sheep out to feed in other pastures. They did not turn to man-

made systems either to understand the nature of man or to discover answers to the problems of living. Jesus offered Himself as the bread of life. He gives the pure water of the Word of God which springs up into eternal life.

Pastors have been called to feed the sheep the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (I Cor. 5:8.) Yet, shepherds who have been influenced by the psychological way are ministering the leaven of psychology and subjecting suffering sheep to professional psychological counseling. Dr. Ed Payne, author of *Biblical Healing for Modern Medicine*, when a professor of Family Medicine at the Medical College of Georgia, declared:

> Church leaders must bear the guilt of the invasion of psychology into the church. These are the people who are ordained of God to guard the minds of their sheep. Instead, they have invited wolves into the fold.[3]

We are not suggesting that all pastors or all Christian leaders or all college and seminary professors or all lay people are psychologically seduced. However, **we are saying that the overwhelming weight of pronouncements and practices and recommendations and referrals favors the psychological way.**

The psychological seduction of Christianity is not simply a future event that may occur. It has already happened. It is not something that is about to take place or merely in the process of taking place. The leaven is already in the loaf and is spreading at incredible speed. The leaven of the psychological way has already spread beyond the pastor's office,

beyond the vast referral system, and right down into the sermons. It permeates churches, parachurch organizations, Bible colleges, Christian schools and universities, seminaries, mission agencies, Christian media, and literature.

In attempting to be relevant, many preachers, teachers, counselors, and writers promote a psychological perspective of life rather than a theological one. The church has joined *The Psychological Society*[4] and has become the Psychological Church. The symbol of psychology overshadows the cross of Christ, and psychological concepts contaminate the Word of God.

We have chosen the term *psychoheresy* because what we describe is a psychological heresy. It is a heresy because it is a departure from the fundamental truth of the Gospel. The departure is the use of the unproven and unscientific psychological opinions of men instead of absolute confidence in the biblical truth of God. **It is a denial of the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life now treated with psychological counseling, which utilizes the very wisdom of man about which God has warned His people** (1 Cor. 2). Psychoheresy is also the intrusion of such theories into the preaching and practice of Christianity, especially when they contradict or compromise biblical Christianity in terms of the nature of man, how he is to live, and how he changes. The subtitle of this book is *The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, which is a seduction that we document as having already happened and that continues to deceive many professing Christians. Psychoheresy is running rampant in churches, parachurch organizations, Bible colleges,

Christian schools and universities, seminaries, and mission agencies. As you read this book, please keep in mind our definition of *psychoheresy* as we reveal its roots throughout the church. Our book *The End of "Christian Psychology"* provides further research and reasons why Christians need to throw off the shackles of psychoheresy.[5]

The apostles and the early church would be horrified to see what is replacing the pure work of God through His Word and His Holy Spirit throughout the church today. They would wonder if Christians have forgotten the great promises of God and the blessed truths of their present inheritance. They would wonder if the Holy Spirit has been shoved into a corner and ignored in the daily course of Christians' lives. Paul briefly describes the tremendous resources for Christians in contrast to the feeble wisdom of man:

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. **Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth**, but which the Holy Ghost

> teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Cor. 2:9-13, bold added.)

Since we have received the Spirit of God, since we have the written Word of God, and since He leads us into wisdom in our daily affairs, it is foolishness to look for answers to the problems of living in the wisdom of men. God gives spiritual discernment. In fact, Paul declares that "we have the mind of Christ."

> But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:14-16.)

But if we continue to listen to the world's philosophies and psychologies to understand the condition of man, why he is the way he is, and how he is to live, we will lose spiritual discernment. We will drown out the pure doctrine of the Word of God and fail to know the mind of Christ.

Paul was well-educated and well-acquainted with the wisdom of the Greeks. However, he refused to use anything that would detract from the testimony of God. This is what he said about his determination to teach only the testimony of God:

> And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you,

> save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. **And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.** (1 Cor. 2:1-5, bold added.)

The psychological way unnecessarily brings man's wisdom into the church. Testimonies of the Lord working sovereignly through His Word and His Holy Spirit in the trials of life are becoming more and more scarce, while honor and praise are being given to those who give forth the worldly psychological wisdom of men. Faith is ever so subtly being shifted from the power of God to a combination of God and the wisdom of men. And when it comes to the more serious problems of living, the shift is so great that God is often left out almost altogether.

Paul had no use for the wisdom of the world. On the other hand, he understood that wisdom from God comes as a gift. It cannot be reduced to formulas or techniques or anything controlled by human beings.

> Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: **yet not the wisdom of this world**, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But **we speak the wisdom of God** in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not

> have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. 2:6-8, bold added.)

However, as James reminds us, wisdom only comes to those who trust Him:

> If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James 1:5-8.)

The wisdom of God is scarce these days because of the confidence being placed in the wisdom of men. Thus, rather than asking in faith and waiting on God for wisdom, believers are wavering. Or worse yet, Christians are asking psychologists in faith and expecting them to fix their lives. Thus they are caught in a web of **double-mindedness**, which is a very apt description of the integration of psychology and the Bible.

What William Law wrote two centuries ago is even more evident today: "Man needs to be saved from his own wisdom as much as from his own righteousness, for they produce one and the same corruption."[6] Besides offering only the dregs of the broken cisterns of man-made ideas rather than the fresh springs of living water, the theories of psychological counseling poison the soul. They draw a person away from the True Bread and the Living Water. Furthermore, once a person has embraced the psy-

chological way he becomes vulnerable to greater and greater deceptions. Those who use the psychological way of assisting people and who preach psychologized sermons exhibit their faith in psychology. They generally believe a number of myths about the psychological way, which we will examine throughout this book.

The Bible is the true food for the church, but it is also an excellent hiding place for deceptive ideas. A lie placed in the midst of truth often goes unnoticed and may be as fully accepted as the Gospel Truth. In fact, the shepherds are often unaware of the deceptive nature of the leaven they are adding to the loaf. If the leaven were obviously evil, the shepherds entrusted with the care of God's flock would avoid it altogether.

Considering the state of the visible church, too many Christians are naïve and oblivious to the heresies, apostasies, and heterodoxies running throughout the church. Too many believers appear to be unable to discern whether there are differences between the teachings and practices of their churches and the Bible regarding the essentials of the faith. We are not speaking about nitpicking, but blatant violations of clear Scriptural teachings.

Dr. Hilton Terrell, editor of the *Journal of Biblical Ethics in Medicine*, after having earned a Ph.D. in psychology and an M.D. in family practice medicine could see what was truly happening and said:

> The fondness of Christians for the prolific spawn of popular psychotherapies should be a cause for embarrassment and admonition from Church leaders. Instead, Christian

> psychiatrists and psychologists who rework alien dogmas into facsimiles of biblical truth are immunized against needed criticism. The vaccine is composed of their undeniable personal zeal for Christ, a generous use of Bible passages (albeit of dubious relevance to their desired points) and the Church's ignorance of the true nature of psychotherapy. A Trojan horse full of dangerous psychofantasies has been professionally prepared for us by Christian psychiatrists and psychologists. The hollow idol has been dragged into the Church by non-professionals, whose eagerness to have the world's psychological teachings accounts for their acceptance more than does the professional's handiwork…. No amount of well-intentioned refinement of deadly doctrines will make them clean for use by Christians. Though gems are occasionally found in coal mines, Christians who go fossicking for gems of God's truth in psychotherapeutic coal mines will usually emerge empty-handed and filthy.[7]

Payne says, "No greater issue faces the modern, true church than this Trojan horse of psychology. It has a stranglehold that will not be easily loosened."[8] Now psychoheresy permeates practically every nook and cranny of the church. There is hardly a church, denomination, Bible college, Christian university or school, seminary, or mission agency not affected by it. Psychoheresy began about fifty years ago as a trickle, turned into a torrent, and is now a tsunami raging against the true faith in its perilous path.

The rise of psychoheresy since we began writing over thirty years ago has been phenomenal and is a symptom of the Last Days before the Lord's return. Psychoheresy is one of many deceptions that will continue to increase. **The greater the increase in psychoheresy in all areas of the church, the closer we are to the Lord's return.**

3

A Way Which Seemeth Right Right

No matter how personable and well-meaning a Christian therapist may be, he has been heavily influenced by an ungodly psychological perspective. Psychology thus becomes the tempting means for both interpreting Scripture and applying it to daily living. When people read the Bible from the psychological perspective of Freud, Jung, Adler, Maslow, Rogers, et al, they tend to conform the Bible to those theories and methods. Rather than looking at life **solely** through the lens of the Bible, they tend to look at the Bible through the lens of psychology.

Amalgamators, those who integrate psychology and the Bible, add the wisdom of men to fill in what they think is missing from the Bible. They take an age-old problem, give it a new name, such as "mid-life crisis," and give solutions from the leavened loaf.[1] They integrate psychological ideas with a Bible verse or story here and there to come up with what they believe to be effective solutions to problems they think are beyond the reach of Scripture.

One human problem after another is confronted with an integrated approach. This conveys the idea

that one is getting the best of both worlds, and underneath this is the not-so-subtle idea that the Bible is insufficient and must be propped up by a strong psychology. Psychological counselors decide which of the almost 500 often-contradictory psychological approaches and which of the thousands of not-always-compatible techniques they will integrate with the Bible. Does anyone notice the contradictions in all of these integrations?

Even Christian psychologists chase one trendy idea after another, just like Don Quixote pursuing the parade of tilting windmills. Freud is not quite as popular among Christians as Jung, Rogers, Adler, and Maslow are right now. As Berne became less popular, Ellis gained in popularity among Christian therapists. It all depends on which ideas and methods are in vogue and how well they are couched in Christian terminology. The church pursues both blindly and eagerly the psychological purveyors of perverse and unproven ideas and opinions with the same kind of loyalty and naiveté as Don Quixote's servant Sancho.

PROFESSIONALISM

Christians have given significant concerns of life over to the ever-bulging ranks of professionalism. C. P. Dragash complains that "The 20th century has seen the professionals take over from families and communities many of their ancient responsibilities." He refers to the high price paid as "the loss of autonomy in families and the decay of community identity and responsibility."[2] This is not simply a secular problem. Christians are included in the ranks. The

most repeated advice among Christians for problems of living is "get some counseling," and by this they mean professional psychological counseling.

The "loss of autonomy," "decay of community identity," and loss of responsibility have gone so far that professional help is now considered necessary for problems that used to be solved by common sense and caring friends and family. A *Newsweek* article states, "Sometimes even the obvious solution requires the blessing of a therapist."[3] In other words, people are now paying professionals to tell them what common sense would dictate. While training and licensing are unnecessary to dispense obvious solutions to sometimes simple problems, loss of individual responsibility and confidence has necessitated it. However, it is the loss of responsibility and confidence fostered by the therapists themselves, and now therapy is necessary to encourage individuals to do what common sense would have caused them to do in the past. One sees this psychological mentality in a great variety of places and the examples one could give are pandemic.

Psychological therapy has thus encouraged the very problems it claims to cure. It has fostered dependence on the professional and it has given psychological excuses for people not to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions. People have inadvertently been robbed of dignity and personal responsibility in the name of therapy. Perhaps we could add some new "mental illnesses" to the expanding list: such as the disease of psychotherapeutic mentality, the disease of dependence on therapists, the disease of shifting responsibility onto professionals, and the disease of psychotherapy. As someone

once said, "Psychotherapy is the disease of which it pretends to be the cure."

PASTORS UNDERMINED

The cancer of psychotherapy has not only hit the church, but has metastasized to all its members. More and more Christians are looking to psychologists as though they are the sages of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. **Psychologists have taken the position of priests and replaced the pastors as "experts" in matters pertaining to life.** Freud and Jung et al speak for us instead of the apostles and prophets. Psychotherapists have thus attained the level of adoration, mystery, and divine regard once accorded to the clergy. They have even become idols, because they supposedly hold the keys to mental health and understand all the mental mysteries of life.

Psychotherapist Dr. Loriene Chase concedes that pastors can deal with "ecclesiastical confusion and can assist in the maturation of your spiritual belief systems as well as offering a workable and compatible philosophy in your search for inner harmony." But, according to Chase, the pastor without psychotherapeutic training should be limited to those matters.[4] Chase, like many psychologists, does not see the **Bible as the authoritative Word about all matters of the human heart, soul, mind, and behavior**. Yet her advice is almost identical to Christians who have made psychology their standard and guide for values, attitudes, emotions, thoughts, actions, and relationships. If the Bible does not speak to the crucial issues of life and if Jesus has not come

to indwell and transform believers, then we are to be pitied. The psychological answers do not give life. They merely manipulate according to the whim of the human heart and the bias of the therapist.

Mary VanderGoot, while a professor of psychology at a Christian college, listed a litany of reasons why preachers should not minister to individuals with "deeply-rooted, life-crippling psychological problems."[5] Her bias was obviously psychological. She listed reasons why pastors should not counsel, such as their lack of psychological training, qualifications, and experience; they do not usually charge a fee and they do not set prescribed time limits on appointments. Furthermore, she feared that if pastors counsel they risk church unity.[6]

By the end of the article VanderGoot makes it sufficiently clear that no self-respecting minister who is ethical and logical would counsel because of the incompatibility of the roles of pastor and therapist. Evidently the biblical answers to life's problems and complexities are only appropriate on Sunday mornings; psychological ideas are the fare for the rest of the week. Thus VanderGoot recommends: "The pastor should be taught how to assemble a list of professionals in his community who will serve his parishioners well."[7]

The early church survived without psychotherapists. Throughout the centuries Christians found victory in Jesus without the help of recently arrived, modern-day psychotherapists. Pastors ministered to the problems of living through preaching, teaching, and ministering the Word of God. However, today psychological ideas about life and how to live happily and successfully have replaced and/or supplemented

the age old truths by which the saints through the ages have lived. If pastors have not been trained in those psychological ideas and methods they are no longer considered able to minister to the most crucial challenges of life. The psychologists have placed themselves beyond reproach, because unless a person is trained in the theories and methods of psychology he supposedly doesn't know what he is talking about, especially if he questions the psychological way.

Contrary to the general, acceptable, cultural view, psychotherapy is riddled with myths. Psychiatrist Garth Wood, in his book *The Myth Of Neurosis,* describes the bankruptcy of psychotherapists:

> Cowed by their status as men of science, deferring to their academic titles, bewitched by the initials after their names, we, the gullible, lap up their pretentious nonsense as if it were the gospel truth. We must learn to recognize them for what they are—possessors of no special knowledge of the human psyche, who have nonetheless, chosen to earn their living from the dissemination of the myth that they do indeed know how the mind works, are thoroughly conversant with the "rules" that govern human behavior.[8]

In testifying at a murder trial (for the prosecution) psychiatrist Lee Coleman said, "I think common sense wins hands-down in a race with psychiatry."[9]

Wood is not cowed by the sacred cow of psychotherapy. He says, "Freudian theories, and their off-

spring, are irrelevant where they are not actually dangerous."[10] Psychiatrist Thomas Szasz says:

> Perhaps most, so-called psychotherapeutic procedures are harmful for the so-called patients...all such interventions and proposals should therefore be regarded as evil until they are proven otherwise.[11]

In spite of the research, psychological counselors continually spread rumors about persons being harmed by pastoral or other biblical ministry. One wonders if they are acquainted with the research about people being harmed by psychological counseling. There are numerous horror stories hidden away in psychotherapy closets related to misdiagnosis, maltreatment, and other failures.

Dr. Archibald Hart, Emeritus, Department of Clinical Psychology at Fuller Seminary, illustrates his concern by listing a host of problems associated with pastors as counselors. And of course, most of those reasons evaporate if the pastor is psychologically trained. Hart says, "When people sit in the pew, they want to know truth. When they sit in the counseling room, they want to be understood."[12] And yet, in Jesus there is both grace and truth. The Bible does not separate truth from love. Who understands better than God? And what does Hart mean when he says "understood"? Does a psychologically trained individual understand people any better than anyone else? There is no evidence that he does. Professional therapists have even been notoriously poor at diagnosis.[13]

Hart expresses his ideas about counseling and counseling relationships as if his statements were

scientific and based upon research, when, in fact, he is espousing only his own personal opinion. For example, he says, "The most important way we have for understanding the self is through the exploration of feelings."[14] Not only does the Bible not support that statement; one can easily find a great number of professionals, including Christian psychologists, who would deny this. Nevertheless, Hart's personal point of view is printed as if it were a scientific gospel.

In addition, Hart promotes the work of Carl Rogers by saying, "Carl Rogers has identified and articulated, **perhaps better than any other theoretician**, the essential qualities of a good human interaction."[15] (Bold added.) Evidently it does not matter that Carl Rogers is a humanistic psychologist who has espoused secular humanism and spiritism and even consulted the Ouija Board and been involved in necromancy.[16]

In spite of his questionable involvements and unbiblical ideas and practices, Rogers is emulated by many who call themselves "Christian psychologists."[17] In addition to his first-place ranking with secular therapists, Rogers was rated in first place in a ranking survey of CAPS (Christian Association for Psychological Studies) in reference to influence in counseling practices. One could excuse this ignorance on the part of Christian psychologists, except that Carl Rogers, while having departed severely from his early Christian background, has erected a system that is a pale imitation of what one could more richly find in Scripture. For example, Carl Rogers's crowning discovery is that of love.[18] Why would

anyone need to ask Carl Rogers about love? In his description of the man of the future, he writes:

> The man of the future...will be living his transient life mostly in temporary relationships... he must be able to establish closeness quickly. He must be able to leave these close relationships behind without excessive conflict or mourning.[19]

What does this say about commitment of relationship in love between persons? Furthermore a secular humanist knows nothing about the love of God that passes understanding. And the kind of love that is Christian has no counterpart or parallel in humanistic psychology

Why Christians need to find out about love from Carl Rogers boggles the mind. Love is a constant theme of Scripture. God is love. Jesus loves. The Bible teaches love. How could anyone miss it? It is heartbreaking to hear Christian psychologists say that they did not know about love until they read Rogers. One wonders if they could truly know Jesus or the love of God, since Rogers's brand of love is limited to the self-serving carnal flesh.

Could it be that Christian psychologists spend so much time reading psychological texts and so little time reading the Bible that they do not see love in Scripture? Have they so spiritualized the Bible that they do not see the practicality of God's love and Christ's Words about love? Do they not realize the power of the Gospel of Christ to deal with all problems of living?

Hart ends his comments by saying, "As a general rule, whenever possible, get some therapy yourself—

not necessarily because you have problems, but to develop a greater self-understanding."[20] This would not have been the advice of the saints throughout the centuries. They would have said, "Know God." It is Socrates rather than the Bible that declared that we should know ourselves. The Bible constantly encourages us to know God. Paul prayed for the Christians:

> That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. (Eph. 1:17-19.)

The only kind of self-understanding Christians must come to is that which follows knowing God. And that is the kind Job came to when he encountered the Living God.

> Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.... I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.... I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. (Job 42:1-3, 5-6.)

The Bible teaches that we are transformed into the image of Christ not by looking at ourselves or at our feelings, but rather by looking at Him.

> But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. 3:18.)

Can you imagine the apostle Paul seeking self-understanding through exploring his feelings?

> But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. (Philip. 3:7-8.)

There are some very basic differences between the psychological ideas invading the church and the doctrines of Scripture, both in direction and emphasis. The psychological way often seeks to enhance the self, through self-love, self-realization, self-esteem, self-actualization, self-understanding, and other selfisms. The Bible teaches loving God and neighbor and the application of the cross to the self so that believers may confidently say with Paul:

> I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20.)

In contrast to the fears of VanderGoot and Hart, Bernie Zilbergeld, who does not even profess the Christian faith, suspects that even lay people (regardless of their religious persuasion) do a good job of counseling. He admits that if professional therapists were pitted against lay therapists and research done on the results, "I would worry until the results were in," as far as the survival of his own profession is concerned.[21] Besides noting the research that does not support the use of professionally trained therapists, Zilbergeld says:

> If counseling does indeed produce great changes, the results should be easy to observe in therapists, for they have received more therapy than any other group of people and they have also had extensive training in methods of personal change, methods they could personally use on themselves.[22]

If therapy is all that it is supposed to be, the lives of therapists should advertise its benefits. However, the lives of therapists do not support the claims made by them for their psychological surgery. There is no book that surpasses the Bible in giving an accurate understanding of the human condition. There is no one else who can transform a life like Jesus can. He has given believers His Word and His Holy Spirit and He has chosen to minister through His people in such a way that the glory goes to the Father.

> For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in

> our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (2 Cor. 4:5-7.)

SUBVERTING THE FAITH

The antagonism towards Christianity subtly seeps through psychological ideas about why people are the way they are, how they should live, what they need, and how they change. Such ideas, promoted by Christians who believe and promote the psychological way, actually subvert the claims of Christ. Rather than denying the claims of Christ directly, they simply place Him alongside their favorite psychological theorists. Instead of denying the validity of the Word of God, they merely say that ministers of the Word are not qualified to minister to the deep levels of human need.

Psychological counselors undermine the ministering of pastors and have developed a formula for referral: (1) Anyone who is not psychologically trained is not qualified to counsel those people with the really serious problems of living. (2) Refer them to professional trained therapists. This is one predictable and pathetic pattern of the psychological seduction of Christianity.

Pastors have been intimidated by the warnings from psychologists. They have become fearful of doing the very thing God has called them to do: to minister to the spiritual needs of the people through godly counsel both in and out of the pulpit. Some of that intimidation has come from psychologically

trained pastors. A spokesman for the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, a psychotherapeutically trained group of pastors, says "Our concern is that there are a lot of ministers who aren't trained to handle their parishioners' psychotherapy."[23] And of course, if the pastors are not trained they are not considered qualified. Therefore, the predictable benediction to the litany is: "refer to a professional."

And, just as referral is the offering to the parishioner, it is the so-called answer for the missionary who needs rehabilitation. An article in a conservative Christian magazine recommends the possibility of sending missionaries away from a church to a treatment center "which specializes in missionary restoration."[24] In checking the staff of this restoration-for-missionaries center, we found—you guessed it—professional psychotherapists.

Can you imagine Paul turning to the ideas of men after his first missionary journey, after he had been persecuted and nearly stoned to death? Paul refused to put any confidence in the flesh. Without ever turning again to the philosophies of men and without the benefit of modern-day psychology, Paul rejoiced in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and in the great privilege to serve Him and to suffer for Him.

The number of examples of the referral formula is endless. It would be repetitious and eventually boring to continue adding examples. Everyone knows that the church has become one gigantic referral system. One pastor rightly challenges other pastors by saying:

> We pastors have, like the rest of society, forgotten who we are and what we do. We are

> ministers of the Word. As such, everything we do, including counseling, is to be guided by the Word.
>
> We have confused ourselves with secular counselors and psychologists. We have different goals! Their goal is to see the counselee restored to normalcy as recognized by society. Our goal is to see the counselee restored to a right relationship with God, and then, as a result of that restoration, to see him live as a child of God.[25]

This pastor also says, "Pastors either 'farm out' counseling situations to 'professional counselors' or use secular counseling methods themselves." Then he asks a very important question: "How can we expect our people to see the relevance of God's Word on Sunday morning if we use a different standard during the week?"[26] This type of spiritual schizophrenia elevates the psychological over the theological and therapy over sanctification.

Conservative members of world religions generally do not seek answers to life's problems outside of their faith. Instead, they would look to their families and religious leaders for counsel. Yet, conservative Christians now seek answers from psychotherapists. That this is true is seen in the previous writers quoted as well as others. In a well-known Christian newsletter on cults, a professor of psychology from the University of California in Berkeley, who obviously has excellent academic credentials, was interviewed. She was given center stage in the publication and spoke as an authority in the field of cults.[27] The trouble is that this psychologist, who is a

non-Christian, advocated psychology while explaining some helpful information about cults. All in all, while this article had some valuable observations, psychology came out ahead and Christianity was left behind.

THEOLOGY OR PSYCHOLOGY?

In the past fifty years there really has been a gradual but dramatic shift from a conservative to a liberal view of the Scriptures in the church—**from a theology of life to a psychology of life**. Pastor Ben Patterson admits, "But of late, we evangelicals have out-liberaled the liberals with our self-help books, positive thinking preaching, and success gospels."[28] The psychological way is not limited to the counselor's office; it greatly influences the way Christians think and talk. Psychological ideas are interspersed with Scripture. In most cases those Scriptures that would directly oppose the popular psychological ideas are either forgotten or reinterpreted.

It is obvious that the morals of society and the biblical standards of the church have been strongly influenced by psychology and that much of the moral decay and outright rebellion are directly attributable to the psychological way. This can even more strongly be said of psychological counseling and psychological ideas about mankind. And, as the church has become psychologized, its standards have been compromised.

Professor William Kirk Kilpatrick aptly describes the situation he experienced:

> The point I wish to make here is that religion and psychology had become nearly indis-

> tinguishable for me. Freud and the church fathers, faith in God and faith in human potential, revelation and self-revelation all slid together in an easy companionship. As for God, He began to take shape in my mind along the lines of a friendly counselor of the nondirective school. I never balked at doing His will. His will always coincided with my own.[29]

Later Kilpatrick says:

> It sometimes seems that there is a direct ratio between the increasing number of helpers and the increasing number of those who need help. The more psychologists we have, the more mental illness we get; the more social workers and probation officers, the more crime; the more teachers, the more ignorance.
>
> One has to wonder at it all. In plain language, it is suspicious. We are forced to entertain the possibility that psychology and related professions are proposing to solve problems that they themselves have helped to create. We find psychologists raising people's expectations for happiness in this life to an inordinate level, and then we find them dispensing advice about the mid-life crisis and dying. We find psychologists making a virtue out of self-preoccupation, and then we find them surprised at the increased supply of narcissists. We find psychologists advising the courts that there is no such thing as a bad boy or even a bad adult, and then we find them formulating

> theories to explain the rise in crime. We find psychologists severing the bonds of family life, and then we find them conducting therapy for broken families.[30]

In another book Kilpatrick says that "what psychology gives with the one hand, it takes away with the other."[31]

Kerry Koller, when director of the Center for Christian Studies, asked the following question: "Do psychological theories and therapies see life from an angle that Christians can accept?" He pointed out how psychology "has come to take a central position in man's understanding of himself and the world he lives in."[32] He then talked about how most psychological theories contradict biblical truth. He contended that "One could even argue that it is precisely because of the use of these therapies in Christian settings that Christian ethical norms have gotten considerably weaker."[33] He concluded by saying, "If Christians wholeheartedly accept current psychological theories they will probably take on the values of the surrounding society which psychology embodies."[34] We believe this has already happened.

Two comments from a Christian Booksellers' Association (CBA) convention speak to this point. A book publisher's representative says, "It's one of the most upbeat CBNs I've been to. It's fulfill yourself, do it all, have it all—in a Christian way, of course." Is it possible to fulfill self, do it all, have it all in a Christian way?

A. W. Tozer stressed the inadequacy of what he called "Instant Christianity." He wrote:

> The American genius for getting things done quickly and easily with little concern for quality or permanence has bred a virus that has infected the whole evangelical church in the United States and, through our literature, our evangelists and our missionaries, has spread all over the world.
>
> Instant Christianity came in with the machine age. Men invented machines for two purposes. They wanted to get important work done more quickly and easily than they could do it by hand, and they wanted to get the work over with so they could give their time to pursuits more to their liking, such as loafing or enjoying the pleasures of the world. Instant Christianity now serves the same purposes in religion. It disposes of the past, guarantees the future and sets the Christian free to follow the more refined lusts of the flesh in all good conscience and with a minimum of restraint.[35]

How does this compare with the fellowship of Christ's sufferings into which we are called? How does this fit with Jesus' words?

> If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (Matt. 16:24-25.)

In reference to the CBA convention, one historian-author notes that "evangelical Christians are trying to keep their young people by adapting their faith

to the forms of the majority culture."[36] The majority culture is a psychological culture with (to quote a well-known book) "new rules" and is "searching for self-fulfillment in a world turned upside down."[37]

God's view of man according to the Bible is not compatible with any psychotherapeutic view of man. Nor is the biblical condition of man accepted or promoted by any of the many brands of psychotherapy. **Psychotherapy has attempted to destroy religion where it can and to compromise where it cannot. A supernatural void has resulted, and the need to believe in something has been filled by making a religion out of the ritual of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy has debased and virtually replaced the church's ministry to troubled individuals.** During this time pastors have been devalued and have been intimidated into referring their sheep to professional psychotherapeutic priests. Many people no longer look to pastors and fellow believers for such help; nor do they look to the Bible for spiritual solutions to mental-emotional-behavioral problems.

The cycle of deception is complete. The psychotherapist offers humanity a less demanding, less disciplined, more self-centered substitute for religion, for that is what psychotherapy is; a false solution to mental-emotional-behavioral problems, for that is what the psychological way is; and another god figure, for that is what the psychotherapist has become. Now deceived people flock to this surrogate religion with its unproved ideas and solutions. They flock to the counterfeit high priest and worship at strange altars. People have fallen for the false image

of the psychotherapist priest and for the theology of therapy.

We live in the most ego-enlarged, self-indulged, navel-examined society since the days of Babylon, and the psychological way of dealing with problems of living has been a major source of this self preoccupation. Unless we seek a spiritual understanding (biblical model of man) and a spiritual solution (biblical methodology) in all matters of life and of ministering to one another, we are in serious danger of "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such turn away." (2 Tim. 3:5.)

4

Broken Cisterns or Living Waters?

Twenty-first century idols are more sophisticated than the false gods of the Canaanites and Babylonians. Rather than idols made of wood and stone, modern man makes idols of the mind and heart. By elevating his own conceptions of personhood, purpose, and power for change above what God has already said, man directly or indirectly raises himself to the status of godhood. In his own limited wisdom man has attempted to form a psychological model of mankind in place of the biblical model and a psychological methodology of change and growth in place of sanctification. In other words, **psychologists have contrived ways of explaining man other than the fall, ways of saving man other than the cross, and various ways of transforming man other than through Christ**. The temptation to seek help from sources other than God comes in the same way as Satan enticed Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. The contemporary tree of the knowledge of good and evil contains much psychological

fruit which looks "pleasant to the eyes" and "to be desired to make one wise." (Gen. 3:6.)

Isaiah warned the people about following the teachings of those who have perverted the faith with other ideologies, other vocabularies, other explanations, and other systems of morality:

> Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! (Isaiah 5:20-21.)

There has been a reversal in the meanings of words and phrases. The change is subtle. The word *sin* has been substituted with less convicting words such as *shortcoming, mistake,* or *reaction to past hurt.* Words such as *healed* and *whole* replace *sanctified* and *holy.* In fact, the word *holy* has been redefined to mean some kind of psychological wholeness. What is literal in Scripture often becomes metaphorical for the psychologizers. And what is metaphorical becomes literal.

Light is dark and dark is light, all depending on the psychological ideas that are in vogue. With the advent of Adler and Maslow the self has been elevated so high that if one does not regard himself highly he may be suffering from serious mental problems. Whereas the Bible teaches men to esteem others, psychologizers of Christianity often insist that all must esteem themselves. All kinds of classes both in and out of Christianity have made self-esteem almost the highest virtue of all. Whereas pride has always been a deadly sin in Scripture, the

psychologizers of Christianity have redefined self-centered pride into some kind of compensation for "low self-esteem." The psychologizers of the church would not want anyone to think too poorly of themselves. **But little is said about how highly one is to think of God and of how lowly of mind one should be.**

Although some people repudiate God directly and choose a totally different path to fulfill their desires, others deny God indirectly when they conclude that He is not available or not enough. Although they claim to depend upon God, they add other ways with other philosophies and other gods. In other words, **they claim to know the God of the Bible, but seek help from sources outside of God Himself in matters which are the exclusive domain of God in relationship to the values, attitudes, thoughts, and actions of His children**. They have amalgamated God's ways with the ways of the world.

IDOLATRY IN THE CHURCH?

After Aaron formed the golden calf he announced, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (Exodus 32:4.) Then Aaron said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD." (Exodus 32:5.) Notice that he calls this false god by the name which is translated LORD in the Old Testament. This designation, when in capital letters, was solely used for the God of Israel, Jehovah. In mixing God with other religious ideas and idols, Aaron called a god that was no god by the very name of the God of

Israel. That is the height of amalgamation. One system swallows another.

Exactly the same thing has happened in the church. The psychological systems of theories and therapies have swallowed up the true faith and replaced it with idols of men's minds. The blatant idolatry of Israel is easy to see. But isn't any substitution or addition to the Word of God idolatry? Idolatry is easy to miss when it wears the respectable pseudogarb of science. It is even easier to miss when it is practiced by Christians who honestly want to help others. Those who utilize the systems of psychotherapy do so because they have not found the Bible and the Holy Spirit sufficient. Perhaps they are looking for something easier than complete transformation into the image of Christ. Perhaps they are looking for easy answers or a quick fix. Or, perhaps they are looking to solutions that do not require them to suffer the personal discomfort that comes with change. Perhaps they are not willing to go the true way of the cross. Thus they attempt to enhance the cross with psychology. They have thus turned to "science falsely so-called" (1 Tim. 6:20) and to philosophical structures which are in opposition to the Bible.

THE DOMAIN OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible is the most practical, relevant, and life-changing guide to living. Those who insist on incorporating the theories of men evidently believe that the Bible and the Holy Spirit are not sufficient for life-transforming work. In fact, many of them restrict the Bible exclusively to an explanation of God and as a guide only in what they refer to as "spiritual mat-

ters," **when in fact the psyche or soul and all of its concerns are spiritual matters.**

Psychotherapy intrudes upon some of the most important themes of Scripture: how to know and understand man, why he behaves the way he does, and how to help him change. In the Bible this understanding is given from God's point of view. In fact, true understanding of the human personality only comes through the Holy Spirit and God's Word. Since God is central in the revelation of wisdom, the focus should be on God rather than on self, on theology rather than on psychology. Self-understanding through psychotherapeutic theories and techniques will only lead to error because of the severe limitations of the human heart and mind. To dress these in biblical terminology and call them Christian is to compound the evil.

The overwhelming majority of problems for which people seek professional psychological help are those of marriage, family, personal distress, depression, and addictive behaviors. The Bible addresses all these areas. In fact, the Bible indicates that God is the source of all peace and also works mightily through tribulation.

> Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed

> abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:1-5.)

What psychological system justifies a person before God and gives him peace with God? What psychological system gives the kind of faith in which a person can live by all of God's promises? What psychological system fulfills its promises the way God fulfills His? What psychological system gives the hope of which Paul speaks? What psychological system enables a person to exult in the midst of tribulation? What psychological system increases the kind of perseverance that builds proven character, gives hope, and produces divine love? Throughout the centuries prior to the rise of psychotherapy there has been a multitude of individuals who have suffered from extremely difficult problems of living who have sought God, and they have found Him to be true and faithful. They looked into the Word of God for wisdom and guidance for living with and overcoming the problems of life. The lives of those saints far outshine the lives of such pitiful souls as those who have followed the siren song of psychology.

GOD'S MERCIFUL WARNINGS

Throughout the history of Israel God warned His people about following the customs of the nations around them. He warned them because He loved them and desired His best for them. He particularly warned them about running after false gods and called such idolatry "adultery" because Israel belonged to Him. Israel had developed its own amalgamation of Jehovah, Baal, Ashtoreth, and other gods and goddesses of the surrounding nations.

Israel had picked up the thinking, the philosophies, and the religions of the world. The Israelites sought to combine the best of the pagan practices with the worship of Jehovah. For awhile such amalgamation appeared to work for them. However, embracing pagan practices led them into great suffering. Israel became contaminated again and again. And, each time, the only way back was to turn away from idolatry and to return exclusively to God in their need.

Israel failed when it trusted in the idols of the surrounding nations. In reference to the apostasy of idolatry, The Lord spoke through Jeremiah:

> Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:11-13.)

Psychological counselors and ministers who follow their lead offer psychological systems which have more in common with false religion than with science. They are offering other religions—religions created by fallen, unredeemed men and religions based upon such philosophies as determinism, atheism, agnosticism, secular humanism, gnosticism, and occultism. They are offering the dregs of broken cisterns.

God warned Israel not to trust in mankind, but to trust in God alone.

> Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD…. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. (Jer. 17:5, 7.)

Every psychotherapeutic system puts more trust in the minds and hearts of the theorists than science permits. Nevertheless the contemporary church is trusting in the theories of men and adding them to their understanding of the Bible, when God alone can reveal to us who we are and who we are meant to be in Him.

The amalgamation of psychology and the Bible not only lurks in the therapies of Christians, it has permeated nearly every ministry in the church. We have to wonder if the church is involved in the same kind of amalgamation as the Israelites were. When the Israelites lost sight of God through their own disobedience and hardness of heart, they lost sight of His power and grace to save. God removed Himself from them until they were ready to repent. In the meantime they needed help. Instead of turning back to God they turned to other gods. However, they never quite realized how much they had turned away from God because they generally merged the idols of their minds and hands with their limited concept of God.

For over the past fifty years God's people have been quenching the Holy Spirit by devaluing the Bible and its supreme place in evaluating and transforming a person's mind, will, emotion, and behavior. They have turned to the religions of psychology for answers to the problems of living and provided

psychological help rather than the whole counsel of God. Rather than recognizing the religious nature of psychology, they have mistakenly believed it to be another form of revelation by giving it the status of objective science. In doing so they have relied more on the faulty ideas of men than on the inspired Word of God.

Throughout the entire Old Testament, God called alliances with other religions "adultery." And, in each instance He brought judgment upon His people in the form of national and personal weakness. When under the judgment of God for spiritual adultery, Israel was continually oppressed by the surrounding nations. Only as they repented of their sin and cried out to God for deliverance did God deliver them and revive their strength as a nation.

The church has become weak in the area of the personal lives of its members. More and more Christians are turning to psychological answers for spiritual problems which they have thought to be psychological problems. The psychological way is promoted as "God's truth" in even the most conservative Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries. Only God Himself in His mercy and grace can reverse the tide. And we pray for His mercy and His grace to send a revival which will cleanse the church of the abominations of psychological amalgamations.

Rather than Christians living in such a way as to show forth the life of Christ dwelling within, many are relying on self and psychology rather than on Christ. They deny their faith every time they turn to the religions of psychology for help rather than to the One True God. The divorce rate, the incidents of all kinds of abuse in the home, fornication, and

licentiousness all indicate that something is wrong in the church. **Worldliness has crept in so subtly and profusely that it is difficult to distinguish between the lifestyle of unbelievers and professing Christians.** Many are failing in their personal lives and have been turning to broken cisterns for help rather than repenting and seeking God to forgive and renew His church.

Is it possible that the very profession that claims to hold answers to the problems of living includes some of the false teachers that Peter warned about?

> But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you....
>
> These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge

> of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. (2 Peter 2:1-3, 17-20.)

Many sincere Christians who have desired to serve God and help people have become entangled in psychological ideologies and religions. They have become enslaved by the psychological way and in turn enslave those that they are trying to free. They have fallen into the maze of opinions masquerading as facts and are dragging others along with them.

We are not saying that everyone in the church has gone this far with the psychotherapeutic theories and the baggage of religion that they drag along. We do say many. Unless the church turns back to God as the source of wisdom and direction for living, as the means of help for life's problems, and as the guide for understanding mankind and how a person grows and changes, the church will lose sight of the Living God. The church needs to discard the various psychological world views and operate again from a biblical world view.

Christians and Christianity do not need the theories and therapies of psychological systems. They will not be lost without them. Instead there is a very strong possibility that Christians will become entangled by them. By not standing firm in their faith, Christians can become swallowed up in the secular systems of psychological services.

Peter Schrag sees the helping professions, therapeutic methods, and mental health as national and international means for controlling behavior and

thus controlling society. He introduces his book *Mind Control* with these words:

> In the past generation, there has been a fundamental shift in the way government and other organizations control the lives and behavior of individuals.... In general, it is a shift from direct to indirect methods of control, from the punitive to the therapeutic, from the moralistic to the mechanistic, from the hortatory to the manipulative. More specifically, it is reflected in the replacement of overt and sometimes crude techniques—threat, punishment, or incarceration—with relatively "smooth" methods: psychotropic drugs; Skinnerian behavior modification; aversive conditioning; electronic surveillance; and the collection, processing, and use of personal information to institutionalize people outside the walls of institutions.[1]

Through government social agencies it is possible to extend intervention (control) to millions of people. In many instances, personal problems are no longer dealt with in a private way. They are becoming areas of public domain and imposed help. Persons may be required or intimidated to involve themselves in some kind of therapy "for their own good" and become locked into a system of external control. Schrag says:

> Impositions before or which had been possible only within closed institutions now become possible in the community at large. The vision is a kind of sanitized social efficiency; its lan-

> guage is clinical; its most important symbol is mental health.[2]

All such methods lead to greater government intervention and control in personal affairs. He goes on to reveal the secular humanistic myth that man can make himself and his society good.

> At the heart of the change lies a transcendent faith that with the proper environment or the proper methods, any individual can be reshaped, reformed, or at the very least, controlled with psychological or chemical methods, and alongside that faith, the chemical, mechanistic, behavioristic view of man that sustains it.[3]

Such a social climate may appear very humane. However, freedoms are taken away without due process of law for the so-called benefit of individuals: to change their thinking, belief system, and behavior—all to what would be socially acceptable to those who are in charge. Although it may not seem at all serious right now, the implications of psycho-social interventions are mind boggling.

Dr. Philip Zimbardo, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, in writing about George Orwell's book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* says,

> The most telling of Orwell's predictions are to be found not in the heavy-handed practices of the Ministry of Justice, but in the treatment programs of the Ministry of Love.

As an illustration from Orwell, Zimbardo quotes the following:

> The party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them.

Zimbardo confesses:

> The current practitioners in our Ministry of Love come from the ranks of the mental health establishment (psychiatry and my own field, psychology), social welfare agencies, education and business.[4]

All of these systems attempt to do what only Jesus can do: save souls, transform the heart, make a person righteous before God. Nevertheless the church is following the Pied Pipers of secular humanism, atheism, and determinism under the colors of science.

How did the church go wrong in the matter of its own psychologizing? It all began by accepting the psychological definitions of life's problems. It proceeded to using psychological diagnostic terms and then resulted in psychological solutions. **We need to restore biblical definitions to life's problems and use biblical terms so that we can provide biblical solutions.**

Confusion arises when mental-emotional-behavioral problems are dealt with from a psychological rather than, or in addition to, a spiritual perspective. To attempt to combine the biblical truth that mankind is born in sin with a model that says, "Man is intrinsically good" (Rogers), or "Man begins from a position of I'm Not OK-You're OK" (Harris), or "Human love and human worthwhileness are man's

greatest needs" (Glasser), or any other humanly contrived model, will bring confusion and distortion.

The Bible clearly states that man's condition is fallen until he is redeemed by Jesus to live by the indwelling Holy Spirit in relationship to God the Father. To develop a model of man with explanations such as primal anxiety, need for transcendence, or cosmic loneliness is to avoid the sin question and thereby to miss the only lasting means of restoration: the death and resurrection of Christ. Mankind's condition is not due to the birth process (Otto Rank), nor from early "psychosexual stages of development" (Sigmund Freud), nor from the "primal pool of pain" (Arthur Janov). Nor is it due to any of the other hundreds of guesses and opinions of men about man. Problems of living are basically spiritual because in some way they involve the fallen or redeemed condition of man. And the way to meet those problems is spiritual.[5]

We need to dare to believe that the Word of God ministered by the Holy Spirit through one who has been transformed by the cross of Christ to one who will receive it is a more powerful way to minister than any psychological therapy administered by the most highly educated and trained psychotherapists. We need to double dare to believe that this is the only way to deal with problems of living.

James Turner, in his book *Without God, Without Creed,* shows how the culture influences the faith. He says:

> In trying to adapt their religious beliefs to socioeconomic change, to new moral chal-

> lenges, to novel problems of knowledge, to the tightening standards of science, the defenders of God slowly strangled Him.[6]

Adapting the Christian message to the culture actually changes the message. Adapting the Christian message to psychological theories and therapies has changed the message from the cross to the couch.

One therapist who has repudiated his psychological training wrote to us and said:

> My experience has been that the major obstacle to establishing Scriptural, spiritual counseling is not from psychotherapy professionals ... but from churches themselves. Pastors and laymen enamored with the psychological way back away from any suggestion that the Word of God, ministered through an untrained person, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is sufficient for all nonorganic problems presented in counseling. As my unbelief in the psychological way has grown, I feel I've been running against the current of contemporary Christian thought.[7]

Rather than turning to the unproven, unsubstantiated, unnecessary, unscientific, often conflicting psychological systems of understanding the meaning of life, the measure of man, or the means of transformation, the church needs to pray for a revival. The church needs to listen to God's instruction:

> If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways;

> then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chron. 7:14.)

The entire church must follow this instruction, for if one member is hurting, the whole body is affected. The reaching out in love to one another in times of crisis must be undergirded by seeking God. And although there are some in the church who faithfully pray for revival, too many are caught up in a psychological world view to turn to the one true source of help. When true revival comes, instigated and fulfilled by the Holy Spirit, the church will be cleansed. Then Christians will not even be interested in psychology Their eyes will be opened to the Lord of life and the indwelling Holy Spirit so much that the high pronouncements of psychology will appear as dung. The real thing will easily replace the false when revival comes.

The revival of the Holy Spirit will be characterized by deep conviction and a renewed realization of Jesus Christ in every area of life. He will be recognized as the answer and the source, the Lord and Savior of every aspect of life.

> Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my

thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace…. (Isaiah 55: 6-12.)

5

History of Psychotherapy

The origin of psychological theories and methods of counseling reaches back beyond Freud to Franz Anton Mesmer (1733-1815). Mesmer believed that he had discovered the great universal cure of both physical and emotional problems. In 1779 he announced, "There is only one illness and one healing."[1] Mesmer presented the idea that an invisible fluid was distributed throughout the body. He called the fluid "animal magnetism" and believed that it influenced illness or health in both the mental-emotional and the physical aspects of life. He considered this fluid to be an energy existing throughout nature. He taught that proper health and mental well-being came from the proper distribution and balance of the animal magnetism throughout the body.

Mesmer's ideas may sound rather foolish from a scientific point of view. However, they were well received by many at the time. Furthermore, as they were modified they formed much of the basis for present-day psychotherapy. The most important modification of mesmerism was getting rid of the

magnets. Through a series of progressions, the animal magnetism theory **moved from the place of the physical affect of magnets to the psychological effects of mind over matter**. Thus the awkward passing of magnets across the body of a person sitting in a tub of water was eliminated.

Mesmerism, as it is called, became psychological rather than physical with patients moving into trance-like states. Furthermore, some of the subjects of mesmerism moved into deeper states of consciousness and spontaneously engaged in telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance.[2] Gradually mesmerism evolved into an entire view of life. **Mesmerism presented a new way of healing people through conversation with an intense rapport between a practitioner and his subject.** Some of those involved in medicine used mesmerism in their investigation of supposed unseen reservoirs of potential for healing within the mind. According to Robert Fuller, in his book *Mesmerism and the American Cure of Souls*:

> The mesmerists had ushered in a new era in the American cure of souls. They were the first to popularize psychological ideas as a resource for religious self-understanding. In an age in which many hungered for nontraditional sources of spiritual edification, they helped make human consciousness itself a medium through which to glimpse the divine.[3]

The theories and practices of mesmerism greatly influenced the up-and-coming field of psychiatry with such early men as Jean Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet, and Sigmund Freud. These men used

information gleaned from patients in the hypnotic state.[4] The followers of Mesmer promoted the ideas of hypnotic suggestion, healing through talking, and mind-over-matter. **Thus, the three main thrusts of Mesmer's influence were hypnosis, psychotherapy, and positive thinking.**

Although hypnosis had been used for centuries in various occultic activities, including medium trances, Mesmer and his followers attempted to bring it into the respectable realm of Western medicine. And, with the shift in emphasis from the physical manipulation of magnets to so-called psychological powers hidden in the depths of the mind, mesmerism moved from the physical to the psychological and spiritual. As the practice of mesmerism moved from the heart of Europe to America it evolved from concentration on the body to the mind and from bodily manipulation to conversation, because the mind was considered to be the gateway to healing. This seemingly minor change made a dramatic difference. **This was the beginning of conversation as the medium of cure and problem centeredness as the method of cure, thus the beginnings of psychotherapy.**

Mesmerism incited much interest in America as a Frenchman by the name of Charles Poyen lectured and conducted exhibitions during the 1830's. Audiences were impressed with the feats of mesmerism because hypnotized subjects would spontaneously exercise clairvoyance and mental telepathy. While under the spell, subjects could also experience and report deeper levels of consciousness in which they would feel utter unity with the universe beyond the confines of space and time. Furthermore, they

would give apparent supernatural information and diagnose diseases telepathically. This led people to believe that great untapped powers of the mind were available to them.[5]

The thrust of mesmerism also changed directions in America.[6] Fuller describes how it promised great psychological and spiritual advantages. Its promises for self improvement, spiritual experience, and personal fulfillment were especially welcomed by unchurched individuals. Fuller says that mesmerism offered "an entirely new and eminently attractive arena for self-discovery—their own psychological depths."[7] Fuller's description of mesmerism in America is an accurate portrayal of twentieth-century psychotherapy. He says, "Mesmerism was the first psychological system to provide individuals with curative services that have traditionally been classified under the rubric cure of souls."[8] Fuller notes that mesmerism was the precursor, not only to psychotherapy, but also hypnosis and New Thought.

The users of mesmerism did not suspect the occultic connections of hypnosis. Both the practitioners and subjects believed that hypnosis revealed untapped reservoirs of human possibility and powers. They believed that these powers could be used to understand the self, attain perfect health, develop supernatural gifts, and reach spiritual heights. Thus, the goal and impetus for discovering and developing human potential grew out of mesmerism and stimulated the growth and expansion of psychotherapy, positive thinking, the human potential movement, and the mind-science religions.

Mesmer's far reaching influence gave an early impetus to scientific-sounding religious alternatives

to Christianity. And he started the trend of medicalizing religion into treatment and therapy. Nevertheless, he only gave the world false religion and false hope. Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry Thomas Szasz describes Mesmer's influence this way:

> Insofar as psychotherapy as a modern "medical technique" can be said to have a discoverer, Mesmer was that person. Mesmer stands in the same sort of relation to Freud and Jung as Columbus stands in relation to Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Columbus stumbled onto a continent that the founding fathers subsequently transformed into the political entity known as the United States of America. Mesmer stumbled onto the literalized use of the leading scientific metaphor of his age for explaining and exorcising all manner of human problems and passions, a rhetorical device that the founders of modern depth psychology subsequently transformed into the pseudomedical entity known as psychotherapy.[9]

Szasz describes the dramatic and historic change in the 18th and 19th centuries that preceded the rise of psychotherapy in his book *The Myth of Psychotherapy*:

> With the decline of religion and the growth of science in the eighteenth century, the cure of (sinful) souls, which had been an integral part of the Christian religions, was recast as the

> cure of (sick) minds, and became an integral part of medical science."[10]

The words *sinful* and *sick* are his and mark the dramatic shift from the cure of souls to the cure of minds. For many, it also was a dramatic shift from the sufficiency of Scripture (cure of souls) to the wisdom of man (cure of minds).

SIGMUND FREUD

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) furthered the idea of conversation being the medium of cure and problem-centeredness being the method of mind cure in the 19th and 20th centuries. Szasz says that Freud "defined listening and talking—that is, conversation as therapy."[11] Szasz refers to the conversation of psychotherapy as "rhetoric." He says:

> In plain language, what do patient and psychotherapist actually do? They speak and listen to each other. What do they speak about? Narrowly put, the patient speaks about himself, and the therapist speaks about the patient. In a broader sense, however, both also speak about other persons and about various matters of concern to their lives. The point is that each tries to move the other to see or do things in a certain way. That is what qualifies their actions as fundamentally rhetorical. If the psychotherapist and his patient were not rhetoricians, they could not engage in the activity we now conventionally call *psychotherapy*.[12]

Thus problem-centered psychotherapy has Mesmeric and Freudian origins, and, though it has gone through up to almost 500 varieties, it still exists essentially as rhetoric as remedy and conversation as therapy.

This rhetoric as remedy and conversation as therapy became professionalized and placed in the hands of these new (at the time) practitioners. Those who followed eventually needed to become educated and licensed. It was a milestone in the history of psychology, and now this problem-centered talk therapy has been fully accepted in both the world and the church. These psychological sorcerers of the soul now set the standards for solutions of the soul—solutions that have not only been wholeheartedly embraced but also practiced and expected in the church.

Mesmer set the pattern for conversation as the medium of cure and problem-centeredness as the method of cure, which Freud continued on. E.M. Thornton in *The Freudian Fallacy* says:

> Probably no single individual has had a more profound effect on twentieth-century thought than Sigmund Freud. His works have influenced psychiatry, anthropology, social work, penology, and education and provided a seemingly limitless source of material for novelists and dramatists … for better or worse he has changed the face of society. The vocabulary of psychoanalysis has passed into the language of everyday life. Freud himself has been described as a genius of the stature of Newton, Einstein, Darwin, and Copernicus.[13]

It is also said of Freud that:

> His ideas about dreams, religion, creativity and the unconscious motivations underlying all human behavior are so pervasive that it would be difficult to imagine twentieth-century thought without them.[14]

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Christian faith and the authority of the Bible were being challenged by a combination of factors: It was not only Freudian theories of a powerful unconscious driving behavior, but also the rising popularity of Darwinian evolution (1809-1882). Then, because of seeming contradictions between science and the Bible and seeming contradictions in the Bible itself, many Christians adjusted their faith to accommodate those seeming contradictions, not because of Freud and Darwin, but because of the response of religious leaders.

James Turner, in his book *Without God, Without Creed*, deals with how disbelief in God became an option for millions of Americans. He says it wasn't because of Darwinism, scientific naturalism, industrialization, urbanization, and technological changes in themselves, but rather because of the response of religious leaders to these developments. Turner says not to blame "Charles Darwin but his adversary, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, not the godless Robert Ingersoll but the godly Beecher family."[15]

TWENTIETH CENTURY

Counseling therapy continued to expand through psychiatry. Freud and other such individuals as Carl Jung and Alfred Adler represented popular psychological approaches. However, because these thera-

pies were very intensive and very expensive and because they required meeting 3-5 times a week with a medical doctor, they involved only a small number of individuals who could afford the time and money. The field of clinical psychology was developed in colleges and universities around 1950. This relatively new field later produced degreed individuals who would become licensed and offer a shorter, therefore less expensive, means of dealing with problems of living.

FOLLOW THE MONEY

After World War II the federal government invested heavily in universities to produce therapists primarily for returning veterans. These additional monies along with private foundation grants were used in universities to expand the departments in order to train individuals to conduct therapy.

Prior to the 1950s, psychology programs emphasized scientific research and had little interest in preparing students for careers in psychotherapy. However, the psychological practitioners gained control of the American Psychological Association (APA) and of academic psychology departments through grants (federal, state, and private) for the psychology departments to train psychotherapists. Moreover, the psychology departments got more students because people could make money in this new-found profession as psychotherapists. As both the burgeoning psychology departments training these psychological counselors and the newly trained counselors began to reap financial profits from the business of

counseling, the clinicians (psychological counselors) became more powerful in the APA.

To demonstrate how weak the clinical psychology movement was at its beginning: "In 1970, the president of the APA, George Albee, Ph.D., was quoted in *Psychology Today* as predicting the death of clinical psychology (out of which come psychotherapists) in his presidential address, 'The Short Unhappy Life of Clinical Psychology: Rest in Peace.'"[16] Pardon the pun, but he was dead wrong. It was in the 1970s that the clinical psychology programs greatly expanded. Students became greatly interested in this burgeoning new field, which promised self-knowledge and a means of making a living.

The book titled *The Practice of Psychology: The Battle for Professionalism* begins with the fact that "The independent provision of psychological services was virtually nonexistent prior to and during World War II."[17] It reveals that "most psychology departments tended to look down on applied practitioners, feeling that the 'true psychologist' was the one functioning in an academic setting."[18]

Ellen Herman, in her book *The Romance of American Psychology*, describes the rise of psychological counseling in America. She says:

> Throughout the entire postwar era, the United States has trained and employed more psychological experts, per capita, than any other country in the world.... Before World War II, professional healers and counselors were few; most individuals allied with psychology did work unrelated to "helping."[19]

Herman describes the omnipresence of psychology as having "seeped into virtually every facet of existence," but she says, "that does not mean that it has always been there or that what experts say has always mattered as much as it matters today."[20]

Aside from individual meetings and brief advice giving, this problem-centered professional counseling mania did not exist in or out of the church prior to World War II. At the same time problem-centered counseling came in, the bar was lowered as to what constitutes problems that should lead to counseling. The bar was first lowered in society through problem-centered counseling and then some years later the church followed suit. The bar that was lowered was what problems constitute a need for counseling for Christians.

In Chapter One of our book *Stop Counseling! Start Ministering!* we reveal how the privacy of private lives became public and how the therapeutic mentality became ubiquitous throughout America. Early marriage education classes prior to World War II mandated a move from lives being private to a need to reveal as much as possible about one's personal life, thoughts, and relationships in order to be helped. **It was primarily women who sought the help.** During the post-World War II era women's magazines carried and conveyed a so-called necessity to express publicly what had previously been unexpressed and private. Also during the pre-war and early post-war periods the psychotherapeutic gospel, in which private lives are made public to the counselor, was the leaven being infused into marriage education and women's magazines that eventually came to full loaf with licensed therapists and

the therapeutic gospel permeating all of society and even the church. The sinful problem-centeredness began with the psychological counseling movement after World War II and was later adopted by the biblical counseling movement.

Alongside the post-World War II counseling movement came the almost simultaneous arrival of the media-driven exposure of personal lives becoming publicly proclaimed and drastically displayed in new and unprecedented ways. While men and women are both guilty of the publicizing of private lives, **men were instrumental in initiating such exposure in therapy, but women are primarily responsible for its current popularity and expansion**. **Counseling is essentially a female friendly activity, largely loathed by men as counselees with women currently being the large majority of both the counselors and counselees**

FROM THE SPIRITUAL TO THE FLESHLY

With the rise of affluence after World War II, there was a shift from interest in the supernatural (spiritual) to the natural (fleshly) and from the eternal to the here and now. Instead of seeing the trials and tribulations of life as challenges to faith as a normal part of the Christian experience and even as something to build endurance while looking ahead to a blessed eternity with God, there was an increased desire to seek present happiness through counseling. This also impacted the church where there was a shift from dependence upon God to a dependence upon self to deal with the trials of life. The wisdom of men became the standard of change, and counsel-

ing became the means to accomplish happiness here and now. In order to attain here and now happiness, people seek to have the normal twists and trials of life adjusted through problem-centered counseling. Thus the bar was not just lowered, but practically eliminated, when it came to what problems are fair game for the counselor's office.

In her chapter on "The Growth Industry," Herman describes how psychotherapy (problem-centered counseling) grew from treating those with extreme mood disorders to individuals who did not think of themselves as "mentally ill," but wanted what they regarded as the benefits of treatment. Herman concludes the chapter on growth with a section titled "Psychotherapy for the Normal as a Postwar Growth Industry." At the end of it she says:

> Each of the developments described in this chapter expanded psychology's jurisdiction applying the theories and technologies of clinical expertise to more people in more places for more reasons than before.... Strengthening feelings of human connection and identification, struggling to adjust, gain insight, and become fully human—these were gradually transformed into important social goals as well as widespread individual preoccupations during the postwar decades.[21]

Herman later says, **"As a result, psychological help was defined so broadly that everyone needed it."**[22] (Bold added.) In the last half of the 20th century the supposed need for psychological counseling and the practice of counseling psychology accelerated rapidly.

Problem-centered psychological counseling was first embraced by those Christians who became educated to be teachers or licensed practitioners and then embraced by those in the newly formed biblical counseling movement. **The activity of conversation as therapy and rhetoric as remedy is promulgated through problem-centered counseling, which is now the standard outside and inside the church; it is the standard in both psychological and biblical counseling.**[23]

Sketching the history of the rise of counseling psychology and its importance throughout America, Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld said, "It is probably not unfair to say that it [counseling psychology] has become as important as the tenets of Christianity once were."[24] Few will admit it, but in practice this is true throughout much of the church. And those in biblical counseling often mimic those in the psychological counseling movement with the same fixation on problem-centeredness and a whole panorama of problems never before considered worthy of such personalized attention in the church.

Prior to World War II whoever thought of discussing problems as they are currently discussed in problem-centered counseling, and whoever knew that the most mundane aspects of life, never before regarded as worthy to be aired, would be the subjects of such conversations? For example, such "important" problem-centered marriage counseling topics as the husband "does not pick up his socks" and the wife's "failure to serve meals that please."[25] Eliminating talking about such trivial problems of living that have been magnified beyond significance by a self-centered, self-indulgent society seeking present-

life, personal happiness would extinguish much of the plethora of problem-centered conversations.

UNIFORM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Many higher educational systems in the U.S., both secular and Christian, educate with psychological licenses in view. In 1965 the University of California (UC) with nine campuses and the California State Universities (CSU) with 19 campuses graduated only eight doctoral clinical psychologists. The estimate for the following year was only four graduates. The UC and CSU together comprise one of the largest university complexes in the world.[26] However, in the last half of the 20th century the practice of psychological counseling accelerated rapidly.

A little over fifty years ago in the US there was no state licensing, no insurance reimbursements (less than forty years ago), no uniform graduate programs, and no Bible college, Christian university, or seminary programs promoting psychotherapy. In California psychologists were first licensed in 1958 and Marriage and Family therapists in 1964. All fifty states now have licensing.

SHIFT IN CONFIDENCE (PAST 50 YEARS IN THE CHURCH)

During the past fifty years there has been a dramatic shift in confidence on the part of Christians—away from the sufficiency of God's Word for problems of living and towards man's psychological wisdom.

After WWII, materialism and affluence led to selfism and the breakdown of the nuclear family. During the 1960s the mental health associations began sponsoring meetings for dialog between local psychological therapists and pastors. Psychotherapists convinced pastors that they were not qualified to handle the hard cases and thus needed to refer people to the psychotherapists.

With the field of psychological counseling exploding and pastors beginning to refer their flocks to professional therapists came the great "psychological awakening" of evangelical Christianity. If pastors must send their flocks to professional psychotherapists, then there was a crying need for Christians to become trained in psychology and psychiatry. After all, pastors did not want to send their people to "godless" psychologists and psychiatrists, who might not appreciate Christianity. Thus began the era of so-called Christian psychology.

Some of the precursors of the rising tide of popularity of psychotherapy among Christians were Paul Tournier, Clyde Narramore, Henry Brandt, James Dobson, and a whole host of other popular Christians. Among the early academic institutions to promote it are Fuller Seminary (APA approved in 1972), Rosemead Graduate School (at Biola University), Wheaton College, George Fox University and later Liberty University and Regent University. Following these beginnings, many thousands of Christians became trained to do psychotherapy and hundreds of Christian educational institutions became immersed in this type of psychology, so much so that much of the church in America has become a major part of the psychological society. Today psychology

is one of the most popular majors in U. S. Christian higher education.

From the influence of Mesmer to the popularity of Freud and his psychotherapy followers after World War II came the psychological seduction of Christianity that has engulfed conservative churches, parachurch organizations, Bible colleges, Christian schools and universities, seminaries, and mission agencies. **The present-day church has strained at many theological gnats but swallowed the camel of psychotherapy to such an extent that the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life has been overlooked for "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."** (1 Tim. 6:20.)

6

Psychotherapy Is Pseudoscience

> O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen. (1 Tim. 6:20-21.)

Men and women of God seek wisdom and knowledge both from the written revelation of Scripture and from the physical world. Paul contends that everyone is accountable before God because of God's evidence of Himself in creation:

> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

And David sang:

> The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. (Psalms 19:1.)

As Christians examine the universe, their faith in a God who is both creator and sustainer will cause them to see regularities and consistent patterns. Therefore, scientific study and discovery can be very useful in many walks of life. **However, we begin by bluntly saying that counseling theories, methodologies, and techniques are not science.** We have written much about this[1] and, based on the work of distinguished individuals, have concluded that these constitute *pseudoscience*, which the dictionary defines as "a system of theories, assumptions, and methods erroneously regarded as scientific."[2] Pseudoscience or pseudoscientism uses the scientific label to protect and promote opinions that are neither provable nor refutable, which is required to qualify as a science. One science writer contends that:

> … there exists in psychology no systematic body of laws or principles, no basic units of analysis, and not even a commonly accepted methodology for investigating behavior from which credible deductions about the unobservable events could be made.[3]

Think about it. What tangible, observable, measurable basic units of the mind are there? Certainly none that have been accepted by the scientific community. Our reason for quoting researchers is because therapists, according to Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld, "tend to forget unsuccessful cases or pretend they weren't failures."[4] Zilbergeld also says, "Therapists rarely have systematically collected and controlled information about their own cases from which to draw

reliable conclusions about effectiveness."[5] He says, "Very few therapists do any follow up evaluations."[6]

Researcher Dr. Dorothy Tennov says, "A recent review of psychotherapy research revealed that in twenty-five years, only fifteen studies had employed a private practice setting."[7]

In an article titled "Psychabuse," the author compares the results of research with the actual practice of psychotherapists. He gives examples of discrepancies between what therapists do and what scientific research reveals. He refers to these differences as abuses, thus the name of the article. He concludes by saying, "One distressing conclusion that can be drawn from all of these abuses is that psychotherapists don't care much for results or for science."[8]

The point we are making is that private practice therapists generally do not do research and when they do, it is not generally reliable. We stress this point because Christian professional counselors who write books and speak refer to their own personal approaches as if they are successful, when, as a matter of fact, either unreliable research or no research has been conducted to indicate the efficacy of their work. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the academic researchers instead of accepting the testimonies of Christian professional counselors, unless backed up by reliable research. That is one reason why we quote research in our work.

Scientists develop theories based on what they observe. Then they examine each theory with rigorous tests to see if it accurately describes reality. The scientific method works well in observing and recording physical data and in reaching conclusions which form the theories. Therefore, scholars who desire to

study human nature hope to be able to apply the scientific method to observe, record, and treat human behavior. They figure that if people could be studied in a scientific manner there would be more accuracy in understanding present behavior, in predicting future behavior, and in altering behavior through some kind of scientific intervention.

While some psychology utilizes the scientific method, the one part of the total discipline of psychology that is riddled with pseudoscience is that of psychotherapy. If psychotherapy had established itself as a science, there would be some consensus in the field regarding mental-emotional-behavioral problems and how to treat them. Instead, the field continues to expand with contradictory theories and techniques, all of which communicate confusion rather than anything approximating scientific order.

Psychotherapy continues to proliferate with its growing number of conflicting explanations of human beings and their behavior. Psychologist Roger Mills, in his article "Psychology Goes Insane, Botches Role as Science," says:

> The field of psychology today is literally a mess. There are as many techniques, methods and theories around as there are researchers and therapists. I have personally seen therapists convince their clients that all of their problems come from their mothers, the stars, their bio-chemical make-up, their diet, their life-style and even the "kharma" from their past lives.[9]

Instead of knowledge being added to knowledge with more recent discoveries resting on a body of solid information, one system contradicts another, one set of opinions is exchanged for another, and one set of techniques replaces another.

Psychotherapy changes along with current cultural trends. An accumulation of about 500 separate systems, each claiming superiority, should discourage anyone from thinking that so many diverse opinions could be scientific or even factual. **Psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies are amassed in confusion, with their pseudoknowledge and pseudotheories resulting in pseudoscience**

AN ELUSIVE DREAM

The dream of a scientific study of human nature and a scientific method of treating unacceptable behavior was most alluring. The hoped-for science of behavior promised much to those who had been struggling to unravel the vast complexities of individual personalities in equally complex circumstances. Thus, through study and imagination, psychologists pursued the dream of discovering scientific methods of observing, explaining, and transforming human behavior.

Clinical psychology and its active arm of psychotherapy have indeed adopted the scientific posture. However, from a strictly scientific point of view they have not been able to meet the requirements. In attempting to evaluate the status of psychology, the American Psychological Association appointed Sigmund Koch to plan and direct a study which was subsidized by the National Science Foundation. This

study involved eighty eminent scholars in assessing the facts, theories, and methods of psychology. The results of this extensive endeavor were then published in a seven volume series entitled *Psychology: A Study of a Science*.[10] Koch describes the delusion from which people have been suffering in thinking about psychology as a science:

> *The hope* of a psychological science became indistinguishable from the *fact* of psychological science. The entire subsequent history of psychology can be seen as a ritualistic endeavor to emulate the forms of science in order to sustain the delusion that it already *is* a science.[11] (Italics his.)

Koch says: "Throughout psychology's history as 'science,' *the hard* knowledge it has deposited has been uniformly negative."[12] (Italics his.) He contends that much of psychology is not a cumulative or progressive discipline in which knowledge is added to knowledge. Rather, what is discovered by one generation "typically disenfranchises the theoretical fictions of the past." Instead of refining and specifying larger generalizations of the past, psychologists are busy replacing them. He adds, "I think it by this time utterly and finally clear that ***psychology cannot be a coherent science***."[13] (Italics his, bold added.) Koch suggests, "As the beginning of a therapeutic humility, we might re-christen *psychology* and speak instead of *the psychological studies*."[14] (Italics his.)

Koch would certainly criticize psychotherapy for living under "the delusion that it already *is* a science" when it is not.[15] And, he would certainly confirm

that psychotherapy "cannot be a coherent science." One reason why psychotherapy cannot legitimately be called a coherent science is because it attempts to deal with deep human complexities that cannot be directly observed or consistently predicted. Furthermore, the therapist and client are each individually unique and their interaction lends an additional dimension of variability. When one adds time and changing circumstances, it is no wonder that the therapeutic relationship escapes the rigors of science.

In considering the dilemma between science and personal individuality, Dr. Gordon Allport says:

> The Individual, whatever else he may be, is an internally consistent and unique organization of bodily and mental processes. But since he is unique, science finds him an embarrassment. Science, it is said, deals only with broad, preferably universal, laws…. Individuality **cannot** be studied by science, but only by history, art, or biography.[16] (Bold added.)

We could add, the individual not only escapes the formulas of science, but also defies the descriptions of literature. Nevertheless, if one must choose between the two, it appears that literature has more ably revealed human beings. Language describes the complexities of individuality far better than formulas. Language and literature, rather than personality theories and psychotherapy, better portray human nature and provide a glimpse into the depths of the soul, but it is the Bible that best portrays and gives accurate truth about mankind.

SCIENCE OR OPINION?

Psychological statements which describe human behavior or which report results of research can be scientific. **However, when we move from describing human behavior to explaining it and particularly changing it, we move from science to opinion.** An example of this difference is found in the phenomenon called the *Stockholm syndrome.*

The Stockholm syndrome sometimes occurs when persons are taken hostage in bank robberies. Under these circumstances, some captives identify with and desire to protect their captors. Captives sometimes fear the police more than they fear the robbers and have been known to become voluntary shields for their captors to protect them from being shot by the police. SWAT teams are aware that certain captives cannot be counted on for help and that some hostages will oppose the police who are trying to save them.

Such a description of human behavior under adverse circumstances may be factual. Captives sometimes do behave in ways just described.[17] However, the explanations of this behavior are opinions and vary from one "expert" to another. An FBI report explains the behavior in this way:

> The Stockholm syndrome is viewed by this author as regression to a more elementary level of development than is seen in the five-year-old who identifies with a parent. The five-year old is able to feed himself, speak for himself and has locomotion. The hostage is more like the infant who must cry for food, cannot speak and may be bound.

> The infant is blessed with a mother figure who sees to his needs. As these needs are satisfactorily met by the mother figure, the child begins to love this person who is protecting him from the outside world. So it is with the hostage—his extreme dependence, his every breath a gift from the subject. He is now as dependent as he was as an infant; the controlling, all-powerful adult is again present; the outside world is threatening once again.... So the behavior that worked for the dependent infant surfaces again as a coping device, a defense mechanism, to lead the way to survival.[18]

The writer of the FBI report presents only one of many possible explanations of the phenomenon. The *description* of this syndrome to the extent that it is accurate is factual, but the *explanation* is merely opinion. **Whenever we move from what happens in human behavior to why it happened, and especially how to change human behavior, we move from science to conjecture.**

The move from description to prescription is a move from objectivity to opinion. And such opinion about human behavior presented as truth or scientific fact is merely pseudoscience. It rests upon false premises (opinions, guesses, subjective explanations) and leads to false conclusions.

PSEUDOSCIENCE

As we said earlier, psychotherapy is riddled with pseudoscience. If psychotherapy had succeeded as a science, then there would be some consensus in the

field regarding mental-emotional-behavioral problems and how to treat them.

This question of scientific and pseudoscientific theories intrigued Sir Karl Popper, who is considered one of the greatest philosophers of science. As Popper investigated the differences between physical theories, such as Newton's theory of gravity and Einstein's theory of relativity, and theories about human behavior, he began to suspect that the psychologies underlying the psychotherapies could not truly be considered scientific.[19]

Although such theories **seem** to be able to explain or interpret behavior, they rely on subjective interpretations. Even the claims of clinical observation cannot be considered objective or scientific, because they are merely interpretations based on the theories familiar to the observer.[20] These theories depend upon confirmation rather than testability. If one is looking for verifications or confirmations, they can be found with every psychotherapeutic theory. But, the person who is trying to test a theory will try to disprove it.

Popper says: "Every genuine *test* of a theory is an attempt to falsify it, or to refute it"[21] (italics in original); and, "Confirming evidence should not count *except when it is the result of a genuine test of the theory.*"[22] (Italics his.) Furthermore, Popper declares that psychological theories formulated by Freud, Adler, and others, "**though posing as sciences, had in fact more in common with primitive myths than with science; that they resembled astrology rather than astronomy**."[23] (Bold added.) He also says, "These theories describe some facts, but in the manner of myths. They contain most

interesting psychological suggestions, but not in a testable form."[24]

Other researchers echo the same conclusions. Research psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey, in his book *The Mind Game*, says, "The techniques used by Western psychiatrists are, with few exceptions, on exactly the same scientific plane as the techniques used by witchdoctors."[25]

Dr. Adolf Grünbaum, a distinguished professor of philosophy and research, levels extensive criticism at *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis*, which is the title of his book. Based on his writings, it is obvious he would condemn the psychological foundations of psychotherapy and would not regard them as scientific theories.[26]

In a book titled *The Sorcerer's Apprentice,* Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, a professor of psychology, reveals "that the apprenticeship of psychology to natural science ... does not work."[27]

Psychiatrist Lee Coleman titled his book about psychiatry *The Reign of Error*. In this book he demonstrates that "psychiatry does not deserve the legal power it has been given" and that "psychiatry is not a science."[28] He says:

> I have testified in over one hundred and thirty criminal and civil trials around the country, countering the authority of psychiatrists or psychologists hired by one side or the other. In each case I try to educate the judge or jury about why the opinions produced by these professionals have no scientific merit.[29]

Now as never before, the status of psychotherapy as science has been questioned. However, psy-

chotherapists persistently claim to operate under scientific principles and consider themselves solidly scientific. Research psychiatrist Dr. Jerome Frank says that most psychotherapists "share the American faith in science. They appeal to science to validate their methods just as religious healers appeal to God."[30]

"ALL TRUTH IS GOD'S TRUTH"?

In spite of this hodgepodge of unscientific opinions and contradictions, those of us who believe Christians should not integrate secular counseling psychologies with the Bible are often dismissed with such shibboleths as "all truth is God's truth," when, in fact, the kind of psychology we are opposed to is made up of opinions and myths, rather than truth. They use this statement to support their use of psychology, but they are not clear about what God's truth is. Is God's truth Freudian pronouncements of obsessive neurosis? Or is God's truth Jung's structure of archetypes? Or is God's truth Rogers's ideas on human love? Or is God's truth the behaviorism of B. F Skinner? Or is God's truth Ellis's Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy?

Psychotherapy, as well as many religions, will include elements of truth. Even Satan's temptation of Eve included both truth and a lie. The enticement of the "All truth is God's truth" fallacy is that there is some similarity between the biblical teachings and the psychological ideas. Similarities do not make psychology compatible with Christianity. They merely indicate that the systems of psychological counseling are indeed religions. There are just

as many similarities between Christianity and other world religions as between Christianity and psychology. The scriptures of the Hindu, Buddhist, and Moslem faiths contain statements about attitudes and behavior which may be similar to some Bible verses. Christians should no more turn to psychologists than to leaders of non-Christian faiths to find wisdom and help with problems of living.

Since there is not one standardized Christian psychology, each so-called Christian psychologist decides for himself which of the many psychological opinions and methods constitute his ideas of "God's truth." In so doing, the subjective observations and biased opinions of mere mortals are placed on the same level as the inspired Word of God. Perhaps they think that what has been observed in nature by the limited minds of men equals God's truth. The Bible contains the only pure truth of God. All else is distorted by the limitations of human perception. Whatever else one can discover about God's creation is only partial knowledge and partial understanding. It cannot be equal to God's truth.

The statement "All truth is God's truth" is discussed in the popular *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology*. The book claims that its contributors are "among the finest evangelical scholars in the field."[31] In the section on "Christian Psychology," natural revelation (e.g. the physical world and how it functions) is touted as supporting special revelation as if God's Word needs substantiation, confirmation, expansion, or any other kind of support. In his review of this book, Ed Payne, M.D., says, "Almost certainly the message of the book and its authors is that the Bible and psychological literature stand on the same

authoritative level."[32] This book merely reflects what the church has come to accept. Unscientific, unsubstantiated, unproven psychological opinions of men have now been leavened into the church through the semantic sorcery of "All truth is God's truth." The equating of psychology and theology reveals that the leaven has now come to full loaf.

Hilton Terrell, M.D., Ph.D. (psychology), says:

> We tell ourselves that Christians should use the best knowledge available in Christ's service. Apologists for the syncretism of biblical truth and psychological "truth" often say, "All truth is God's truth." The issue is precisely there.… Whereas observational sciences can build upon biblical presuppositions to our aid, observation offers no brief on issues of the inner man. Only the trappings, the lingo, the aura of science attend psychoanalytic practices. Frequent references to "health" or biochemistry do not verify medical pronouncements on matters of the spirit. At base, such therapies stand upon dogma, not scientific observations, and the dogma is the odious one of Freud and his followers who were some of the century's most anti-Christ teachers.[33]

The term generally used for the hoped for hybridizing of the psychological way and the biblical way is *integration.* The goal is to integrate or amalgamate the truth of Scripture with the so-called truth of psychology to produce a hybrid that is superior to the truth of each. However, there is an assumption that psychological "truth" is scientific truth. The faulty foundation of this amalgamation is 'All truth

is God's truth. " This slogan seems to be the alpha and omega of the amalgamationists.

Dr. Gary Collins, a popular psychologist and psychologizer of Christianity, is the author and editor of numerous books. In his book *Psychology and Theology: Prospects for Integration,* Collins says:

> ... there will be no conflict or contradiction between truth as revealed in the Bible (studied by Bible scholars and theologians), and truth as revealed in nature (studied by scientists, including psychologists and other scholars).[34]

He uses this as a basis for integrating psychology and theology. However he does not define integration or what brands of psychology and theology he hopes to integrate.

Dr. John Carter and Dr. Bruce Narramore, of Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology, have written a book titled *The Integration of Psychology and Theology,*[35] in which they refer to and repeat, "All truth is God's truth." This has obviously become the abracadabra of integrationists. The incantation is sprinkled throughout their book as it is in the writings of others who espouse the amalgamationists' position. Such books repeatedly state, but cannot support, the "all truth is God's truth" platitude. They talk about it but cannot demonstrate the connection between "all truth is God's truth" and so-called psychotherapeutic truth. The lack of uniformity in psychological theories and practices among those who preach integration should prove that theological-psychological amalgamania is in a sad state of confusion.

After looking at the almost 500 competing and often contradictory therapies and thousands of not-always-compatible techniques, and after surveying Christian therapists and finding how little consistency there is among them in what they practice and in how great the variety of their approaches, one has to conclude that the integrationists make what they call "God's truth" look more than just a little confused. As we have shown in our writings, when one reviews all of the research and considers all of the researchers one can also conclude that, if the integrationists are referring to psychotherapy as science (truth), one gets the impression that God's truth is very unscientific. **The use of psychotherapy in Christianity is not a testimony God's truth or to science. It is a testimony to how much the church can be deceived.**

Biblical theology did without psychology for almost two thousand years. The prophets of the Old Testament, the disciples and apostles of the New Testament, and the saints right up to the present century did very well without psychology. Why would the church need the modern-day psychologizers now? We shudder to think of what a present-day psychologist would have said to Ezekiel seeing "a wheel in the middle of a wheel," or to Elijah hearing "a still small voice," or Isaiah seeing "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up," or Peter and his vision of unclean things, or the man who was caught up to the third heaven.

To even hint that the often-conflicting discoveries of such unredeemed men as Freud, Jung, Rogers, etc. are God's truth is to undermine the very Word of God. The revealed Word of God does not need

the support or the help of psychological pronouncements. The Word alone stands as the truth of God. That psychologists who call themselves Christian would even use such a phrase to justify their use of psychology indicates the direction of their faith.

William Law's concern about adding the wisdom of men to the Word of God in matters of who we are and how we are to live are perhaps more applicable today than when he wrote them. He warned:

> What is the source of all this spiritual blindness which from age to age thus mistakes and defeats all the gracious designs of God towards fallen mankind? Look at the origin of the first sin, and you have it all. Had Eve desired no knowledge but that which came from God, Paradise had still been the habitation of her and of all her offspring….
>
> But now corruption, sin, death, and every evil of the world have entered into the Church, the spouse of Christ, just as they entered into Eve, the spouse of Adam, in Paradise. And in the very same way, and from the same cause: namely, a desire for knowledge other than that which comes from the inspiration of the Spirit of God alone. This desire is the serpent's voice in every man, doing everything to him and in him which Satanic deception did to Eve in the garden. It carries on the first deceit, it shows and recommends to him that same beautiful tree of human wisdom, self-will, and self-esteem springing up within him, which Eve saw in the garden.[36]

Psychotherapy is not science. It is not scientific theory. Psychotherapy rests upon the erroneous assumption that nonbiological problems of thinking and living constitute psychological disorders and therefore require cures by psychologically trained professionals. One writer very wisely pointed out that the prevailing popular psychotherapeutic systems merely reflect the current culture.[37] **We know that the truths of Scripture are eternal. But, which psychological "truths" are eternal?** It is grievous that Christians have followed the psychological way and its pseudosolutions to real problems.

Because of psychotherapy's nonstatus as a science and because it is nonsense as medicine, people who choose psychotherapy do so by faith. They believe the claims of psychotherapy rather than the research evidence. Psychotherapy falls short of the objectivity and testability of science. As we have said elsewhere, **"Psychotherapy is not a coherent science in principle or in theory, diagnosis, or treatment."**[38]

SCIENTIFIC FACADE

Many critics in the field recognize the pseudo-scientific nature of psychotherapy. Psychiatrist-lawyer Jonas Robitscher, in his book *The Powers of Psychiatry,* says regarding the scientific status of psychiatric advice:

> His advice is followed because he is a psychiatrist, even though the scientific validity of his advice and recommendations has never been firmly established.[39]

Robitscher also says, "The infuriating quality of psychiatrists is ... their insistence that they are scientific and correct and that their detractors, therefore, must be wrong."[40]

As we quoted earlier, research psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey is even more blunt when he says:

> The techniques used by Western psychiatrists are, with few exceptions, on exactly the same scientific plane as the techniques used by witch doctors.[41]

Torrey also says, "If anything, psychiatric training may confer greater ability to rationalize subjective conviction as scientific fact."[42]

Walter Reich refers to "the sudden recognition among psychiatrists that, even as a *clinical* enterprise, psychoanalysis and the approaches derived from it are neither scientific nor effective."[43] (Italics his.) Reich mentions "the dangers of ideological zeal in psychiatry, the profession's preference for wishful thinking to scientific knowledge, and the backlash that is provoked, perhaps inevitably, when the zeal devours the ideology and the wish banishes the science."[44]

Linda Riebel, in an article titled "Theory as Self-Portrait and the Ideal of Objectivity," points out clearly that "theories of human nature reflect the theorist's personality as he or she externalizes it or projects it onto humanity at large." She says, "... the theory of human nature is a self-portrait of the theorist ... emphasizing what the theorist needs."[45] Her main point is that theorizing in psychotherapy "cannot transcend the individual personality engaged in that act."[46]

Dr. Harvey Mindess has written a book titled *Makers of Psychology: The Personal Factor*. He says:

> It is my intention to show how the leaders of the field portray humanity in their own image and how each one's theories and techniques are a means of validating his own identity.[47]
>
> The only target I wish to attack is the delusion that psychologists' judgments are objective, their pronouncements unbiased, their methods based more upon external evidence than personal need. Even the greatest geniuses are human beings, limited by the time and place of their existence and, above all, limited by their personal characteristics Their outlooks are shaped by who they are. There is no shame in that, but it is a crime against truth to deny it.[48]
>
> The field as a whole, taking direction as it does from the standpoints of its leaders—which, as I will demonstrate, are *always* personally motivated— may be regarded as a set of distorting mirrors, each one reflecting human nature in a somewhat lopsided way, with no guarantee that all of them put together add up to a rounded portrait.[49] (Italics his.)
>
> The enigma of human nature, we may say, is like a giant Rorschach blot onto which each personality theorist projects his own personality characteristics.[50]

Learning theories about human behavior and personality is vastly different from knowing facts. For too long too many have believed these theories to be factual. They would do well to stay out of the morass of opinions, contradictions, and unproven conceptions; stop speaking of these theories as if they represent reality and, worse yet, acting as if they are true; and recognize that there is much subjectivity, sentimentality, superstition, and even shamanism within these theoretical sand castles.

Take any text on behavior or personality or psychotherapy and examine it to see how much is subjective theory and how little is objective fact. Then remove all the pages that contain unprovable theories and see what remains. In most cases there would be almost nothing left. We are not saying that psychotherapeutic theories are intentionally dishonest, deceitful, or untruthful; we are merely pointing out a common error in thinking. **Psychotherapy is not a coherent science, but rather a discipline based upon many unscientific theories and few verifiable facts.**

Besides the confusion between theory and fact, notice that psychotherapeutic theories invariably cover the deepest and most profound levels of human behavior, while psychotherapeutic facts reveal the most superficial. Verifiable facts are not only few and far between; they cover only the most obvious aspects of man. Often they sound a little ridiculous. For example, a fact of human behavior would be something like this: people communicate with one another through language.

The deeper a person plunges into the psyche of man, the more theoretical he becomes. In order to

explain these deep levels, the psychologist uses a mumbo jumbo of jargon and metaphors of psychological language and symbols. People gain comfort and confidence with personality theories, because they seem to explain or categorize behavior. But, just because one feels comfortable does not mean that the theories are verifiable through objective, scientific testing.

Perhaps people like theories because they help organize attitudes and easily explain away individual complexity. Being confronted by human behavior without a frame of reference makes one feel insecure. Frank points out, "The first step to gaining control of any phenomenon is to give it a name."[51] He also says that we "need to master some conceptual framework to enable us to . . . maintain our own confidence."[52] People seek names, words and thoughts. They look for a Rosetta Stone to decipher the mysterious symbols and actions of the human psyche.

Without psychological theories people may feel weak, ineffective, and impotent; but with such theories they sense stability, direction, and power. Theories, whether true or false, do seem to fulfill a need to grasp and make sense out of what people see and experience. Thus, humans invent and manipulate symbols for their own security and then believe and act upon them as though they were reality, even when they are not.

Naming, describing, and categorizing human behavior does not necessarily bring knowledge and understanding. There is a great gulf between describing human behavior and truly understanding it, and also between talking about human behavior and changing it. Psychotherapeutic theory is merely

a combination of subjective, yet scientific-sounding words. Many are seduced by a scientific-sounding psychological system that is sometimes just "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." *(Macbeth,* Act V, Scene V.)

Psychologist Carol Tavris compares astrology and psychotherapy. She says:

> Now the irony is that many people who are not fooled by astrology for one minute subject themselves to therapy for years, where the same errors of logic and interpretation often occur.[53]

Frank also refers to psychotherapies as myths because "they are not subject to disproof."[54] One can devise a system of explaining all human behavior and then interpret all behavior in the light of that explanation. This is just as true of psychotherapeutic theories as it is true of graphology, astrology, and other such "ologies."

Crucial to a science is the possibility of not only refuting theories but also predicting future events, reproducing results obtained, and controlling what is observed. Distinguished medical doctor Lewis Thomas says, "Science requires, among other things, a statistically significant number of reproducible observations and, above all, controls."[55] As we move from the natural sciences to the so-called behavioral sciences, we move away from refutability, predictability, reproducibility, and controllability. In addition, the cause and effect relationship, so evident in the natural sciences, is ambiguous or absent in the behavioral "sciences." Instead of causation (cause and effect), psychotherapy rests heavily upon cova-

riation (events which appear together which may not necessarily be related.) From cause and effect, where there is a direct relationship, psychotherapy utilizes covariation even though the events which seem to be related may in fact have nothing to do with each other.

There is a great temptation to assume that when two events occur together (covariation) one must have caused the other. This is the basis of much superstition. For example, if one walks under a ladder and then has "bad luck," a cause and effect relationship is assumed and one then avoids walking under ladders for fear of "bad luck." This type of superstitious relationship occurs often in the behavioral "sciences." The superstitious nonscientific illusions of psychotherapy are many.

Psychotherapy escapes the rigors of science because the mind is not equal to the brain and man is not a machine. Psychotherapy deals with individuals who are unique and possess a will. Interaction in a therapeutic setting involves the individuality and volition of both the therapist and the person being counseled, the importance of which we will discuss later. Additionally, there are variables of time and changing circumstances in the lives of both therapist and counselee and in their values, which are an inevitable part of therapy. Science is at a loss because the deep thoughts and motivations of humanity escape the scientific method. Instead, the study is more the business of philosophers and theologians.

Dave Hunt addresses this issue in his book *Beyond Seduction:*

> True faith and true science are not rivals, but deal with different realms.... To mix faith with science is to destroy both.... The God who created us in His image exists beyond the scope of scientific laws. Therefore, human personality and experience, which come from God and not from nature, must forever defy scientific analysis. No wonder psychotherapy, which pretends to deal "scientifically" with human behavior and personality, has failed so miserably! No human being has the power to define from within himself, much less dictate to others, what constitutes right or wrong behavior. Only God can set such standards, and if there is no Creator God, then morality is nonexistent. This is why psychology's "scientific" standards for "normal" behavior are arbitrary, changeable, meaningless, and inevitably amoral.[56]

The authors of a prestigious book about human behavior admit after reporting 1,045 scientific findings on the subject:

> Indeed, as one reviews this set of findings, he may well be impressed by striking omission. As one lives life or observes it around him (or within himself) or finds it in a work of art, he sees a richness that has somehow fallen through the present screen of the behavioral sciences. This book, for example, has rather little to say about the central human concerns: nobility, moral courage, ethical torments, the delicate relation of father and son or of the marriage state, life's way of corrupting inno-

> cence, the rightness and wrongness of acts, evil, happiness, love and hate, death, even sex.[57]

The actual foundations of psychotherapy are not science, but rather various philosophical world views, especially those of determinism, secular humanism, behaviorism, existentialism, and even evolutionism. With its *isms* within *isms* psychotherapy penetrates every area of modern thought. Its influence has not been confined to the therapist's office, for its varied explanations of human behavior and contradictory ideas for change have permeated society. One of the authors of a national study conducted some years back titled "The Inner America: Americans View Their Jobs and Marital Health" reveals that individuals were much more likely to view problems psychologically than they were twenty years earlier.[58] This is even more so today.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ENTRENCHMENT

The Christian community has embraced the all-pervasive influence of psychotherapy. The church has unwittingly and even eagerly embraced the pseudoscientisms of psychotherapy and has intimately incorporated this spectre into the very sinew of its life. Not only does the church include the concepts and teachings of psychotherapists in sermons and seminaries, it steps aside and entrusts the mentally and emotionally halt and lame to the "high altar" of psychotherapy.

Many church leaders contend that the church does not have the ability to meet the needs of people suffering from depression, anxiety, fear, and other

problems of living. They therefore trust the paid practitioners of the pseudoscientisms of psychotherapy more than they trust the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Because of the confusion between science and pseudoscience, church leaders have elevated the psychotherapist to a position of authority in the modern church. Thus, any attack on the amalgamation of psychotherapy and Christianity is considered to be an attack on the church itself.

Although the church has quite universally accepted and endorsed the psychological way, there are others who have not. Dr. Jay Adams says:

> In my opinion, advocating, allowing and practicing psychiatric and psychoanalytical dogmas within the church is every bit as pagan and heretical (and therefore perilous) as propagating the teachings of some of the most bizarre cults. The only vital difference is that the cults are less dangerous because their errors are more identifiable.[59]

Hunt, in his book *The Cult Explosion,* says:

> Today the church is being destroyed from within by "Christian psychology" that interprets Scripture on the basis of a bankrupt, atheistic philosophy, which at best turns Christ into a heavenly psychiatrist. Months and even years of "Christian psychiatry" are now attempting to do what was once accomplished in a moment by coming to the cross.[60]

The apostle Paul warns Timothy and all believers to this day: "O Timothy, keep that which is com-

mitted to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." (1 Tim. 6:20.) Psychotherapy and its underlying theories have overtaken almost the entire church; but they are "profane and vain babblings" and "science falsely so called." Indeed, these are pseudoscience! Matthew Poole quotes the next verse and comments:

> *Which some professing have erred concerning the faith*; which kind of science, some pretending and boasting of, studying to show themselves learned and subtle men, they have been led into errors in Christianity, apostatizing from the doctrine of faith.[61]

God has given believers far more than psychology can offer. There are hundreds of Bible verses that attend to this, such as 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

Irenaeus, an early church father, wrote a treatise against Gnosticism titled *On the Detection and Overthrow of Knowledge Falsely So Called*. Counseling psychology is not only "**science** falsely so called"; it is "**knowledge** falsely so called." It is out of this false science and false knowledge that there are almost 500 often incompatible psychological approaches and thousands of conflicting techniques. In a word, this all results in psychoheresy! **Psychotherapy is a most subtle and devious spectre haunting the church, because it is perceived and received as a scientific salve for the sick**

soul rather than as what it truly is: a pseudo-scientific substitute system of religious relief.

The early church faced and ministered to mental-emotional-behavioral problems which were as complex as the ones that exist today. If anything, the conditions of the early church were more difficult than those we currently face. The early Christians suffered persecution, poverty, and various afflictions which are foreign to most of contemporary Christendom (especially in the West). The catacombs in Rome are a testimony to the extent of the problems faced by the early church.

If we suffer at all, it is from affluence and ease, which have propelled us toward a greater fixation on self than would likely have occurred in less affluent times. However, the cure for the sins of self-preoccupation existed in the early church and is just as available today. In fact, biblical cures used by the early church are just as potent if used today. The Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit are applicable to all problems of living and therefore do not need to be superseded by talk therapies and talk therapists.

Has the modern church given up its call and obligation to minister to suffering individuals? If so, one reason is because Christians believe the myth that psychological counseling is science. However, psychological counseling is not science, but rather, as we show in the next chapter, another religion and another gospel. (Galatians 1:6) The conflict between the psychological way of counseling and the biblical way is not between true science and true religion. The conflict is strictly religious—a conflict between many religions grouped under the name of psycho-

therapy (psychological counseling) and the one true religion of the Bible.

7

Psychotherapy Is Religion

The Bible is full of explanations of why people behave the way they do and how they change. Beginning with Genesis, God demonstrated the basic problem of mankind: separation from God through sin. And, God provided the only lasting remedy for change: a restored relationship with Him by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus. A person's separation from God or his active relationship with God will affect every attitude, every choice, and every action. **The study of mankind from any other perspective will bring about a distorted view.** Although we can observe, record and report external aspects of human nature, we must turn to Scripture for explanations of why people behave the way they do and how they can change. **Every other explanation must be fully in agreement with Scripture to be accurate.**

Psychotherapy deals with the very same areas of concern already dealt with in Scripture. Explanations of why people behave the way they do and how they change have concerned philosophers,

theologians, cultists, and occultists throughout the centuries. **Since God has given an Instruction Book on how to live, all psychotherapeutic ideas about the why's of behavior and the how's of change must be viewed as religious in nature.** Whereas the Bible claims divine revelation, psychotherapy falsely claims scientific substantiation as we have shown. Nevertheless, when it comes to behavior and attitudes and morals and values, we are dealing with religion, either the Christian faith or any one of a number of other religions.

Once the false façade of science is removed, psychotherapy is seen for what it really is: a faith system and therefore, by many definitions, a religion. If one searches the definition of "religion" on the internet, it will be readily apparent in the plethora of entries that religion has been defined in a great variety of ways. We learn in our reading the various internet definitions that a religion does not need to posit a god. Some religions are polytheistic, some monotheistic, and some non-theistic, such as Buddhism. One of the definitions we found of "religion" is: "One's primary worldview and how that dictates one's thoughts and actions." By that definition atheism is a religion. Courts have ruled in favor of atheists based on their First Amendment rights."[1]

One academic after another and even one academic atheist after another regard psychotherapy as a religion. **Professor William Epstein, in his book *Psychotherapy as Religion*, makes a strong case that psychotherapy is religion.** Epstein says, "Rather than a successful clinical practice of psychic, emotional, and mental healing, psychother-

apy is a civil religion—a social and political fable."[2] Those who look at psychotherapy from an analytical, research point of view have long suspected the religious nature of psychotherapy. Psychiatrist Jerome Frank says that "psychotherapy is not primarily an applied science. In some ways it more resembles a religion."[3]

Many who practice psychotherapy embrace its religious aspects. According to Victor Von Weizsaecker, "C. G. Jung was the first to understand that psychoanalysis belonged in the sphere of religion."[4] Jung himself wrote:

> Religions are systems of healing for psychic illness.... That is why patients force the psychotherapist into the role of a priest, and expect and demand of him that he shall free them from their distress. That is why we psychotherapists must occupy ourselves with problems which, strictly speaking, belong to the theologian.[5]

Note that Jung used the word *religions* rather than *Christianity*. Jung himself repudiated Christianity and explored other forms of religious experience, including the occult. Without throwing out the religious nature of man, Jung dispensed with the God of the Bible and assumed his own role as priest.

ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS ALTERNATIVES

From its very beginning psychological theories and methods of counseling created doubt about Christianity. Each great innovator of psychological

theories sought an understanding about mankind apart from the revealed Word of God. Each created an unbiblical system to explain the nature of man and to bring about change. Men like Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Jung (1875-1961) eroded confidence in Christianity and established systems in direct opposition to the Word of God. Occultism, atheism, and antagonism towards Christianity were disguised by psychological, scientific sounding language.

Freud reduced religious beliefs to illusions and called religion "the obsessional neurosis of humanity."[6] Jung, an early follower of Freud, however, viewed all religions as collective mythologies. He did not believe they were real in essence, but that they could affect the human personality. While Freud viewed religion as the source of mental problems, Jung believed that religion was a solution. **Freud argued that religions are illusionary and therefore evil. Jung, on the other hand, contended that all religions are imaginary but good.** Both positions are anti-Christian. One denies Christianity and the other mythologizes it.

Religious bias colored the psychological systems of both Freud and Jung. They were not dealing with science, but with beliefs, values, attitudes, and behavior. And because they were working in areas about which the Bible gives the authoritative Word of God, they were developing antibiblical religions. Dr. Jay Adams says:

> Because of the teaching of the Scriptures, one is forced to conclude that much of clinical and counseling psychology, as well as most

> of psychiatry, has been carried on without license from God and in autonomous rebellion against Him. This was inevitable because the Word of the sovereign God of creation has been ignored.
>
> In that Word are "all things pertaining to life and godliness." By it the man of God "may be fully equipped for every good work." And it is that Word—and only that Word—that can tell a poor sinner how to love God with all of the heart, and mind, and soul, and how to love a neighbor with the same depth of concern that he exhibits toward himself.[7]

Dr. Thomas Szasz contends, "The popular image of Freud as an enlightened, emancipated, irreligious person who, with the aid of psychoanalysis, 'discovered' that religion is a mental illness is pure fiction."[8] He says, "One of Freud's most powerful motives in life was the desire to inflict vengeance on Christianity for its traditional anti-Semitism."[9] Freud used scientific-sounding language to disguise his hostility towards religion. However, Szasz declares, "There is, in short, nothing scientific about Freud's hostility to established religion, though he tries hard to pretend that there is."[10] Freud was not an objective observer of humanity, nor was he an objective observer of religion.

While Freud grew up in a Jewish home, Jung's father was a Protestant minister. Jung's description of his early experience with Holy Communion reveals his disappointment with Christianity. He wrote:

> Slowly I came to understand that this communion had been a fatal experience for me. It had proved hollow; more than that it had proved to be a total loss. I knew that I would never again be able to participate in this ceremony. "Why, that is not religion at all," I thought. "It is an absence of God; the church is a place I should not go to. It is not life which is there, but death."[11]

This significant experience could have led Jung to deny all religions as Freud did, but he did not. For him all religions were myths which contained some truth about the human psyche. For him, psychoanalysis was a religious activity. And, since all religions held some elements about truth, he denied the authority of Scripture and the exclusive claim of Jesus Christ to be the only way of salvation.

Jung repudiated Christianity and became involved in idolatry. He renamed and replaced everything Christian and everything biblical with his own mythology of archetypes. And as he moved in his own sphere of idolatry, the archetypes took form and served him as familiar spirits. He even had his own personal familiar spirit by the name of Philemon. He also participated in the occultic practice of necromancy.[12] Dr. Richard Noll, in his book *The Jung Cult*, reveals that "the theory of the archetypes come[s] as much from late nineteenth-century occultism, neopaganism, and social Darwinian teachings as they do from natural science."[13] Jung's teachings serve to mythologize Scripture and reduce the basic doctrines of the faith into esoteric gnosticism.

Rather than objective observation and scientific discovery, Freud and Jung each turned his own experience into a new belief system, Freud into psychoanalysis and Jung into Analytic Psychology. Freud attempted to destroy the spirituality of man by reducing religion to illusion and neurosis; Jung attempted to debase the spirituality of man by presenting all religion as mythology and fantasy. Repudiating the God of the Bible, both Freud and Jung led their followers in the quest for alternative understandings of mankind and alternative solutions to problems of living. They turned inward to their own limited imaginations and viewed their subjects from their own anti-Christian subjectivity.

Because they rest on different foundations, move in contrasting directions, and rely on opposing belief systems, psychotherapy and Christianity are not now, nor were they ever, natural companions in helping individuals. The faith once delivered to the saints was displaced by a substitute faith, often disguised as medicine or science, but based upon foundations which are in direct contradiction to the Bible.

Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen indicates the impetus psychotherapy received from those who sought to repudiate Christianity by saying, "It appears that certain of the most influential pioneers in American psychotherapy found in it an ideal vehicle for renouncing their own Christian upbringing in the name of science."[14]

Psychologist Carl Rogers is the most popular psychologist of the last century. A national survey of psychotherapists, conducted in 2006 as a research project for the National Institute of Mental Health, asked the following question: "Over the last 25 years,

which figures have most influenced your practice?" The *Psychotherapy Networker* (*PN*), a journal for psychotherapists, reports:

> Perhaps the most surprising single finding was that in both the 1982 and the 2006 survey the single most influential psychotherapist—**by a landslide**—was Carl Rogers. In other words, the therapist who became famous for his leisurely, nondirective, open-ended, soft-focus form of therapy 50 years ago remains a major role model today.[15] (Bold added.)

Rogers is another example of one of those influential pioneers. While attending Union Theological Seminary, he and some of his fellow classmates "thought themselves right out of religious work."[16] He did not find what he was looking for in Christianity and thus turned away from his Christian upbringing and Christian calling.[17] Rogers renounced Christianity and became one of the most respected leaders of psychotherapy. He confessed, "I could not work in a field where I would be required to believe in some specified religious doctrine."[18] Rogers also said:

> Neither the Bible nor the prophets—neither Freud nor research—neither the revelations of God nor man—can take precedence over my own direct experience.[19]

Psychology was attractive to him since he was interested in the "questions as to the meaning of life," but did not want to be restricted by the doctrines of Christianity.[20] Not only did Rogers embrace another religion, secular humanism; he later turned to the occult. Rogers engaged in the biblically forbid-

den practice of necromancy, which is communication with the dead through a medium.[21] What does a man who has repudiated Christianity have to offer the church about the most important matters of life?

From its inception, psychotherapy was developed as an alternative means of healing and help, not as an addition or complement to Christianity. Dr. Arthur Burton says, "Psychotherapy…promises salvation in this life in the same way that theology promises it in the afterlife."[22] It is not only a substitute method of helping troubled souls; it is a surrogate religion. Szasz contends:

> Contrition, confession, prayer, faith, inner resolution, and countless other elements are expropriated and renamed as psychotherapy; whereas certain observances, rituals, taboos, and other elements of religion are demeaned and destroyed as symptoms of neurotic or psychotic "illness."[23]

PSYCHOTHERAPY OR RELIGION?

Critics of the scientific facade of psychotherapy have especially noted its religious nature. Nobelist Richard Feynman, in considering the scientific status of psychotherapy, says that "psychoanalysis is not a science" and that it is "perhaps even more like witch-doctoring."[24]

Lance Lee refers to "psychoanalysis as a religion hidden beneath scientific verbiage" and as a "substitute religion for both practitioner and patient."[25] There is an old saying: "If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck and quacks like a duck—it's probably a

duck." Psychotherapy looks like a religion, acts like a religion and talks like a religion—Voila!—it's a religion.

Professor Perry London, in his book *The Modes and Morals Of Psychotherapy,* points out that psychotherapists constitute a priesthood.[26] Frank says that the psychiatrist "cannot avoid infringing on the territory of religion."[27] One writer refers to "the 'Jehovah effect' in which the therapist recreates patients into his own image."[28] A simple question to the majority of the church who have bought into the psychology craze: Does psychotherapy ever discuss, teach or promote the idea that its clients are sinners in need of repentance and salvation? The answer is obviously "No"! To further the duck analogy, psychotherapy is a "quack" religion.

Szasz says:

> Traditionally, people sought counsel for problems in living in religion. Today, for the most part, they seek it in psychiatry and psychology. We are in grave danger of ignoring the competition and conflict between these two approaches; or worse, declaring the religious approach unscientific and therefore illegitimate.[29]

Szasz, in his book *The Myth of Psychotherapy,* says, "The basic ingredients of psychotherapy are religion, rhetoric, and repression."[30] He points out that while psychotherapy does not always involve repression, it does always involve religion and rhetoric. By "rhetoric" Szasz means "conversation." Just as conversation is always present in psychotherapy, so too in religion. Szasz says very strongly that "the

human relations we now call 'psychotherapy,' are, in fact, matters of religion-and that we mislabel them as 'therapeutic' at great risk to our spiritual well-being."[31] Elsewhere Szasz refers to the dangers of psychotherapy as religion:

> It is not merely a religion that pretends to be a science, it is actually a fake religion that seeks to destroy true religion.[32]

He warns about "the implacable resolve of psychotherapy to rob religion of as much as it can, and to destroy what it cannot."[33] Christopher Lasch, author of *The Culture of Narcissism*, would probably agree since he says, "Therapy constitutes an antireligion."[34] It is a fake religion that is "anti" the true religion of the Bible.

CURE OF SOULS OR CURE OF MINDS?

There was a cure of souls ministry which existed in the early church and was practiced up to the present century. In this ministry there was a dependence on the Bible for understanding the human condition and for relieving troubled minds. Prayer and healing in the early church were not limited to small problems, but covered all personal issues normally taken to a psychotherapist. The cure of souls ministry dealt with all nonorganic mental-emotional-personal problems of living.

With the rise of psychological counseling in the twentieth century, biblical ministry waned until presently it is almost nonexistent. During the past fifty years the cure of souls, which once was a vital ministry of the church, has been displaced by a cure

of minds called "psychotherapy." The authors of *Cults and Cons* note this shift:

> For many, traditional religion no longer offers relevant answers and more and more people are seeking answers in strange, new packages. Thousands, if not millions, are turning to that part of psychology which promises the *answer* and an effortless, painless ride into the Promised Land, perfectly meeting our present and prevailing need for quick solutions to hard problems (emphasis theirs).[35]

Martin Gross observes:

> When educated man lost faith in formal religion, he required a substitute belief that would be as reputable in the last half of the twentieth century as Christianity was in the first. Psychology and psychiatry have now assumed that role.[36]

Frank notes: "Our psychotherapeutic literature has contained precious little on the redemptive power of suffering, acceptance of one's lot in life, filial piety, adherence to tradition, self-restraint and moderation."[37]

Leo Rosten says:

> As recently as 30 years ago, no one questioned your right to be unhappy. Happiness was considered a blessing, not a guarantee. You were permitted to suffer pain, or fall into moods, or seek solitude without being analyzed, interpreted and discussed.[38]

Dr. George Albee, a past president of the American Psychological Association says:

> The old conventional sources of explaining the mysteries of human existence, such as religion and science, no longer hold much water for a lot of people. So people have turned largely to psychology as one field which attempts to answer questions about the meaning of life.[39]

Psychologist and researcher Dr. Morris Parloff says:

> In the past, religion and science were the main ways of achieving our aspirations. More recently, to the consternation of some and the satisfaction of others, the license for ensuring our well-being has apparently been transferred to psychotherapy![40]

Dr. Jacob Needleman observes:

> Modern psychiatry arose out of the vision that man must change himself and not depend for help upon an imaginary God. . . . mainly through the insights of Freud and through the energies of those he influenced, the human psyche was wrested from the faltering hands of organized religion and was situated in the world of nature as a subject for scientific study.[41]

Rogers confesses, "Yes, it is true, psychotherapy is subversive. . . . Therapy, theories and techniques promote a new model of man contrary to that which has been traditionally acceptable."[42]

Bernie Zilbergeld, in his book *The Shrinking of America: Myths of Psychological Change,* says:

> Psychology has become something of a substitute for old belief systems. Different schools of therapy offer visions of the good life and how to live it, and those whose ancestors took comfort from the words of God and worshipped at the altars of Christ and Yahweh now take solace from and worship at the altars of Freud, Jung, Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, Werner Erhard, and a host of similar authorities. While in the past the common reference point was the Bible and its commentaries and commentators, the reference today is a therapeutic language and the success stories of mostly secular people changers.[43]

Dr. Christopher Lasch charges that the "contemporary climate is therapeutic, not religious," and says, "People today hunger not for personal salvation ... but for the feeling, the momentary illusion of personal well-being, health and psychic security."[44]

Lasch says, "The medicalization of religion facilitated the rapprochement between religion and psychiatry."[45] As soon as religious problems were medicalized (made into diseases), they became psychiatric problems. Problems of thought and behavior, once considered to be the concern of clergymen, were transformed into medical, and therefore supposedly scientific problems. They were then transferred from the church to the couch. Later "diseases" were changed into "disorders" and became even more palatable for the public and for the church.

In referring to this change from the spiritual to the psychological and from religion to science, Szasz says:

> Educated in the classics, Freud and the early Freudians remolded these images into, and renamed them as, medical diseases and treatments. This metamorphosis has been widely acclaimed in the modern world as an epoch-making scientific discovery. Alas, it is, in fact, only the clever and cynical destruction of the spirituality of man, and its replacement by a positivistic "science of mind."[46]

It is not only a matter of the "destruction of the spirituality of man," but a destruction of religion itself. As we have noted elsewhere:

> The recipe was simple. Replace the cure of souls with the cure of minds by confusing an abstraction (mind) with a biological organ (brain), and thus convince people that mental healing and medical healing are the same. Stir in a dash of theory disguised as fact. Call it all science and put it into medicine and the rest is history. With the rise in psychotherapy, there was a decline in the pastoral cure of souls until it is now almost nonexistent.[47]

Szasz also says that "psychotherapy is a modern, scientific-sounding name for what used to be called the 'cure of souls.'"[48] Psychological practitioners have supplanted spiritual ministers in matters that have more to do with religion and values than with science and medicine.

Of course the central aspect of the cure of souls was to bring a person into a right relationship with God. Souls were "cured" through confession, repentance, and forgiveness. By following the biblical patterns set forth by Jesus and the Apostles, individuals will learn to live abundant lives. They will find comfort and strength in the midst of problems and wisdom to know what to do. Furthermore, as ordinary human beings receive the life of God into their own being through the Holy Spirit they have an inward Guide as well as the written Word.

PSYCHOTHERAPY AS RELIGION

Although all forms of psychotherapy are religious, the fourth branch of psychotherapy—the transpersonal—is more blatantly religious than the others. Transpersonal psychologies involve faith in the supernatural. They include the belief that there is something beyond the natural, physical universe. However, the spirituality they have to offer includes mystical experiences of both the occult and Eastern religions. Although they are very religious and attempt to meet the spiritual needs of individuals, they are in direct contradiction to the Bible. Any religion that claims to be the only way is anathema to transpersonal psychologies. According to them, it's all right to believe anything, no matter how bizarre, as long as one does not contend that there is only one way.

Through such transpersonal psychotherapies various forms of Eastern religion have crept into Western life. Some years back, psychologist Daniel Goleman quoted Chogyam Trungpa as saying, "Bud-

dhism will come to the West as psychology." At the time Goleman pointed out how Oriental religions "seem to be making gradual headway as psychologies, not as religions."[49]

Jacob Needleman says:

> A large and growing number of psychotherapists are now convinced that the Eastern religions offer an understanding of the mind far more complete than anything yet envisaged by Western science. At the same time, the leaders of the new religions themselves—the numerous gurus and spiritual teachers now in the West—are reformulating and adapting the traditional systems according to the language and atmosphere of modern psychology.[50]

Psychotherapy Networker (*PN*), a journal for psychotherapists announces a conference on mindfulness with "Discover the New Wisdom Tradition—a true marriage of Mindfulness and Psychotherapy that's dramatically enhancing the quality of healing in the field." *PN* says, "Mindfulness practices have now assumed a place of respectability—even a kind of secular sanctity—in the therapy world." *PN* refers to mindfulness as an "infusion from the East."[51]

One specific example of this East-meets-West is the popular Dialectical Behavior Therapy, which combines standard cognitive-behavioral techniques with concepts from Buddhist meditative practice.[52]

Needleman further notes:

> With all these disparate movements, it is no wonder that thousands of troubled men and

> women throughout America no longer know whether they need psychological or spiritual help. The line is blurred that divides the therapist from the spiritual guide.[53]

Dr. Robert C. Fuller, in his book *Americans and the Unconscious*, states this very clearly:

> Insofar as psychological theories purport to interpret reality and orient individuals within it, they inevitably assume many of the cultural functions traditionally associated with religion. And to the extent that psychological concepts are used to guide individuals toward life's intrinsic values and ultimate mysteries, their religious character becomes prominent.[54]

Karl Kraus, a Viennese journalist, wrote,

> Despite its deceptive terminology, psychoanalysis is not a science but a religion—the faith of a generation incapable of any other.[55]

The same could be said of the various psychotherapies which have followed psychoanalysis. The tragedy is that few in the church recognize that psychotherapy, though attiring itself in the garb of science, is as naked as the emperor in "The Emperor's New Clothes." And sadder yet is the great admiration for this pseudo-garment.

Because psychotherapy deals with meaning in life, values, and behavior, it is religion in theory and in practice. Every branch of psychotherapy is religious. Therefore, combining Christianity with psychotherapy is joining two or more religious systems. Psychotherapy cannot be performed and people

cannot be transformed without affecting a person's beliefs. No psychotherapy and no psychotherapist would say that what they do and what they believe is absent of ethics, morals, and values. Because psychotherapy involves ethics, morals, and values, it is religion.

PSEUDOFAITH VERSUS TRUE FAITH

Psychological theories and methods continue to subvert Christianity. Rather than being directly antagonistic, however, promoters of psychotherapy have covertly weakened the faith. By offering a substitute for the cross of Christ, purveyors of the psychological way encourage the pseudo faith described by A. W. Tozer:

> Many of us Christians have become extremely skillful in arranging our lives so as to admit the truth of Christianity without being embarrassed by its implications. We arrange things so that we can get on well enough without divine aid, while at the same time ostensibly seeking it. We boast in the Lord but watch carefully that we never get caught depending on Him. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
>
> Pseudo faith always arranges a way out to serve in case God fails it. Real faith knows only one way and gladly allows itself to be stripped of any second way or makeshift substitutes. For true faith, it is either God or total collapse. And not since Adam first stood up

> on the earth has God failed a single man or woman who trusted Him.
>
> The man of pseudo faith will fight for his verbal creed but refuse flatly to allow himself to get into a predicament where his future must depend upon that creed being true. He always provides himself with secondary ways of escape so he will have a way out if the roof caves in.
>
> What we need very badly these days is a company of Christians who are prepared to trust God as completely now as they know they must do at the last day.[56]

Christianity is more than a religion. It is relationship with the Creator of the universe. It is relationship with God the Father through the costly price of the cross of Christ. It is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Christians are called to live by the very life of God. Paul prayed for believers to live by faith:

> For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to

> be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:9-14.)

Paul then admonished:

> As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. (Colossians 2:6-10.)

8

Self-Centered Gospel of Psychology

> This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves.

Someone once said that a psychotherapist is an "I" doctor. The therapeutic gospel is all about self. Eva Moskowitz's book *In Therapy We Trust* is subtitled *America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment*. Her main theme has to do with the "therapeutic gospel." She says:

> There are three central tenets to this "therapeutic gospel." The first is that happiness should be our supreme goal. Wealth, public recognition, high moral character—each of these achievements is held valuable only to the extent that it makes us happy. Success, in the final analysis, must be measured with a psychological yardstick….
>
> The second tenet of our therapeutic faith is the belief that our problems stem from psy-

> chological causes. Problems that were once considered political, economic, or educational are today found to be psychological….
>
> The third and final tenet of the therapeutic gospel is the most important, but it is so universally accepted, so seemingly self-evident, that we hardly notice its existence. This tenet is that the psychological problems that underlie our failures and unhappiness are in fact treatable and that we can, indeed *should*, address these problems both individually and as a society. This is the essence of the therapeutic gospel.[1] (Italics in original.)

Last-days lovers of self seek personal happiness as the supreme goal and the therapeutic gospel convinces people that unhappiness is "treatable" through psychotherapies according to the therapeutic gospelizers.

Psychological counseling and its penchant for sinful speaking is a Western phenomenon. In her book *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession for Self-Fulfillment*, Eva Moskowitz reveals the contrast between "Americans' proclivity for the couch" and other contrasting nations world-wide. She says:

> Though we recognize the therapeutic gospel's grip on our culture, we have little idea how we came to this point. Perhaps this is because the therapeutic has snuck up on us. Perhaps it is because we are only dimly aware that America has not always been obsessed with the psyche. But our therapeutic faith is neither timeless nor universal. Our nation has

> not always been so preoccupied with personal dilemmas and emotional cures, nor are other nations so preoccupied today. The citizens of Asia, Africa, and Europe do not share Americans' proclivity for the couch. There are fewer psychological professionals in China, Israel, and Korea combined, for example, than there are sex and art therapists in America.[2]

Dr. Frank Furedi, a professor of sociology at the University of Kent, reports in his book *Therapy Culture*:

> A study of "seeker churches" in the US argues that their ability to attract new recruits is based on their ability to tap into the therapeutic understanding of Americans.[3]

Although corrupt-talk counseling is a Western activity, other countries are beginning to adopt it because of Western influence. While it is on the increase, there has been little of this counseling in East Asian countries. One major reason it is almost non-existent there is because East Asians have typically **not** been **self-oriented** or personal problem-centered. They have typically been **we-oriented**, while Westerners are typically **me-centered**. Also, the culture and tradition of East Asians has been to regard the family as sacred. Therefore one would not blame family or parents for one's present life.

One specialist writing on "psychotherapy in Japan" refers to the "family's sacrosanct character" and the reluctance to blame "a parent or parent's role in a patient's neurosis or, especially, the ways in which a maternal figure may not be all-loving and

good." The article says, "A Japanese, instead of investigating his past, romanticizes it: Instead of analyzing his early childhood, he creates fictions about it." The contrast to Western individualism is seen in the following: "Even for [Japanese] adults, expressions of individuality are often considered signs of selfish immaturity."[4]

One writer describes the East/West cleavage this way:

> The world can be divided in many ways—rich and poor, democratic and the authoritarian—but one of the most striking is the divide between the societies with an individualist mentality and the ones with a collectivist mentality….
>
> You can create a global continuum with the most individualistic societies—like the United States or Britain—on one end, and the most collectivist societies—like China or Japan—on the other.[5]

Many Latin American cultures also represent a contrast to the Western "me" culture. While there are some regional differences, Latin American cultures are generally "we" cultures. Mexican writer Octavio Paz describes this tendency:

> I am another when I am, my actions are more mine if they are also everyone's. So that I can exist I must be the other, I must leave myself to look for myself among the others, those who would not exist if I did not, those who give me my own existence. I am not, there is no I, **always it is we**.[6] (Bold added.)

In comparing the aspect of collectivism/individualism between Spanish Speaking South Americans (SSSAs) and English Speaking North Americans (ESNAs), Skye Stephenson says that for SSSAs, "the opinions of others are often given significant weight in evaluating personal behavior and deciding upon appropriate actions" and that the "focus on others' opinions, especially for self-evaluation, is encouraged in most SSSAs from a very young age" and is shown in the way children are scolded.[7] **SSSAs are encouraged not to shame the group, while, in contrast, ESNAs are encouraged to follow their own personal beliefs.**

Geert and Gert Jan Hofstede describe collectivism, in contrast to individualism, as "societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetimes continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty."[8] They say that "in a collectivist environment" family and group ties are very strong, "it is immoral *not* to treat one's in-group members better than others," and shaming is used to correct bad behavior because it makes the family or group look bad.[9] (Italics theirs.) So we see a similarity to East Asian culture in many Latin American cultures where the group and family are sacred and where focusing on the self and condemning the group or family are discouraged. Without North American influence, such Latin American cultures are not naturally fertile territory for psychotherapy and counseling.

One of the most popular themes in psychology is that of self-fulfillment. Although this is an extremely popular theme, it is a theme of recent origin having

arisen only since World War II and in recent years within the church itself. Daniel Yankelovich, who is a pollster and analyst of social trends and public attitudes, in his book entitled *New Rules: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down,* documents the changes that have occurred and describes "the struggle for self-fulfillment" as "the leading edge of a genuine cultural revolution." He claims, "It is moving our industrial civilization toward a new phase of human experience."[10] Yankelovich describes the new rules in society throughout his book. He says:

> In their extreme form, the new rules simply turn the old ones on their head, and in place of the old self-denial ethic we find people who refuse to deny *anything* to themselves.[11] (Italics his.)

The description of the book states:

> *New Rules* is about 80 percent of Americans now committed to one degree or another to the search for self-fulfillment, at the expense of the older, self-denying ethic of earlier years.[12]

As society moved from self denial to self-fulfillment, a new vocabulary emerged which revealed a new inner attitude and a different view of life. The new vocabulary became the very fabric of a new psychology. This new psychological force is known as humanistic psychology. **Humanistic psychology's great emphasis is on self. Self-actualization is its major focus and self-fulfillment its clarion call.** Self-fulfillment, with all its accompanying self-hyphenated and self-fixated variations such as self-

love, self-acceptance, self-esteem, and self-worth, has become the new promised land. Then as the church became psychologized, the emphasis shifted from God to self.

The new formula for society has become a cause and effect relationship between a high amount of self-love, self-esteem, etc., leading to health, wealth, and happiness and a low amount leading to just the opposite. That idea, once having permeated society, penetrated the church. Christian books began to reflect what was accepted in society. Some examples are *Love Yourself, The Art of Learning to Love Yourself, Loving Yourselves, Celebrate Yourself, You're Someone Special, Self Esteem: You're Better than You Think,* and probably best known, Robert Schuler's *Self Esteem: The New Reformation.* The list of books and examples of the psychological self-stroking mentality are numerous.

One research study supported by the National Institute of Mental Health attempted to find a relationship between self-esteem and delinquent children. The researchers concluded that "the effect of self-esteem on delinquent behavior is negligible."[13] The researchers confess, "Given the extensive speculation and debate about self-esteem and delinquency, we find these results something of an embarrassment."[14]

David Myers, in his book *The Inflated Self,* points out how research has revealed a self-serving bias in man. Although many in the church now claim that people need ego boosting and self-esteem raising, Myers' research led him to conclude:

> Preachers who deliver ego-boosting pep talks to audiences who are supposedly plagued with miserable self images are preaching to a problem that seldom exists.[15]

A research project at Purdue University compared two groups of individuals. one with low self-esteem and the other with high self-esteem, in regard to problem solving. The results of the study once more explode the myth that high self-esteem is a must for mankind. The results of the study were reported by one of the two researchers assigned to the project. He says, "Self-esteem is generally considered an across-the-board important attitude, but this study showed self-esteem to correlate negatively with performance" He concludes by stating that in that particular study, "The higher the self-esteem, the poorer the performance."[16]

In a research study seeking to find underlying causes for coronary heart disease it was found that frequent self-references on the part of the subjects was definitely implicated in coronary heart disease. Self-references were measured by the subjects' use of "I," "me," "my," and "mine." In contrast, the researchers mention that "it is interesting to note that the Japanese, with the lowest rate of coronary heart disease of any industrialized nation, do not have prominent self-references in their language."[17] The researchers conclude by saying:

> Our central thesis, stated in a sentence, is that self-involvement, which arises from one's self-identity and one's attachment to that identity and its extensions, forms the substrate for all

> the recognized psychosocial risk factors of coronary heart disease.[18]

Dr. Paul Vitz notes the danger of self-actualization:

> The relentless and single-minded search for and glorification of the self is at direct cross purposes with the Christian injunction to lose thyself. Certainly Jesus Christ neither lived nor advocated a life that would qualify by today's standards as "self-actualized." For the Christian the self is the problem, not the potential paradise. Understanding this problem involves an awareness of sin, especially the sin of pride; correcting this condition requires the practice of such un-self-actualized states as contrition and penitence, humility, obedience, and trust in God.[19]

John Piper says sadly, "Today the first and greatest commandment is 'Thou shalt love thyself.'" He rightly complains that "today the ultimate sin is no longer the failure to honor God and thank Him but the failure to esteem oneself."[20]

Unless Scripture is molded to conform to the self-promoting teachings, the Bible teaches one to be Christ-centered and other-oriented. Loving God above all else with one's entire being and loving neighbor as much as one **already** loves oneself are the primary injunctions of the Bible. The admonition to love oneself or to esteem oneself is missing.

The teachings of self-love, self-esteem, and self-worth have been brought in from the world rather than gleaned from Scripture. They are products of

humanistic psychologists, rather than the truth from the Word of God. Dr. Jay Adams warns about this serious encroachment:

> Any system that proposes to solve human problems apart from the Bible and the power of the Holy Spirit (as all of these pagan systems, including the self-worth system, do) is automatically condemned by Scripture itself. Neither Adler nor Maslow [humanistic psychologists] professed Christian faith. Nor does their system in any way depend upon the message of salvation. Love, joy, peace, etc., are discussed as if they were not the fruit of the Spirit but merely the fruit of right views of one's self which anyone can attain without the Bible or the work of the Spirit in his heart.[21]

Adams continues:

> For these reasons the self-worth system with its claimed biblical correspondence must be rejected. It does not come from the Bible; Christians called the Bible into service long after the system was developed by others who had no intention of basing their system on God's Word. Any resemblance between biblical teaching and the teaching of the self-worth originators is either contrived or coincidental.[22]

Rather than self-love being taught as a virtue in Scripture, it is placed among the diabolical works of the flesh. Paul addresses the issue of self-love from

just the opposite perspective from the present-day promoters:

> This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

Detail by detail Paul's prophecy of the last days describes the twentieth and twenty-first century Western culture. Anyone from a third-world country watching Western television could more easily equate our culture with that verse than with any biblical description of Christianity.

Worse than that, what Paul has described floods over into the church when Christians compromise their faith with the enticement of the world. One theologian notes the trend of Christians to love self and pleasure more than God:

> Modern Christians tend to make satisfaction their religion. We show much more concern for self-fulfillment than for pleasing our God. Typical of Christianity today, at any rate in the English-speaking world, is its massive rash of how-to books for believers, directing us to more successful relationships, more joy in sex, becoming more of a person, realizing

> our possibilities, getting more excitement each day, reducing our weight, improving our diet, managing our money, licking our families into happier shape, and whatnot. For people whose prime passion is to glorify God, these are doubtless legitimate concerns; but the how-to books regularly explore them in a self-absorbed way that treats our enjoyment of life rather than the glory of God as the center of interest. Granted, they spread a thin layer of Bible teaching over the mixture of popular psychology and common sense they offer, but their overall approach clearly reflects the narcissism—"selfism" or "me-ism" as it is sometimes called—that is the way of the world in the modern West.[23]

Dave Hunt reminds us:

> Those who grow up under totalitarian regimes hostile to the gospel expect to be rejected, despised, ridiculed, and even imprisoned or killed for their faith, and would not understand the importance that Christians in the West place upon self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-fulfillment.[24]

The clear teaching of Scripture is not self-esteem. but rather denying the self. Jesus says:

> Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. (Mark 8:34-35.)

John Wesley has said:

> Denying ourselves and taking up our cross isn't a little side issue—it is absolutely necessary to becoming or continuing to become a disciple of Jesus.... All of the things that hold us back from being right with God or growing in the Lord can be boiled down to this: either we won't deny ourselves or we won't take up our cross.[25]

Over 200 years ago William Law wrote:

> Self is all the evil that he [man] has, and God is all the goodness that he can ever have; but self and God are always with him. Death to self is the only entrance into the Church of the living God; and nothing but God can give this death, and that alone through the inward work of the cross of Christ by His Spirit made real in the Soul.[26]

Ruth Graham says it concisely: "Self is spiritual BO."[27] In an article in *Moody* magazine, Elwood McQuaid says, "A new, hybrid faith is infiltrating evangelicalism. Self is at its center. While in most quarters its creed is still orthodox, its conclusions are humanistic."[28]

Psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey says:

> When *The Scarlet Letter* was written, in 1850, adultery was explained by a minister as the product of evil inside the woman. If the same book were written today the author would have a psychiatrist explain the woman's behavior as due to her low self-esteem and difficulty in getting close to people.[29]

Professor William Kirk Kilpatrick says:

> ...the most shameful incidents of my life—things I now wince to think about—were the product of a happy self-acceptance, the period during which I was most smitten with self-esteem, "innocently" following what I had convinced myself were good or at least neutral impulses. My self-esteem simply wouldn't allow any honest self-awareness: that only came later.[30]

Furthermore the Bible admonishes believers to esteem others better than self. Dr. Paul Brownback, in his book *The Dangers of Self-Love,* addresses the subject of self-love and self-esteem. His chapters "The Evidence from Scripture," Parts One and Two, are particularly important when evaluating the matter.[31] Adams' book *The Biblical View of Self-Esteem, Self-Love, and Self-Image* reveals the unbiblical basis of self-esteem.[32]

Two books on the subject of self-actualization describe it as a great detriment rather than an asset. They are *Habits of the Heart*[33] and *Psychology's Sanction for Selfishness.* The authors of the first book speak of the Americans' cult of the individual and its effects on society. One of the authors points out how therapy, in focusing on the self, often leads to a discarding of tradition and can possibly lead to a weakening of the larger moral fabric on which to base decisions. The second book is "about selfishness and psychology's role in promoting it."[34] Drs. Michael and Lise Wallach introduce their well reasoned and documented investigation by saying:

> Our analysis suggests that the roots of psychology's ubiquitous sanction for selfishness lie in fundamental assumptions about motivation that almost all psychologists have come to take for granted.... The directions taken by psychological theorizing that serve to support and encourage selfishness do not, we find, seem justified in the light of current knowledge and evidence.[35]

T. A. McMahon, coauthor of *The Seduction of Christianity* wrote to James Dobson after McMahon and his coauthor Dave Hunt visited him. McMahon says, "Self-esteem has become a new doctrine in the church today ... it is a false doctrine." McMahon also says,

> I've read most of the secular and Christian (C.A.P.S. [Christian Association for Psychological Studies], Trobish, Narramore, Wagner, Osborne, Hoekema, et al) psychological self theories along with your [Dobson's] own and have found them to be only superficially different from each other while basically at odds with the Word of God.[36]

Christians should not use such terms as *self-esteem, self-worth*, or *self-image*, because these terms originate from a secular humanistic society. They have been picked up and popularized by humanistic psychologists. And, they have been used as a distortion of biblical truth. These terms have already been defined by a flesh-oriented society and are often detrimental even in small doses.

John Vasconcellos and Mitch Saunders wrote about this issue in the *Association for Humanistic Psychology Newsletter*:

> The issue is *always* whether or not we believe that we humans are inherently good, trustworthy and responsible. This issue is becoming *the* central social and political challenge of our times.[37] (Italics theirs.)

It is also becoming the spiritual issue of our times. The issue is whether Christians are going to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints or if they are going to slip into the faith of secular humanism through the cracks of psychology and self-esteem.

The self-esteem leaven turned loose will fool many more in Christian churches, schools, colleges, and seminaries. These institutions have already been introduced to such teachings by influential psychologists who are Christians, or by those pastors, teachers, and writers who have been influenced by their teachings. Christians do not realize that underlying much of what these people teach is a psychological, not biblical message.

The California legislature passed a bill creating the California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility. The legislature funded the bill with $245,000 a year for three years, for a total of $735,000. The twofold title of the Task Force is an assumption and may, in fact, be a contradiction. No one has ever demonstrated that promoting self-esteem is in any way related to personal and social responsibility. Nor has anyone ever proved that all those who exhibit personal and social responsibility have high self-esteem. No doubt the

"personal and social responsibility" had to be tacked on to promoting self-esteem or the bill would probably never have been passed. Self-esteem and social and personal responsibility may actually be negatively rather than positively related.

The Mission Statement of the Task Force states:

> Seek to determine whether self-esteem, and personal and social responsibility are the keys to unlocking the secrets of healthy human development so that we can get to the roots of and develop effective solutions for major social problems and to develop and provide for every Californian the latest knowledge and practices regarding the significance of self-esteem, and personal and social responsibility.[38]

The Task Force believes that esteeming oneself and growing in self-esteem will reduce "dramatically the epidemic levels of social problems we currently face."[39] In order to investigate this relationship, the state Task Force hired eight professors from the University of California to look at the research on self-esteem as it relates to the six following areas:

1. Crime, violence and recidivism.
2. Alcohol and drug abuse.
3. Welfare dependency.
4. Teenage pregnancy.
5. Child and spousal abuse.
6. Children failing to learn in school.

Seven of the professors researched the above areas and the eighth professor summarized the results. The results were then published in a book

titled *The Social Importance of Self-Esteem*.[40] In the "Second Annual Progress Report" of the task force on self-esteem, "The Executive Summary" states:

> The statute creating the Task Force posed this as a basic question: What is the extent of the correlation between low self-esteem and six major social concerns (crime and violence, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, child and spousal abuse, chronic welfare dependency, and the failure to achieve in school)? Based on their first-hand experiences most therapists, counselors, teachers, and other social service professionals have long been certain of a direct link between low self-esteem and these personal and social ills, but there had not previously existed any recognized academic evidence of this connection. Now that evidence is in hand.[41]

Has the relationship been established between self-esteem and social problems? Dr. Neil Smelser, the professor who summarized the research presented in *The Social Importance of Self-Esteem*, says:

> The research reviewed in the following chapters has been carried out primarily with small ad hoc samples generated by researchers who have pulled together the sample from groups that were available to them through some personal or institutional contact. Small samples yield relations that cannot be regarded as statistically significant; when uncovered, these relations cannot permit causal inferences;

> and, above all, small samples do not permit the holding constant of other variables suspected of affecting the relationships between self-esteem and some outcomes.[42]

Smelser admits:

> **One of the disappointing aspects of every chapter in this volume ... is how low the associations between self-esteem and its consequences are in research to date**.[43] (Bold added.)

Smelser also says:

> The authors who have assessed the state-of-the-art knowledge of factors important in the genesis of many social problems have been unable to uncover many causally valid findings relating to that genesis—and they have therefore been correspondingly unable to come up with systematic statements relating to cure or prevention.[44]

David L. Kirk, syndicated writer for the *San Francisco Examiner*, says it more bluntly:

> *The Social Importance of Self-Esteem* summarizes all the research on the subject in the stultifyingly boring prose of wannabe scientists. Save yourself the 40 bucks the book costs and head straight for the conclusion: **There is precious little evidence that self-esteem is the cause of our social ills**.[45]

Kirk further says:

> Those social scientists looked hard ... but they could detect essentially **no cause-and-effect link between self-esteem and problematic behavior**, whether it's teen pregnancy, drug use or child abuse.[46] (Bold added.)

The research presented in that book is replete with statistical and methodological problems. Anyone who uses the book and its findings to support self-esteem as the cause or cure for the "epidemic level of social problems" listed above is grossly distorting the research.

John Vasconcellos, the California Assemblyman who authored the self-esteem legislation, says that self-esteem "most likely appears to be the social vaccine that inoculates us to lead lives apart from drugs and violence." However, Smelser, the professor who summarized the research, says in response to Vasconcellos that "self-esteem and social problems are too complicated to result in any simple conclusions.... When you get to looking for clear relationships as to cause and effect, particularly in areas so unclear as this one, you're not going to find them." [47]

Also, Dr. Thomas Scheff, one of the University of California professors who did the research, said that "thousands of studies have been done on self-esteem since World War II, but the results have been inconclusive."[48] One member of the Task Force was candid enough and perceptive enough to say:

> The Task Force's interpretation of the UC professors' academic findings **understates the absence of a significant linkage of self-esteem and the six social problems**.[49] (Bold added.)

In summary, a high-self-esteem-will-help-you-low-self-esteem-will-hurt-you formula is not biblical. Nor is it proven in the research. It is unfortunate that many Christian leaders and psychologists have chosen to promote self-esteem. Self-fulfillment, self-actualization, self-love, and the other combinations and permutations of self-enlarging words are just various facets of the desire to be like God, which originated in the Garden of Eden. **Amalgamating Scripture with psychological counseling theories feeds the flesh with a deceptively enticing message.**

9

Against Psychotherapy

This and the following chapters will affirm the ministry that believers gratefully used prior to the rise of the counseling mania by exposing the fallacious and foolish wisdom of men called "counseling" with its fabricated fetish of problem-centeredness. We do this by offering scientific reasons why one should not trust counseling. The evidence we present should be an encouragement to those who, regardless of education, degrees, or training, are equipped with the Sword of the Spirit to do battle in the ongoing spiritual warfare in this woefully wayward, wicked world (Eph. 6:10-18).

There is a plethora of scientific research on psychological counseling, also known as psychotherapy. We will briefly discuss the research findings, which we previously addressed in our past writings, in which we have given the specific scientific research support for what we have said by thoroughly footnoting original sources.[1] Here we reveal truths about psychotherapy that may apply to all similar counseling.

Alan Stone has said:

> The psychologizing of the American public has created an expanding market.... As a result of the psychologizing of the American public, people who have marital problems, sex problems, problems with their children, who are having psychological "discomfort" increasingly look for psychological help. It is an infinitely expanding market.[2]

Psychological counseling and its underlying psychologies are a powerful force in this century. They have virtually subdued biblical ministry or the cure of souls. Because of this overwhelming takeover, an important question must be asked: Does psychological counseling and its accompanying psychologies have something better to offer Christians than the ministry which the church provided since its inception?

Because of the great faith in what is believed to be science and the ever expanding numbers of people supposedly with mental disorders, psychotherapy continues to flourish with promises for change, cure, and happiness. Dr. Morris Parloff has said:

> The number of therapies and the variety of techniques continue to increase, the ranks of putative therapists swell, and the volume of consumers rises. The limits of this burgeoning enterprise give no signs of having been reached.[3]

Assurances of help are undergirded by testimonies and confidence in psychological models and methods. On the other hand, the outcome research

tells us something quite different about the effectiveness and the limitations of psychotherapy. The research we present is only the "tip of the iceberg" of what is available to show that psychotherapy is not a panacea or a palliative but may be a powerful placebo. While much research is presented we minimize the amount so as to make a point without overwhelming the reader.

Throughout psychotherapy's history we have seen the rise and wane of one therapy after another, one promise of cure after another, one hope of success after another, and one polluted psychological stream after another. The pendulum has swung 180 degrees through four forces of psychotherapy from Freud's rejection of religion as an illusion to new combinations of religion and psychotherapy. Psychotherapy has moved in its various iterations and forms from a dependency upon the natural world as being the sole reality in life to an inclusion of spirituality as a necessity. *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* (Fifth Edition) is regarded in the field as the most trustworthy volume on outcomes in psychotherapy. They say:

> A clear trend in psychotherapeutic interventions since the mid-1960s has been the proliferation not only of the types of practitioners, but also of the types and numbers of psychotherapies used alone and in combination in day-to-day practice. Garfield (1982) identified 60 forms of psychotherapy in use in the 1960s. In 1975, the Research Task Force of the National Institute of Mental Health estimated that there were 125 different forms. Herink

> (1980) listed over 200 separate approaches, while Kazdin (1986) noted 400 variants of psychotherapy.[4]

Currently it has been estimated that there are about 500 different psychotherapies, which are obviously not all compatible, and many of them are contradictory to one another.

RESEARCH AGAINST PSYCHOTHERAPY

Here we present evidence against the use of psychotherapy. In the next chapter we will discuss arguments given for the use of psychotherapy. However, a number of distinguished researchers disagree with the idea that psychotherapy is at all helpful and believe that either no treatment or sham treatment is equal to treatment. The best-known early research on the success and failure rates of psychotherapy was reported in 1952 by Dr. Hans J. Eysenck, an eminent English scholar, who is arguably the most cited psychological researcher of the past century. In his research Eysenck compared groups of patients treated by psychotherapy with persons given little or no treatment at all. Eysenck found that a greater percentage of patients who did not have psychotherapy improved over those who did undergo therapy. After examining over 8000 cases, Eysenck concluded that:

> ... roughly two-thirds of a group of neurotic patients will recover or improve to a marked extent within about two years of the onset of their illness, whether they are treated by means of psychotherapy or not.[5]

What Eysenck showed was that for the subjects he examined little differences in results could be found between those treated and those not treated. Since his study failed to prove the advantage of psychotherapy over no formal treatment, he remarked:

> From the point of view of the neurotic, these figures are encouraging; from the point of view of the psychotherapist, they can hardly be called very favorable to his claims.[6]

The significance of Eysenck's statement is overwhelming! Why refer people to psychological counseling if they will do just as well (on the average) without treatment?

Since 1952 the controversy has been raging over the difference, if any, between counseled and not-counseled persons. In 1979 a symposium was conducted on "The Outcome of Psychotherapy: Benefit, Harm, or No Change?" During the symposium, Eysenck reported the results of reviewing the history of the cures for mental patients in the hospital in which he works. He discovered that as far back as the late seventeenth century (1683-1703) about two-thirds of the patients were discharged as cured. Psychotherapy did not exist at that time, and yet the improvement rate was about the same as it is today. The so-called treatment consisted of the use of fetters, cold baths, solitary confinement, and even extraction of teeth for extreme punishment.

In his presentation Eysenck gave additional evidence for his earlier statement that about the same number of individuals will improve over a two-year period of time whether or not they receive therapy. He confirmed, "What I said over 25 years ago still

stands."[7] Later, in 1980 Eysenck wrote a letter to the *American Psychologist* supporting his original position.[8] Since then Eysenck has even more strongly supported his original position.[9]

CONTINUED RESEARCH AND CONTINUING CONTROVERSY

We will begin with the research a number of years ago and then bring it up to date. A number of years ago Mary L. Smith and Gene V. Glass did a review of a large number of research studies. Psychotherapists were encouraged because the review seemed to indicate that psychotherapy was indeed more effective than no treatment at all. Smith and Glass reviewed such a vast amount of research and used such sophisticated statistical methods that many who read the conclusions thought that finally, once and for all, the proof for psychotherapy had been established. However, at the time, psychiatrist Dr. Sol Garfield, in the book *Psychotherapy Research*, criticizes that conclusion which is based upon the approach used by Smith and Glass called meta-analysis. Garfield says that "instead of resolving forever the perennial controversy on the efficacy of psychotherapy, meta-analysis seemingly has led to an increased crescendo in the argument."[10]

The controversy over whether or not psychological counseling really helps people continues to rage in spite of the increase in research.[11] Garfield concludes a review of the research activities in psychotherapy by stating:

> Admittedly, we have a long way to go before we can speak more authoritatively about the efficacy, generality, and specificity of psychotherapy.... The present results on outcome, while modestly positive, are not strong enough for us to state categorically that psychotherapy is effective, or even that it is not effective.... Until we are able to secure more definitive research data, the efficacy of psychotherapy will remain a controversial issue.[12]

S. J. Rachman, Professor of Abnormal Psychology, and G. T. Wilson, Professor of Psychology, in their book *The Effects of Psychological Therapy*, also critique the Smith and Glass report. Rachman and Wilson point out its many serious errors and violations of sound statistical procedure. They say:

> Smith and Glass are naive in prematurely applying a novel statistical method to dubious evidence that is too complex and certainly too uneven and underdeveloped for anything useful to emerge. The result is statistical mayhem.[13]

After evaluating the Smith and Glass review as well as other disagreements with and criticisms of Eysenck, Rachman and Wilson support Eysenck's original position that there is no advantage of treatment over no treatment. Eysenck also mentions a study done by McLean and Hakstian which used a variety of treatment methods for depressed patients. One conclusion of the study was that, of the treatment methods used, psychotherapy was the least effective.[14]

EFFICACY UNCONFIRMED

For any form of psychotherapy to meet the criteria for efficacy, that therapy must show that its results are equal to or better than results from other forms of therapy and also better than no treatment at all. It must meet this criteria through standards set by independent observers who have no bias towards or against the therapy being examined. Also, the study must be able to be repeated and confirmed to indicate whether a therapy can be said to be helpful.[15]

Professor of psychiatry Donald Klein, in his testimony before the Subcommittee on Health of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Finance, said, "I believe that, at present, the scientific evidence for psychotherapy efficacy cannot justify public support."[16] As a result of the hearings, a letter from Jay Constantine, Chief, Health Professional Staff, reports:

> Based upon evaluations of the literature and testimony, it appears clear to us that there are virtually no controlled clinical studies, conducted and evaluated in accordance with generally accepted scientific principles, which confirm the efficacy, safety and appropriateness of psychotherapy as it is conducted today.
>
> Against that background, there is strong pressure from the psychological and psychiatric professions and related organizations to extend and expand Medicare and Medicaid payment for their services. Our concern is that, without validation of psychotherapy and its manifest forms and methods, and in view

> of the almost infinite demand (self-induced and practitioner-induced) which might result, we could be confronted with tremendous costs, confusion and inappropriate care.[17]

After summarizing a variety of research studies, Nathan Epstein and Louis Vlok state:

> We are thus left to conclude with the sad and paradoxical fact that for the diagnostic category in which most psychotherapy is applied—that of neurosis—the volume of satisfactory outcome research reported is among the lowest and the proven effectiveness of psychotherapy is minimal.[18]

Michael Shepherd from the Institute of Psychiatry in London summarizes the outcome studies in psychotherapy:

> A host of studies have now been conducted which, with all their imperfections, have made it clear that (1) any advantage accruing from psychotherapy is small at best; (2) the difference between the effects of different forms of therapy are negligible; and (3) psychotherapeutic intervention is capable of doing harm.[19]

The following statement from Rachman and Wilson, after extensive review of the research on the effects of psychotherapy is both revealing and shocking:

> It has to be admitted that the scarcity of convincing findings remains a continuing embarrassment, and the profession can regard itself

> as fortunate that the more strident advocates of accountability have not yet scrutinized the evidence. If challenged by external critics, which pieces of evidence can we bring forward? ... The few clear successes to which we can point are out-numbered by the failures, and both are drowned by the unsatisfactory reports and studies from which no safe conclusions can be salvaged.[20]

These authors conclude their book by saying:

> ... it is our view that modest evidence now supports the claim that psychotherapy is capable of producing some beneficial changes—but the negative results still outnumber the positive findings, and both of these are exceeded by reports that are beyond interpretation.[21]

The *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* reports:

> ... it is disheartening to find that there is still considerable controversy over the rate of improvement in neurotic disorders in the absence of formal treatment.[22]

Psychotherapy has not shown positive results in cases of substance abuse. *Newsweek* magazine reveals, "Individual psychotherapy, the rehab experts agree, is notoriously ineffective in treating addiction."[23] Dr. Stanton Peele, a top addiction researcher says:

> Among people in therapy to lose weight, stop smoking, kick a drug or drink addiction, as few as 5% actually make it.[24]

MIGHT PSYCHOTHERAPY IMPEDE CURE?

Peele believes that "therapy itself may inadvertently impede cure."[25] He summarizes his remarks by saying, "But here's the irony and the hope: Self-cure can work, and depending on someone else to cure you usually does not."[26] We believe that there is some justification to conclude that for all problems of living the best way out is by individual effort. The next best help is the informal support group, then the formal support group, and finally least effective is individual psychotherapy.

In the treatment of agoraphobia (abnormal fear of being in crowds, public places, or open spaces), the authors of one book make the following statements:

> Patients often attribute progress to the help that they receive from the therapist, and thus they feel dependent on continuing contact with him/her.
>
> Possibly as a result, progress does not usually continue after treatment has ended even though most patients still have some residual symptoms and disability.
>
> Patients who later experience a recurrence of acute anxiety may be unable to cope successfully without the help of the therapist, and so they relapse.

For these and other reasons, the authors conclude:

> Treatment should emphasize the practice that patients carry out by themselves; it

> should either involve nonprofessional helpers **or better still encourage complete self-reliance.**[27] (Bold added.)

The psychotherapeutic environment fosters reliance on the therapist. It may do so unintentionally, but it prolongs the treatment and creates a continuing source of income for the therapist. And, when relapse occurs, return visits. No matter how one may try to avoid it, therapist dependency is a factor to be considered when seeking therapeutic help.

"DOES PSYCHOTHERAPY WORK?"

Many think that the answer to the question of "Does psychotherapy work?" is obvious, but it is not. Hans Strupp, Suzanne Hadley, and Beverly Gomes-Schwartz, three eminent researchers in the field of outcomes in psychotherapy, conclude that "the urgent question being pressed by the public—Does psychotherapy work?—goes unanswered."[28] Suzanne Hadley, in response to a letter sent to her, said that "the question itself, 'Does psychotherapy work?' is at best a simplistic approach which defies an answer."[29]

A book entitled *Psychotherapy Research: Methodological and Efficacy Issues,* published by the American Psychiatric Association, indicates that a definite answer to the question, "Is psychotherapy effective?" may be unattainable. The book concludes by stating: "Unequivocal conclusions about causal connections between treatment and outcome may never be possible in psychotherapy research."[30] In other words, **they may never know for sure about the effectiveness of psychotherapy**. In reviewing

this book, The *Brain/Mind Bulletin* says, "Research often fails to demonstrate an unequivocal advantage from psychotherapy." The following is an interesting example from the book:

> ... an experiment at the All-India Institute of Mental Health in Bangalore found that Western-trained psychiatrists and native healers had a comparable recovery rate. The most notable difference was that the so-called "witch doctors" released their patients sooner.[31]

Researcher Dr. Allen Bergin admits that it is very hard to prove things in psychotherapy.[32] Because of the difficulties involved, one researcher says that there is a "paucity of sound research in this area."[33] Two writers indicate that "the paucity of 'outcome' data leaves the profession vulnerable to the familiar charge that it is not a science at all, but rather a 'belief system' that depends on an act of faith between the troubled patient and a supportive therapist."[34]

When Dr. Leonard Bickman was honored for his "Distinguished Contributions to Research" by the American Psychological Association (APA) he was invited to give an address at their annual convention. In his talk, "Practice Makes Perfect and Other Myths About Mental Health Services," he said:

> Concurrently psychologists have been unable to muster scientific evidence for the effectiveness of typical services. . . . Psychologists seem confident that effective services are assured by (a) more experienced clinicians, (b) degree programs, (c) continuing education, (d) licensing, (e) accreditation, and (f) clinical supervi-

sion. After reviewing relevant scientific literature, the author concludes that these are **myths with little or no evidence to support them**….

I label these beliefs as myths because they follow the Webster's dictionary definition of a myth as 'a belief given uncritical acceptance by the members of a group especially in support of existing or traditional practices and institutions.' ... I have identified six beliefs that are routinely used to bolster our confidence in the effectiveness of mental health services and yet have very little scientific support.

Myth 1: We Can Depend on Experienced Clinicians to Deliver Effective Services….

Myth 2: Advanced Degree Programs Produce More Effective Clinicians….

Myth 3: Continuing Education Improves the Effectiveness of Clinicians….

Myth 4: Licensing Helps Assure That Clinicians Will Be Effective….

Myth5: Accreditation of Health Delivery Organizations Improves Outcomes for Consumers….

Myth 6: Clinical Supervision Results in More Effective Clinicians….[35] (Bold added.)

CAVEAT EMPTOR (LET THE BUYER BEWARE)

We often hear about the possible help given by psychotherapy, but we rarely hear about its potential harm. A book by Richard B. Stuart entitled *Trick or Treatment, How and When Psychotherapy Fails* is filled with studies and reviews that show "how current psychotherapeutic practices often harm the patients they are supposed to help."[36] One group of researchers, after surveying the "best minds in the field of psychotherapy," conclude:

> It is clear that negative effects of psychotherapy are overwhelmingly regarded by experts in the field as a significant problem requiring the attention and concern of practitioners and researchers alike.[37]

Stuart is not alone in his concern about potential negative effects in therapy. Many other researchers are noting this danger zone in therapy. Bergin and Lambert say that "ample evidence exists that psychotherapy can and does cause harm to a portion of those it is intended to help."[38] Parloff, when Chief of the Psychosocial Treatments Research Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health, declared:

> In my view, it seems fair to conclude that although the empirical evidence is not firm, there is now a clinical consensus that psychotherapy, if improperly or inappropriately conducted, can produce psychonoxious effects. Most studies do not contemplate the possibility of negative effects.[39]

Carol Tavris warns:

> Psychotherapy can be helpful, especially if the therapist is warm and empathic, but sometimes it slows down a person's natural rate of improvement. In a small but significant number of cases, psychotherapy can be harmful and downright dangerous to a client. Most of the time it doesn't accomplish much of anything.[40]

The average figure of harmful effects is about ten percent.[41] This provides some support for a *caveat emptor* (buyer beware) warning to prospective patients. Michael Scriven, when he was a member of the American Psychological Association Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility, questioned "the moral justification for dispensing psychotherapy, given the state of outcome studies which would lead the FDA to ban its sale if it were a drug."[42]

Even after considering the most recent research on the subject, Scriven still refers to psychotherapy as a "weak possibility."[43] If psychotherapy can be harmful to one's mental health, some written warning (equivalent to the one on cigarette packages) ought to be given to potential buyers. When one considers the research which reveals detrimental effects of psychological counseling, one wonders if the overall potential for improvement is worth the risk.[44] Many therapists are reluctant to publicize and advertise anything but the positive results of psychological counseling. We agree with Dorothy Tennov, who says in her book *Psychotherapy: The Hazardous Cure:*

> ... if the purpose of the research is to prop up a profession sagging under the weight of its own ineffectiveness in a desperate last-ditch effort to find a rationale for its survival, we might prefer to put our research dollars elsewhere.[45]

Bergin once accused two well-known writers in the field of being too concerned about harming the image of psychotherapy in the eyes of government, insurance companies, and consumers. He said:

> The implication is that "harmful effects" will impinge upon our pocketbooks if we are not more careful about publishing evidence on therapy-induced deterioration.[46]

We wonder to what extent money, academic rank, and vested interests in training programs influence the outlook and reaction of therapists to research detrimental to the psychological way.

OTHER FACTORS

How many of the positive results of psychotherapy are due to the "experimenter effect"? The experimenter effect is the tendency of a researcher (mostly unintended) to bias results in the direction of his expectation or beliefs. Derek Freeman, in his book *Margaret Mead and Samoa,* and Martin Gardner, in the *Skeptical Inquirer,* document how much the distinguished anthropologist Margaret Mead biased data in the direction of her own beliefs. This experimenter effect occurred in her investigation of the Samoan culture, UFO'S, dowsing, psychic powers, and trance behavior.[47]

One text on the subject presents "evidence that an experimenter's expectancy may serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy of his subject's responses."[48] It has been found in various research settings that expecting a result or a certain kind of behavior increases the probability of it occurring (self-fulfilling prophecy). Teachers have learned that if they expect certain students to do well they probably will. On the other hand, if they expect certain students will do poorly they probably will. It would be natural for a therapist to expect positive results from psychotherapy and therefore either encourage it or interpret the results positively.

Another factor which would cause questionability is that studies determining the efficacy of psychotherapy are usually based upon the use of the best therapists. When one is doing a study, he ends up with a select group of therapists. The therapists are asked because they are known to be good therapists or the therapists agree to participate because they are confident in their counseling abilities. Bergin and Lambert, in reference to the positive results that they have found of treatment over no treatment, say:

> ... we believe that a major contributor to these newer findings is that more experienced and competent therapists have been used in recent studies.[49]

The use of above-average therapists would tend to inflate outcome results.

Bergin reports how outcome studies depend on the use of good therapists and not those who are average or below.[50] This raises several questions

which research does not answer. First: "Does the use of average psychotherapists yield better results on treated patients than no treatment at all?" Second: "How much more deterioration occurs with average psychotherapists on treated groups compared with no treatment at all?" And, finally: "How many good therapists are there?" No one really knows how many good therapists there are. Nor does anyone know whether no treatment would yield better results than the use of average or below-average therapists. Furthermore, no one knows how high the harm rate is with average or below-average therapists.

However, there **is** some doubt as to whether there are many good therapists. Researchers Truax and Mitchell say, "From existing data it would appear that only one out of three people entering professional training has the requisite interpersonal skills to prove helpful to patients."[51] Two other researchers estimate that only one-fifth of the therapists are competent.[52] On top of this, some studies have indicated that while "warmth and empathy are highly important variables in determining client benefit ... graduate programs do not help students to greatly increase their interpersonal skills."[53] The authors of *Psychotherapy for Better or Worse* note that "the therapist himself was one of the most often cited sources of negative effects in psychotherapy."[54]

The research studies are not only based upon the use of above-average psychotherapists. They use almost exclusively other-than-private-practice therapists. One review of psychotherapy research revealed only fifteen private-practice studies were done during a twenty-five-year period of time. There

are few such studies because private-practice psychotherapists are reluctant to participate.[55]

One additional factor which would inflate improvement results in favor of treatment over no treatment is that of research procedure. Generally the therapist, the patient, and the one evaluating the results all know that research is being conducted. It has been shown through other studies that such knowledge tends to inflate results. Dr. Arthur Shapiro says:

> The design of almost all studies does not fulfill the essential prerequisite for an adequate or double-blind study, which requires that there is no possibility that patients, clinicians, researchers, and statisticians can break the code before the statistical results are completely tabulated and analyzed. [56]

Often research results are biased by the researcher himself. J. Richard Greenwell, after analyzing a questionnaire, reports:

> We are now reasonably sure that scientists' notions of reality are influenced not only by objective conditions but also by subjective considerations.[57]

Morris Parloff declares:

> You have to ask "Who does research?" By and large those motivated to do research have a point they want to prove, and generally they do the kind of research that will prove it.[58]

George Miller says:

> People do not usually try to disprove their own ideas.... People seldom find anything they're not looking for. All research is done where the light is best.[59]

David Myers notes:

> Even when observing purely random events, people easily become convinced that significant relationships are occurring—when they expect to see them.[60]

It may be that this illusory correlation is the influencing factor in many of the research results which are favorable towards psychotherapy. Myers, in his book *The Inflated Self,* indicates that there is an illusion of efficacy which often occurs when people go for psychotherapy. The illusion of efficacy is an illusory belief about causation.[61] Testimonies are given about self-improvement after intense journal workshops, Gestalt therapy, transactional analysis, body work, est, Senoi dream education, etc. There seems to be a cause and effect here: a workshop or other experience is followed by an improvement. Therefore the person concludes that the workshop must have caused it, whether there was any connection or not.

Psychotherapist Allan Fromme claims that any change will usually result in improvement, no matter what it is.[62] Myers explains:

> The principle of "regression toward the average" also contributes to the illusion of efficacy since people tend to seek help when things have hit bottom, any activity that is then

> undertaken may seem to be effective—to both the client and the therapist.[63]

In summary, it cannot be said categorically that psychotherapy itself is or is not effective, or that there is a possibility of greater improvement with or without treatment, or how much harm may occur during the treatment. However, these are serious considerations for anyone recommending or seeking treatment, especially when some research indicating that treatment may be helpful could have inflated results due to the use of the best therapists or due to biased results. In the next chapter we will consider arguments that are given for using psychotherapy.

10

For Psychotherapy

In this chapter we will pursue the claim that psychotherapy does work. However, understanding why it purportedly works is necessary for knowing how it works and that is what we will show. We will present psychotherapy in the most positive light that research permits. Then we will add the research details of the broader picture of the various facets of it. **We will demonstrate that, if one is honest and fair about the positive research results, one will at minimum question the use of professional psychotherapy, if not reject it altogether.**

The *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* (*Handbook*) is regarded as the bible of outcomes of psychotherapy. It contains numerous studies and reviews of outcomes of psychotherapy revealing its claimed successes and admitted failures. In spite of all the weaknesses of and questions about all the research studies and reviews, we agree with the *Handbook*'s conclusion that "psychotherapy is beneficial," i.e., it works.[1] **Later we will reveal**

the surprising reasons why and how it may be beneficial (i.e., it works), which call into question why Christians place such inordinate confidence in psychotherapy. For now we list some research caveats that reveal a true picture of psychotherapy that few in the church are aware of.

In his book titled *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion*, psychologist Dr. O. Hobart Mowrer asks the following question: "Has evangelical religion sold its birthright for a mess of psychological pottage?"[2] Christians need to remember their birthright and carefully, objectively, seriously, and prayerfully examine this mess of psychological pottage.

A reminder: At one time Freudian psychoanalysis was regarded as the ne plus ultra of the mind cures; now in its pure form it is held in disregard by many. Distinguished researchers Dr. Bruce E. Wampold et al explain the dilemma well in their "Research Forum," published in *The Behavior Therapist*. Please excuse the complexity of the following, but it is the last sentence that is the most important.

> Given the complexity of the therapeutic endeavor, it is not surprising that interpreting the *evidence* is complex—if it were not, the debate surrounding empirically supported treatments (EST) would be inconspicuously absent.... What constitutes evidence is ultimately decided by a confluence of two factors—the phenomenon itself and people.... The phenomenon, under various environmental conditions, is observed by people (i.e., the scientists), who then draw conclusions about the phenomenon. **The road from obser-**

> **vation to conclusion is saturated with social influences on the scientist**.[3] (Italics theirs; bold added.)

One's counseling approach is finally confirmed in "the eye of the beholder." **No matter the training, certification, or academic degree of the counselor, the sum of the counselor's background adds up to whatever is received, modified, and applied by the counselor to the counselee in the counseling office.**

"ONLY MILD TO MODERATE RELIEF"

Some years back the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Commission on Psychotherapies published a book titled *Psychotherapy Research: Methodological and Efficacy Issues*. In it the APA stated: "Whether the magnitude of the psychotherapy effect is medium or small remains a moot point; **no one has claimed that it is large.**"[4] (Bold added.) While no researchers would claim that psychotherapy's level of relief is large, many practitioners and popularizers of psychology do.

Many new psychotherapies and research studies have occurred since the APA's findings, but the same conclusion remains. In an interview with Dr. Martin Seligman, past president of the American Psychological Association, he was asked:

> As a therapist and researcher who has spent three decades trying to build a bridge between the world of science and the world of everyday practice, are you impressed with the hard evidence of psychotherapy's effectiveness?

After discussing the results of averaging all the therapy outcome studies, Seligman admitted that "by and large, we produce only mild to moderate relief." After "regularly revising a formal textbook about abnormal psychology that has gone through five editions" over the past 25 years, Seligman indicated that not much has changed over the years with respect to his conclusion of "**only mild to moderate relief**" from psychotherapy.[5] Dr, Hans Strupp, a distinguished professor at Vanderbilt University, says, "**Psychotherapy is most helpful to those who need it least**."[6] (Bold added.)

While some individual lives may change dramatically and others may remain the same or become worse, **scientific research on psychological counseling indicates that, on average, counseling probably produces "only mild to moderate relief."** In the remainder of this chapter we will explore how and why it produces "only mild to moderate relief."

EQUAL OUTCOMES PHENOMENON

There are about 500 different approaches in the field of psychotherapy. Generally when psychotherapies have been tested and compared, it has been found that, with certain exceptions, they all work and are about equally effective. Dr. Morris Parloff, former Chief of the Psychosocial Treatment Research branch of National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) refers to the "disconcerting finding that all forms of psychotherapy are effective and that all forms of psychotherapy appear to be equally effective."[7] He says:

> No consistent differences are found among different forms of therapy in terms of type or degree of benefit with comparable patients.[8]

A six-year, ten-million-dollar study coordinated by the NIMH compares two forms of talk therapy with drug treatment. The two approaches used were cognitive behavioral therapy and interpersonal therapy. Both forms of talk therapy worked equally well. *Time* reports:

> The general finding that the two different talk therapies are about equally effective strengthens the hand of those who believe that since most therapies get about the same results, the hotly debated differences among talk treatments are basically irrelevant.[9]

American Health quoted Parloff as saying:

> Nearly 500 rigorously controlled studies have shown with almost monotonous regularity that all forms of psychological treatment ... are comparably effective.[10]

Dr. Bruce Wampold is a distinguished researcher who has been given an award by the APA for "using sophisticated meta-analysis techniques and the results of thousands of psychotherapy studies" which "provide scientific evidence as to the causes of the efficacy of psychotherapy."[11] Wampold says, "Generally it has been found that **all treatments are generally equivalent,**" i.e., there are only minor differences. There is not one psychotherapy that stands out above the rest. [12]

Bergin says, "Comparative studies reveal few differences across techniques, thus suggesting that

nontechnical or personal variables account for much of the change."[13] Smith, Glass and Miller, in analyzing 475 outcome studies found little influence of results due to technique factors.[14] Psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin admits:

> The omniscient and totally self-assured psychotherapist exists only in the movies. Of course each school of therapists has its own ideas and techniques, but they all know that they stumble around confusedly when their techniques don't work, which is more often than not.[15]

Donald Klein, New York State Psychiatric Institute, and Judith Rabkin of Columbia University have examined the area of specificity (professional factors) versus generality (personal factors). They say that "specificity usually implies that the specific technique is necessary so that the particular outcome simply cannot be accomplished without it."[16] They say:

> A core, covert issue in the specificity debate is the uncomfortable realization that if all psychotherapies work about the same then all of our elaborate psychogenic etiological hypotheses are called into question.[17]

And, if all hypotheses are called into question, then all third party payments should be too. Of course that is the life blood of most psychotherapists. Their worst nightmare would be the termination of such a lucrative and easy source of payments.

Dr. Joseph Wortis, State University of New York, reduces the problem of generality down to its low-

est common denominator. He says, "The proposition of whether psychotherapy can be beneficial can be reduced to its simplest terms of whether talk is very helpful." He goes on to say, "And that doesn't need to be researched. It is self evident that talk can be helpful."[18] What a simple yet profound statement! It is transparently true with devastating implications not only for third party payments, but for all payments to psychotherapists.

Researcher James Pennebaker, an associate professor at Southern Methodist University, showed a relationship between confiding in others and health. He showed that lack of confiding is related to health problems. One could conclude from his research that, to paraphrase an old adage, the conversation of confession is good for the soul—and apparently for the body too.[19]

Dr. Robert Spitzer, Columbia University and New York State Psychiatric Institute, takes this concept a bit further by giving a hypothetical example of someone proving efficacy for a specific psychotherapeutic technique. He then goes on to speak of those who might provide this service "for the lowest dollar." He continues his hypothetical example by supposing that a "mental health aide" can perform the service for a lot less than the licensed professional. He concludes by challenging his colleagues on how they would feel about a mental health aide providing the service for a lot less.[20] It is certain that such a conclusion, which is a highly likely one, if established under research conditions, would be rejected by the psychotherapeutic community.

A research group summed up the evidence on psychotherapy's effectiveness by referring to the dodo

bird in *Alice in Wonderland*. On one occasion in the story, all the animals were wet and the dodo bird suggested that a "caucus-race" would be the best way to get dry. The dodo bird marked out a race course "in a sort of circle." The animals could start anywhere or stop and start when and where they wanted during the race. A "half hour or so" after the race started, it was obvious that the animals were all dry. Then the dodo bird called out, "The race is over!" The animals then wanted to know who had won the race. After some thought, the dodo bird announced, "*Everybody* has won, and *all* must have prizes."[21]

This anecdote has often been used throughout the psychotherapy literature to illustrate what the research indicates about the effectiveness of psychotherapy.[22] Not all of the approximately 500 approaches to therapy have been tested, but for the many that have, the overwhelming conclusion is "*Everybody* has won, and *all* must have prizes." In other words, all psychotherapies appear to work equally well, even though many contradict each other. With certain exceptions, the research findings add up to the claim that **all psychotherapies work and all seem to work equally well no matter how contrary they are to one another**. This result is known in the research literature as the "**equal outcomes phenomenon**."[23] We will soon reveal why this is so.

The fourth edition of the *Handbook* states:

> …meta-analytic methods [a statistical procedure] have now been extensively applied to large groups of comparative studies, and these reviews generally offer similar conclu-

> sions (i.e., little or no difference between therapies).[24]

It may appear that we are making a case for psychotherapy rather than against it. But, is the equal outcomes result evidence in favor of or against psychotherapy? If one uses the dodo bird, the equal outcomes result, to support the use of professional psychotherapy, that would be a dodo (i.e., foolish or stupid) conclusion. Why? Because, what works is common to all.

The *Handbook*'s "Summation" makes the point of equal outcomes even more powerful by stating:

> With some exceptions, which we will consider, there is massive evidence that **psychotherapeutic techniques do not have specific effects**; yet there is tremendous resistance to accepting this finding as a legitimate one.[25] (Bold added.)

Parloff and Dr. Irene Elkin say:

> The specificity hypothesis would lead one to expect that specific benefits are associated with the application of specific strategies, procedures, techniques and experience. The failure to find empirical support for such expectations provoked the formulation of the nonspecificity or common factors hypothesis.[26]

Psychiatrist Jerome Frank says that from the therapists' view, "little glory derives from showing that the particular method one has mastered with so much effort may be indistinguishable from other methods in its effects."[27] The fact that there are

about 500 different, often-conflicting psychological counseling approaches and thousands of not-often-compatible techniques with various incompatible underlying psychological theories must raise a huge question mark over **why they all seem to work equally well**. The exception to this conclusion is the fact that there are certain types of psychological therapies, such as regressive therapy, that produce up to forty percent detrimental effects.

This equal-outcomes finding, for which we provide research support elsewhere,[28] is not believed by those with individual therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive behavioral therapy and psychodynamic therapy. **However, the fact of the matter is that no one has been able to demonstrate scientifically that there is a best approach when it comes to psychotherapy or any form of counseling.** If research established that one of the almost 500 approaches to psychotherapy were declared the winner, there would be only one counseling approach agreed to by all. For every research report that declares one of the approaches to be the best there will be other research reports that will discredit that conclusion and claim equal outcomes.

COMMON FACTORS

The equal outcomes phenomenon (all therapies work and all seem to work equally well) naturally raises the question of what factors are common to all therapies. **What are some common factors that would, on the average, give all therapies and therapists mild to moderate positive results?** Therapy consists of a counselee or client, a coun-

selor or therapist, and the conversation, which is the medium through which counseling methodology moves. Thus, the counselee, counselor, and conversation are the three most obvious factors to investigate to find what might be common to all therapies. Of these three, and far more important than the other two, is the person being counseled. As a matter of fact, it would be quite appropriate to say that **the counselee is not only the most important factor in counseling, but is also the one factor that determines the usefulness of the other two factors**.

Counselee (Client)

There are various research guesses about exactly how important the counselee is in the process of change. However, **there is no question that the counselee is the most important and essential element in change**.

Counselor/Rapport

Henri F. Ellenberger gives a detailed history of the background and emergence of psychotherapy in his monumental book *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*. He says, "Whatever the psychotherapeutic procedure, it showed the same common basic feature: the presence and utilization of the rapport."[29] If a counselor is to best assist the counselee, **rapport is both a necessary ingredient and a common factor in all counseling and psychotherapy**. Through rapport a bonding occurs between the counselor and the counselee.

As mentioned earlier, these formalized conversations between a person in need and a counselor began with Franz Anton Mesmer. Because Mesmer's theory included the idea of a magnetic fluid, he and those who followed him were known as magnetizers.[30] Mesmer eventually recognized the important element of rapport. In reporting on the origins of psychotherapy through Mesmer, Ellenberger says:

> A magnetizer, Mesmer proclaimed, is the therapeutic agent of his cures: his power lies in himself. To make healing possible, **he must first establish a rapport**, that is a kind of "tuning in," with his patient.[31] (Bold added.)

Ellenberger also says: "Psychotherapy relied mostly upon the use of hypnotism and suggestion, **with special consideration given to the rapport between patient and magnetizer**" (bold added).[32] The rapport necessary was developed through conversation, which Mesmer formalized during his time.

Researchers are becoming more and more aware that the interpersonal qualities of the counselor far outweigh his training and techniques. Psychiatrist Dr. E. Fuller Torrey reports:

> The research shows that certain personal qualities of the therapist—accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness—are of crucial importance in producing effective psychotherapy.

He notes that:

> ... therapists who possess these qualities consistently and convincingly get better thera-

> peutic results than those who do not possess them.[33]

When Sloane et al compared psychotherapy and behavior therapy, they found that:

> Successful patients in both therapies rated the personal interaction with the therapist as the single most important part of their treatment.[34]

Frank contends:

> Anyone with a modicum of human warmth, common sense, some sensitivity to human problems, and a desire to help can benefit many candidates for psychotherapy.[35]

Bergin says that "change appears to be a function of common human interactions, including personal and belief factors."[36] Dr. Lewis Thomas says:

> Most psychiatrists of my acquaintance are skilled in therapy, but the therapy, when it works, is really plain friendship.[37]

Frank says that "the effectiveness of a psychotherapeutic method depends more on the therapist than the technique."[38] Bergin suggests that it is not psychotherapies that help people get better, but rather psychotherapists.[39] In other words, it is not the system which is important, but rather the person. Bryce Nelson says:

> Many patients now use their psychotherapist as a substitute for someone who might, in an earlier day, have filled the need for intimate

> conversation—a good friend, a wise relative, a priest.[40]

Dr. Jay Haley says that:

> ... the exploration of the human psyche may be irrelevant to therapeutic change ... it is argued here that change occurs as a product of the interpersonal context of that exploration rather than the self-awareness which is brought about in the patient.[41]

Frank agrees that the "personal qualities of the therapist and the way he behaves soon outweigh symbols of his therapeutic role."[42] The *Handbook* states:

> So far we can probably safely say that psychological good health, flexibility, open-mindedness, positive attitudes toward people, and interpersonal skill are associated with success as a psychotherapist.[43]

However, these characteristics are not restricted to psychotherapists. They are characteristics of all helping individuals.

The current research stresses the great importance of rapport for success in counseling and calls it the "therapeutic alliance." This term and its significance in successful counseling is repeatedly seen in the literature.[44]

A *Psychology Today* article says:

> Researchers who compare the success rates of various schools find that by and large, techniques and methods don't matter. What does matter is the powerful bond between thera-

> pist and patient. The strength of this "therapeutic alliance" seems to spell the difference between successful therapy and a washout.[45]

Wampold reveals through his meticulous research that the characteristics of the counselee and the counselor and their relationship (therapeutic alliance) had a far greater impact than the treatment approaches. Wampold's research further demonstrates that there are **no differences in outcomes** when bona-fide treatments (i.e., those that have not demonstrated detrimental effects that would disqualify them) are compared.[46]

The *Harvard Mental Health Letter* refers to the therapeutic alliance and says that it is "the working relationship between patient and therapist that is probably the most important influence on the outcome of therapy."[47]

Psychotherapy Networker says:

> The incontrovertible evidence is in: studies of the top 25 percent of therapists—those whose success rates are at least 50 percent better than the average—show unequivocally that neither training, experience, personality style, theoretical orientation, nor (get this) innate talent—has anything much to do with what makes the greats better than all the rest.... The therapeutic alliance—the ability to engage a client in therapy, to forge and maintain a strong, personal connection with her, convince her that the two of you are on a common path—remains the single most important element of all therapy.[48]

Regardless of the counseling approach, the two most important factors for success are the personal qualities and circumstances of the one who comes for help and the rapport that exists between the counselor and counselee, which is a judgment the counselee makes.

IS PSYCHOTHERAPY A PLACEBO?

We next reveal the extent of the power that some attribute to the placebo in the success of psychotherapy. Dr. Arthur Shapiro, clinical professor of psychiatry at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, suggests that the power of psychological counseling may be the effect of a placebo. The placebo effect takes place when one has faith in a pill, a person, a process or procedure, and it is this faith that brings about the healing. The pill, person, process, or procedure may all be fake, but the result is real. Shapiro says:

> Just as bloodletting was perhaps the massive placebo technique of the past, so psychoanalysis—and its dozens of psychotherapy offshoots—is the most used placebo of our time.[49]

Dr. Hans Eysenck dramatically states:

> It is unfortunate for the well-being of psychology as a science that ... the great majority of psychologists, who after all are practicing clinicians, will pay no attention whatsoever to the negative outcome of all the studies carried on over the past thirty years but will continue to use methods which have by now not only failed to find evidence in support of

> their effectiveness, but for which there is now ample evidence that they are no better than placebo treatments.

He goes on to ask:

> Do we really have the right to impose a lengthy training on medical doctors and psychologists in order to enable them to practice a skill which has no practical relevance to the curing of neurotic disorders? Do we have the right to charge patients fees, or get the State to pay us for a treatment which is no better than a placebo?[50]

All of this and more add an exclamation mark to the question mark hanging over psychotherapy.

If psychotherapy indeed operates as a placebo, the psychological approach one uses does not matter. The patient will interpret what he is receiving as helping him whether it does or not. His thinking will then influence the result. Thomas says:

> Protests against bleeding had been raised as early as the 1830's, and a few eminent physicians wrote papers asserting that it generally did more harm than good, but it took a long time to pass from favor.[51]

Could it be that psychotherapy will go the way of bloodletting? William Kroger says:

> The fact that there are contradictory theories being employed with identical results in a wide variety of psychotherapies indicates that here, too, a placebo effect is in operation![52]

Kroger notes that faith and the placebo effect have been constant over a period of time while there have been a variety of new and different therapeutic approaches. He concludes that "it is certain that our present cure rate for many of the psychogenic entities would not differ appreciably from that of any other period."[53]

Thomas Kiernan, author of *Shrinks, Etc.*, says:

> In the end, psychotherapy is a state of mind. If you are convinced it can help you, the likelihood is that it will; if you are convinced of the opposite, the likelihood is that it won't.[54]

A number of studies support the idea that mental, emotional, and even physical change may occur simply because of expectations. Simply expecting to improve will often set the stage for improvement. In fact, the authors of a book on the placebo effect say, "It may be that interventions differ in effectiveness because they differentially elicit expectancy of benefit."[55] Dr. David Shapiro calls this the **"expectancy arousal hypothesis," which is that "treatments differ in effectiveness only to the extent that they arouse in clients differing degrees of expectation of benefit**."[56]

A study of the use of acupuncture at one university indicates that expectation of relief on the part of the patient can influence the results. The researchers concluded that acupuncture "requires a specific psychological attitude on the part of the recipient to potentiate its effect." The remarks that the experimenters made to the patients encouraged higher expectations. The researchers found that:

> Acupuncture significantly reduced pain only when administered in conjunction with procedures designed to enhance subjects' expectation for successful treatment.[57]

Other studies have shown that a variety of anxiety and stress symptoms can even be reduced by giving false information to subjects. Through the use of false feedback with biofeedback devices, a patient receives a sense of self-control. As the false feedback communicates increasing levels of success the patient believes that he has greater self-control. Over a period of weeks the subjects report a decrease in stress symptoms.[58] One reason for such improvements is suggested by two studies which indicate that "paying attention to your body at specific times, not the physiological changes biofeedback produces, may be responsible for its success."[59]

Another study reported that false information about room temperature can influence bodily comfort. The study showed that "misinforming people about room temperature can lead them to feel warmer or cooler than they might if they knew the actual temperature."[60]

One form of psychotherapy, called Social Influence Therapy, purposely uses false feedback in order to achieve success. One practitioner of this brand of therapy says:

> Humanitarian fervor aside, it's the therapist's job to take power over the patient, push ahead with solving the problem, then convince the patient he or she is better, even if it means being devious.[61]

This therapist claims, "Successful therapy can almost be reduced to a formula." The main part of the formula is to convince the "client that the therapy is definitely working apart from any objective evidence of change."[62] In this form of therapy flattery, distortion, lies, and all forms of what is euphemistically called "false feedback" are used, and with success. Ethics aside, this form of therapy is a testimony to the power of the placebo.

If one out of three individuals finds relief through the use of a medical placebo, what percent of the individuals who see a psychotherapist receive similar relief through a type of mental placebo? A group of researchers at Wesleyan University compared the benefits of psychotherapy with those of placebo treatments. The placebo treatments were activities (such as discussion of current events, group play reading, and listening to records) that attempted to help individuals without the use of psychotherapeutic techniques. The researchers concluded:

> ...after about 500 outcome studies have been reviewed—we are still not aware of a single convincing demonstration that the benefits of psychotherapy exceed those of placebos for real patients.[63]

Arthur Shapiro criticized his professional colleagues at the annual meeting of the American Psychopathological Association for ignoring placebo effects and therefore skewing the results of their research.[64] He believes that if placebo effects were considered in the Smith and Glass survey mentioned earlier "that there would be no difference between psychotherapy and placebo."[65]

The placebo not only affects the individual, but it affects those who come in contact with the individual. Everyone tends to feel and believe that progress will be made because something is being done. The placebo effect, along with other factors just mentioned, greatly diminishes the authority of any positive results reported for psychotherapy.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COUNSELING

John C. Norcross and Marvin R. Goldfield, in their academic text of psychotherapy research and results, estimate that the counselee and the rapport (therapeutic alliance) if established by the counselor would average about 70 percent of the success with **counselee or client factors being the greater of the two**.[66] However, think about it. Who determines whether the **rapport or therapeutic alliance** is effective? Who decides whether the counselee/counselor relationship is a warm, empathic, sympathetic one? Answer: **the counselee does**. The counselor may try to establish rapport through various means, but the counselee is the one who responds or rejects, and thus the estimated figure of 70 percent of any success really has to do with the counselees and how they view the relationship.

One therapeutic alliance (rapport) researcher says:

> When you're a therapist, you think you know the most important things about your client and therapy; it's the client's perceptions about

> how things are going that have the greatest predictive value of the outcome of therapy.[67]

After surveying counselees who had recently been in therapy, the authors of the study concluded:

> The most powerful alliance-building behaviors turn out to be basic human courtesies and fundamental relationship skills, which have nothing to do with therapists' techniques or diagnostic abilities. Greeting clients with a smile, making eye contact, sitting still without fidgeting, identifying and reflecting back feelings, making encouraging and positive comments, truthfully sharing negative information, normalizing feelings and experiences, and remembering details from previous sessions turned out to be extremely important factors.[68]

This evidence is seen repeatedly in the research: that the counselees' perceptions of the counselor "have the greatest predictive value of the outcome in therapy" and the personal qualities of the counselor that are rapport building will encourage the counselee to receive whatever counseling is offered. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the counseling still depends on the counselee receiving it.

In addition to the 70 percent for the counselee and counselor, the authors give 15 percent for the placebo effect as an important factor for success. Remember, the placebo effect is a sham treatment, in this case a psychological treatment that through belief on the part of the counselee is received and responded to as a valid treatment.[69] In other words, no matter

what the psychological treatment by the counselor, the counselee responds positively to it and there is a therapeutic effect. **Notice that it does not matter what the treatment is; the receiving and responding are on the part of the counselee. Thus the resulting estimate should add up to about 85 percent for the counselee.**

If one combines the interpersonal qualities of the therapists, the external factors involved outside the office, and the placebo effect, one may account for much of what may be working to bring about any success in psychotherapy. In other words, the particular psychological approach is not what leads to change, nor the theories, training, or techniques. It is the interpersonal environment provided by the counselor, plus spontaneous remission factors, plus the placebo effect. And all of these, of course, pale in comparison to the individual's desire to change and his willingness to take the responsibility to do so.

Finally, in addition to the 15 percent for the placebo effect, Norcross and Goldfield give only 15 percent to the type of conversation or techniques used. However, we remind the reader of the equal outcomes phenomenon, which means that no specific counseling and no specific technique is necessarily the best and thus required for success. **Excluding the counseling that is known to be detrimental, whatever technique or theory is selected has a considerably smaller effect than the counselee/client factors.** However, a small effect can have a major impact on the outcome when it is detrimental and the outcome negative.

When evaluating formal treatment, one needs to remember that the patient's environment and activ-

ities outside of the treatment sessions may have more to do with improvement than the treatment itself. Any factors which influence the no treatment improvement rate may be at work to influence the success rate in therapy. Eysenck, in reporting on the well-known Sloan study of outcomes in psychotherapy, mentions how this study showed a 77 percent spontaneous remission rate. He declares, "Whatever you do [whatever treatment] spontaneous remission will do the work for you or most of it."[70] Spontaneous remission is due to such factors as change in circumstances (e.g., new job), a personal change (e.g., thinking different thoughts or deciding to change), or the help of nonprofessionals (e.g., friends or relatives).

Torrey claims that "psychotherapy *does* work and that its effectiveness is primarily due to four basic components—a shared worldview, personal qualities of the therapist, client expectations, and an emerging sense of mastery."[71] (Italics his.) All of these factors are at play in all effective human relationships. None of these factors requires psychological training, psychological techniques, psychological degrees, or psychological licensing. All of these factors may be at work whether a person is in therapy or not. The same factors which lead to improvement outside of formal treatment also work inside of formal treatment, or alongside it, which adds more questionability to the whole psychotherapeutic mind game.

In summary, the counselee is the keystone to successful counseling. This fact is the reason for psychotherapies being about equally effective (equal outcomes phenomenon), with the exception of those that produce as much as a 40 percent harm rate

mentioned above. **In other words, the counselees who are motivated to succeed, who engage in the rapport with the counselor (therapeutic alliance), and who believe that they are receiving a valid treatment (placebo effect) will most likely succeed, regardless of the counseling approach and regardless of the counselor being an amateur or professional.** Therefore, counselees who meet these conditions and are given entirely different types and even contradictory therapies tend to have similar mild to moderate success rates. However, those who minister to fellow believers in need should have as their highest goal to encourage relationship with Jesus rather than to enhance their own therapeutic alliance.

Because of the equal outcomes phenomenon, one should not be afraid to minister biblically, because the Bible offers what no counseling outside of it can offer and that is salvation, spiritual growth, and an eternity with Jesus. Ministering biblically would go far beyond the equal outcomes level of mild to moderate change! **We challenge anyone to demonstrate through scientific evidence that there is even one psychological counseling theory, technique, or methodology that can trump the biblical care of souls to the extent that it would, on average, produce a better success rate.**

11

PsychoQuackery

Because the psychology that gives rise to psychotherapy is not science and has not proven itself in either research or reality and because it has unnecessarily replaced religious cures, it would be appropriate to label it "psychoquackery" and regard it as psychoheresy. **Psychoquackery becomes psychoheresy when it is combined with Christian verbiage.** Psychotherapy and its philosophical and practical implications and influence could very well be intrinsic to the great last days' seduction.

There is so much fixation on professionalism that simple human interaction is ignored. Yet it is this human interchange that is of utmost importance. This is precisely the area about which the Bible says so much. The Bible teaches how one person should regard another, encourage another, and even correct another. **No license, no degrees, and no professional training are necessary to learn and apply the most powerful factors in human change available to mankind.** They are found in the most readily available Textbook in the world and

the Teacher has been given as a gift from God. The Teacher never sleeps and is thus always available. His fee is the most reasonable in the industry.

PROFESSIONALS VERSUS AMATEURS

We now reveal the startling fact that it has not been demonstrated that professional counselors do any better than amateurs. Professionals are those individuals who, through extensive training (usually at least a Master's degree) and licensing, practice counseling, which includes a variety of names, such as psychotherapy. Amateurs are those individuals who do not have the above training and license, but at times are provided with a minimum of training before counseling others. One dictionary definition of a *paraprofessional* is "a person inexperienced or unskilled in a particular activity," in this case counseling.

Many people assume that psychological training is the most important pre-requisite for improvement. However, the conclusions of researchers suggest that if psychotherapy does help it has little to do with techniques or training. Researcher Ruth Matarazzo says:

> It has never been established that high levels of education and/or training are necessary to the development of an effective psychotherapist.[1]

According to Ernest Havemann, William Glasser (the originator of Reality Therapy) "says he could teach any bright young trainee all he needs to know about the theory in a day."[2]

Truax and Mitchell contend:

> There is no evidence that the usual traditional graduate training program has any positive value in producing therapists who are more helpful than nonprofessionals.[3]

After reviewing a vast amount of psychotherapy outcome research, Dr. Morris Parloff admits that there is no

> ...convincing evidence that these procedures can be uniquely applied only by members of professions who have completed specified training programs and have honed their skills by lengthy experience.[4]

Dr. Joseph Durlak evaluated research projects in which the psychotherapeutic effectiveness of paraprofessionals was compared with that of mental health professionals, such as experienced psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. The training of the paraprofessionals ranged from none to fifteen hours. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to think of those individuals as nonprofessionals. Durlak says:

> Overall, outcome results in comparative studies have favored paraprofessionals.... There were no significant differences among helpers in 28 investigations, but paraprofessionals were significantly more effective than professionals in 12 studies.... In only one study were professionals significantly more effective than all paraprofessionals with whom they were compared.... **The provocative conclusion from these comparative investigations is**

> **that professionals do not possess demonstrably superior therapeutic skills, compared with paraprofessionals.** Moreover, professional mental health education, training, and experience are not necessary prerequisites for an effective helping person.[5] (Bold added.)

A study of trained and untrained therapists by Dr. Hans Strupp at Vanderbilt University compared the mental-emotional improvement of two groups of male college students. Two groups of "therapists" were set up to provide two groups of students with "therapy." The two student groups were equated on the basis of mental-emotional distress as much as possible. The first group of therapists consisted of five psychiatrists and psychologists. "The five professional therapists participating in the study were selected on the basis of their reputation in the professional and academic community for clinical expertise. Their average length of experience was 23 years."

The second group of "therapists" consisted of seven college professors from a variety of fields, but without therapeutic training. Each untrained "therapist" used his own personal manner of care, and each trained therapist used his own brand of therapy. The students seen by the professors showed as much improvement as those seen by the highly experienced and specially trained therapists.[6]

Dr. Allen Bergin and Dr. Michael Lambert report on a "nationwide interview survey conducted for the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health." The survey shows:

> ... that of those persons who actively sought help for personal problems, the vast majority contacted persons other than mental-health professionals, and that generally they were more satisfied with the help received than were those who chose psychiatrists and psychologists.

Bergin and Lambert remark that the no-treatment success rate "may therefore result from seeking and obtaining therapeutic help from nontherapists!"[7]

Other researchers have noticed possible improvement from nonprofessional sources. Dr. Jerome Frank, distinguished professor of psychiatry, found that "over a period of years approximately 50 percent of a group who had sought psychotherapy had also sought help from a variety of non-mental-health sources." Frank suggests that the improvement which occurred "over a long period of time when they were not in therapy was the result of the effects of this nonprofessional 'treatment.'"[8]

Gurin et al commenting on such nonprofessional "treatment" state:

> These findings underscore the crucial role that non-psychiatric resources—particularly clergymen and physicians—play in the treatment process. They are the major therapeutic agents.[9]

Bergin and Lambert say:

> Perhaps psychotherapists are not unique. Perhaps selected helping persons in the "natural" social environment provide adequate or

> better coping conditions for neurosis than do trained mental health experts.[10]

When one considers the great variety of psychotherapies and the research comparing the different approaches, it appears that the personal qualities of the therapist are far more important than training, techniques or approach.

How do professional counselors compare with amateur counselors? As we have revealed elsewhere, according to distinguished researcher Dr. Robyn Dawes, "the training, credentials, and experience of psychotherapists are irrelevant, or at least that is what all the evidence indicates."[11] Dawes also says that "the therapists' credentials—Ph.D., M.D., or no advanced degree—and experience were unrelated to the effectiveness of therapy."[12] Related to the above conclusion, Dawes says that "one's effectiveness as a therapist was unrelated to *any* professional training"[13] and that "*the credentials and experience of the psychotherapists are unrelated to patient outcomes*."[14] (Italics in original.) Thus he says, "There is no reason…to seek out a highly paid, experienced therapist with a lot of credentials."[15] Dawes reports:

> In the years after the Smith and Glass article was published, many attempts were made to disprove their finding that the training, credentials, and experience of therapists are irrelevant. These attempts failed.[16]

Dawes notes that "professional psychologists and other mental health professionals…are no better as psychotherapists than are others of comparable intelligence who are minimally trained."[17]

The *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* (*Handbook*) states the following:

> Most meta-analytic reviews suggest that length of therapist experience by itself is neither a strong nor a significant predictor of amount of improvement.[18]

In addition the *Handbook* says:

> Summarizing contemporary research on therapist experience, Christensen and Jacobson conclude that the evidence for the value of accruing professional experience is weak at best. They suggest that training doctoral-level psychotherapists is not justified by this literature.[19]

It is amazing to us that Christians who have no psychological training and may not ever have gone to college are so reluctant or may be fearful to minister to fellow believers when the research demonstrates the following:

> In a meta-analytic [research] review of studies that address level of training, Berman and Norton concluded that professionally trained therapists had no systematic advantage over nonprofessional therapists in evoking treatment gains.[20]

Dawes says:

> **Evaluating the efficacy [effectiveness] of psychotherapy has led us to conclude that professional psychologists are no better psychotherapists than anyone else with minimal training—sometimes**

> **those without any training at all; the professionals are merely more expensive**.[21] (Bold added.)

Because of the results of the various studies on training, credentials and experience of professional psychologists and mental health professionals, the future of the highly trained, credentialed, experienced professional is questionable. Dr. Keith Humphreys, in an *American Psychologist* article titled "Clinical Psychologists as Psychotherapists," says:

> As managed care and other cost-containment strategies become central features of the American health care system, doctoral-level clinical psychologists will be increasingly supplanted in the role of psychotherapist by lower cost providers such as social workers, marriage and family counselors, and masters-level psychologists.[22]

One would naturally believe that training, credentials, and experience would make a difference. Aren't these some of the major reasons why people pay professionals? But we repeat, "**Training, credentials, and experience of psychotherapists are irrelevant.**"

In his article "The Case Against Credentialism," James Fallows says:

> Within the professions there are abundant illustrations that the skills on which credentials are granted are different from the performance that matters most. For example, in 1979 Daniel Hogan, a lawyer and social psychologist at Harvard, published a four-volume

> study called *The Regulation of Psychotherapists*. Its ambition was to examine the day-by-day workings of psychotherapy at every level, from social worker to licensed psychoanalyst….
>
> Contrary to much professional opinion," he said, "the effectiveness of therapists is more determined by the presence or absence of certain personality characteristics and interpersonal skills than technical abilities and theoretical knowledge." The skills that make a superb psychotherapist are mainly common-sense human skills—warmth, empathy, reliability, a lack of pretentiousness or defensiveness, an alertness to human subtlety, an ability to draw people out." The necessary qualities are very similar to those one looks for in a good friend." These are not traits that can be detected on a multiple-choice examine, but they are real, and can be measured in creative ways. In half of the "effectiveness" studies that Hogan surveyed, **non-professional therapists did better than professionals in helping patients, despite their lack of formal education**.[23] (Bold added.)

Numerous other studies could be used to support the effectiveness of nonprofessionals. Frank once referred to the shocking fact of "the inability of scientific research to demonstrate conclusively that professional psychotherapists produce results sufficiently better than those of nonprofessionals."[24] The conclusion of an article in *Perspectives on Psycholog-*

ical Science regarding the use of paraprofessionals (those with minimal or no training and not licensed) says, "Many clinicians would reject the notion that a trained paraprofessional could deliver psychotherapy effectively. There is little evidence that compels this view, however."[25] In other words, though some would reject this idea, the fact is that paraprofessionals can do effective psychotherapy.

It is important to be aware that most of the recent popular therapeutic approaches, such as Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Dialectical Behavior Therapy can be learned in a one or two-day workshop, which is often offered, or by reading a single book absent any other training or background. Thus, most anyone educated, degreed **or not** can learn the basics of psychotherapy in a short period of time and be successful at it. Therefore, the logical conclusion is that most any person, whether educated, degreed, or not, can minister mutual care and be as successful on average as the degree-trained, certificated, and licensed counselors.

Dr. Leonard Syme, professor of epidemiology at the University of California at Berkeley, investigated disease and mortality rates throughout the world. He found that Japan had the best record for health and longevity. After he had eliminated many of the possible reasons for this high rating, such as food and physical environment, he came to the conclusion that the social, cultural, and traditional family and group ties contributed to the health and longevity. He believes that the more social ties one has the healthier he is bound to be, and the more

isolated a person is the greater possibility for poor health and earlier death.[26]

One important element in social support involves speaking and listening to one another. It is a matter of hearing others and being heard by them. Dr. James Lynch says:

> Our research has revealed that virtually all forms of dialogue—even a pleasant chat about the weather—can alter the cardiovascular system, particularly blood pressure. Although a great many factors contribute to chronic high blood pressure, or hypertension, I believe the condition is most deeply connected to problems in human communication.[27]

If our bodily functions can be affected by human communication, it follows that our mental outlook can also be affected. Social support as described by Syme and human conversation as described by Lynch provide two powerful antidotes for problems of living. It may be that these two ingredients alone account for the majority of help provided in therapeutic settings. A number of organizations have sprung up nationally that recognize the importance of such ingredients and provide friends for those suffering from mental anguish.[28]

Annette Leavy says, "Patient-therapist compatibility is the best indicator of outcome."[29] **Notice that the important factor is compatibility—not therapy, not technique, not training, not degrees, not licenses.** At four days of hearings in Washington, D.C., John Docherty, former Chief of the Psychosocial Treatment Research branch of the National Institute of Mental Health, said that the

rapport between patient and therapist is the only variable that has been shown to be reliably significant in psychiatry.[30] Lester Luborsky and his colleagues report in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* that success in psychotherapy is due to a "helping alliance" between therapist and patient, not the type of therapy.[31]

Some will ask, what will we do about our problems of living? Dr. Bernie Zilbergeld, in his book *The Shrinking of America*, discusses much of the research related to psychotherapy.[32] He says:

> If I personally had a relationship problem and I couldn't work it out with my partner, I wouldn't go and see a shrink. I would look around me for the kind of relationship I admire. I wouldn't care if he was a carpenter or a teacher or a journalist ... or a shrink. That's who I would go to. I want somebody who's showing by your life that you can do it.[33]

Dawes says:

> If we don't feel so wonderful, there is no shame in seeking a little help from our friends (or a therapist), but there is also no necessity for seeking the services of a high-priced professional who claims to have insights that the research shows are no better than insights inferred from general principles.[34]

In concluding the preface of his book on therapy, Dr. Jeffrey Masson says, "What we need are more kindly friends and fewer professionals."[35]

It seems to us that the first and best way of help is deciding to do it and doing it oneself. If one needs help from others, then the next should be godly family and friends who hold the same spiritual world view and then a godly individual who can draw alongside to help bear the burden. We believe that there is great justification to conclude that for all problems of living the best way out for a Christian is by individual choice in cooperation with God; the next best help is Christian family and friends; then the help of mature believers, all the while being in Christian fellowship within the context of the church body.

DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS

Some people think of psychotherapy in a manner similar to the way they think about vitamin supplements: may be helpful, but at least not harmful. This seems to be the prevailing attitude towards psychotherapy: it can be helpful, but at least it can't hurt anyone. **Research reveals that view to be false.** In medical literature the word *iatrogenic* refers to unexpected detrimental effects of taking medicine or receiving other medical treatment. For example, a person may come to a medical doctor with an infection, receive antibiotics, and then suffer negative reactions to the antibiotics. This negative effect is called an *iatrogenic effect.* It is an adverse, though unexpected result of treatment. Research shows that a similar effect occurs in psychotherapy. While mild to moderate improvement may occur under treatment, a patient may also get worse or deteriorate as a result. **Psychotherapy may be somewhat help-**

ful to an individual, but it may also be harmful.

As we show later, the most important factor for success in counseling is the person in need who comes for help. The truth is that many who come for change do not have an earnest desire to change and therefore look into counseling as the answer to their dilemma. **Once the level of desire for change on the part of the counselee reaches the need for change, then change is highly probable.** Change occurs primarily by the personal efforts put forth by the counselee. However, if support and encouragement are needed, any person whose rapport efforts the counselee will receive may be helpful. **Once the level of rapport reaches the level needed by the counselee for change to occur, the greater the probability for change.** This rapport is the counselor's most important contribution to success, far greater than the techniques or methodology used, but it is actually up to the counselee to receive it.

Negative effects average around ten to twenty percent and up to forty percent for some types of therapy! [36] When therapy succeeds, the counselor generally takes much of the credit; however when therapy fails, the counselor often blames the counselee. If one considers that research shows that much of the success is due to counselee/client factors, one might assume that therapy failure is due to the counselee. However, when one looks at the detrimental effects, one can see that to a great extent failure has to do with the counselor and methodology, and the harm rate increases in those therapies that emphasize the past and lead coun-

selees into talking about and even re-experiencing traumatic past events.[37]

The question arises as to how reliable are therapists' judgments of deterioration or detrimental effects (harm) in counseling. A study reported in a professional journal "examined therapists' ability to detect counselee/client deterioration [harm] through the review of therapy progress notes" and concluded that:

> Therapists had **considerable difficulty** recognizing client deterioration, challenging the assumption that routine clinical judgment is sufficient when attempting to detect client deterioration.[38] (Bold added.)

Sharon Begley, a technology and science writer, summed up her criticism of psychotherapy in her *Newsweek* article titled "Get Shrunk at Your Own Risk," by saying, "**What is remarkable about psychotherapies, though, is that few patients have any idea that 'just talking' can be dangerous to their mental health**" (bold added).[39] The very process of therapy designed to empower people and to help them solve their problems often weakens them and causes them to be dependent on counselors and too self-consumed to fulfill their responsibilities in society.

Dr. Terence Campbell has written a book warning the public about the "talking cure." He says, "too often, psychotherapy severely damages people."[40] The subtitle of his book is *Psychotherapy May Be Hazardous To Your Mental Health*. This warning should be on every psychotherapist's door.

In their book *One Nation Under Therapy: How the Helping Culture is Eroding Self-Reliance*, Christina Hoff Sommers and Sally Satel, M.D., say, "Therapism tends to regard people as essentially weak, dependent, and never altogether responsible for what they do."[41] They contend that "treating addicts as morally responsible, self-determining human beings free to change their behavior is, in the end, more effective, more respectful, and more compassionate." **They "reject therapism's central doctrine that uninhibited emotional openness is essential to mental health" and say, "Recent findings suggest that reticence and suppression of feelings … can be healthy and adaptive" and "an excessive focus on introspection and self-disclosure is depressing." They note that "Trauma and grief counselors have erred massively in this direction."** [42]

Marriage counseling is big business in the world and in the church. As more and more people have been going to marriage counseling, more and more have become divorced, and this includes professing Christians, who are divorcing at about the same rate as unbelievers.[43] With all the time and money and the great expectations that counseling will help married couples, it is disconcerting to learn that marriage counseling only helps about half of the time, which is similar to sham treatment. Why are the results so poor? The editor of *Psychotherapy Networker,* a journal for practicing psychotherapists, confesses that "most therapists who actually do marital therapy (about 80 percent of all clinicians) don't really know what they're doing." He says:

> Untrained in and unprepared for work that requires a highly skilled touch and nerves of steel, many therapists blunder ineffectually through sessions until they're fired by their clients or, overwhelmed by a couple's problems, they give up too soon in trying to save a marriage.[44]

But then he admits that skilled, experienced therapists are often unsuccessful as well. One psychotherapist reported in a professional journal article that :

> Controlled outcome studies show that only about half of couples improve with treatment. And even among those who do make progress, a disheartening chunk, 30 to 50 percent, relapse within two years.[45]

Recovered memory therapy is especially dangerous as horrific memories are created, experienced, and re-experienced until the newly created false memory is stronger than real memories. Counselees have ended up accusing their families of abuse that never occurred, cutting themselves off from their families, and seeking ever more therapy to recover from the so-called recovered memories. Thankfully some truth has come forth through memory research and through counselees confessing that these memories were created in therapy.[46] Nevertheless, many lives and relationships have been grievously harmed and even destroyed through recovered memory therapy.[47] But even as these things have come to light, many Christians continue to engage in various forms of inner healing, which combine recovered memory

therapy with aspects of the Bible plus hearing Jesus say things never recorded in Scripture.[48]

Another dangerous form of therapy that sometimes follows recovered memory therapy is for what used to be called multiple-personality disorder (MPD), but is now called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). In this therapy, the counselor believes that the counselee has hidden identities or "alters" and therefore seeks to discover these alters and then attempts to help them work together or to merge into one personality. **This idea became popular as a result of the Sybil story, which was later shown to be spurious.** *The Boston Skepticism Examiner* reveals that "The number of diagnosed MPD cases went from about 75 before Sybil to 40,000 after Sybil." The reviewer further reports:

> During the MPD craze, therapists are reported to have often diagnosed patients with symptoms no more outrageous than depression or anxiety with [so-called] repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse. They would then set about seeking the alters they knew to be present in the subject.[49]

Therapists worked hard to get their patients to remember horrible abuse and then convinced them that they had developed alters to deal with the abuse. The reviewer puts the situation more bluntly: "The patients learned to become multiple under the coercion of therapists who would continually ask to speak to the personality that maintained the memory of the trauma."[50] Indeed, through suggestion, hypnosis, and even coercion, this kind of therapy actually creates these so-called alters to begin with, and as

the therapy increases, so do the number of alters and the amount of confusion and mental distress.

Another very popular form of counseling given whenever tragedies occur is "stress debriefing" with the idea that if people talk about it right away and express their emotions to a trained counselor they will not succumb to PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). However, just the opposite appears to happen. Research studies indicate that "many of those who undergo stress debriefing develop worse PTSD symptoms than those who deal with the trauma on their own." One possible reason given is that "the intense reliving of the trauma impedes natural recovery."[51] In reporting on research regarding "critical incidence stress debriefing," the *Harvard Mental Health Letter* says, "Not only was it ineffective for preventing PTSD, in some instances it appeared to increase the incidence of psychological distress."[52] The more people focus on the trauma and on the accompanying feelings, the more those feelings of sadness, helplessness, and even depression take over.

Regarding sadness and grief, most people will be surprised to learn that "counseling sometimes prolonged and deepened grief, leaving more depression and anxiety than in those who worked through their loss on their own."[53] **In spite of known negative effects, lack of research support for positive effects, a number of exposes demonstrating that prescribing the manner of grieving is unnecessary and can be harmful, many Christians have bought into the method.** Moreover, many still insist that those who have suffered loss need grief counseling. This is one more example of

how Christians have turned to the world rather than to the Lord, who is the God of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

People need to remember that there is definitely a potential harm rate for every seemingly wonderful idea from the psychological systems of men. While spiritual harm rate cannot be measured, there is potential spiritual decline when the counseling is not fully biblical, because using the psychological wisdom of men may very well lead to strengthening the flesh rather than nurturing the spirit. People also need to remember that psychological ideas can be made to sound biblical so that the counselee may very well be strengthening the flesh even while believing that the counseling is bringing forth spiritual growth.

SYNCRETISM AND PSYCHOHERESY

Syncretism is defined as "the combination of different forms of belief or practice." Syncretism is one of Satan's most deceptive and appealing techniques devised to destroy the true faith and undermine the Christian's faith in and dependence on Christ. Syncretism can happen in different ways. One way is accommodating customs and religious beliefs and practices by renaming and redefining them, such as cultures turning native deities into Catholic saints.[54] Another way is using facets of philosophical systems that seem compatible with Christianity, such as assimilating aspects of Greek Stoicism having to do with morality and consolation. Through syncretism, doing penance was added to repentance after confession of sin. While restitu-

tion was to be made and certain punishments were meted out for specific sins, we do not see a system of penance in either the Old or New Testaments. However, penance for the purpose of purification was a practice of some of the Eastern religions and later syncretized into Christianity.[55]

One of our concerns is with the syncretism of psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies with Christianity. As we demonstrate in our writings and earlier in this book, psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies are actually religious in nature and practice. The euphemism for this kind of syncretism is "integration," which occurs when two or more ideas or systems are able to be combined. However, those who take the psychological counseling theories and attempt to combine them with Scripture **cannot** truly integrate them. They are as different as oil and water! One works with the old man of the flesh (carnal); the other works with the new man in Christ (spiritual). They are at enmity with each other, just as the flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other (Gal. 5:17) just as the carnal man is at enmity with God (Rom. 8:7). They cannot mix because they are enemies, just as the idols of the nations around Israel were at enmity with God. Thus these so-called Christian psychologists and other mental health professionals are not practicing and promoting ordinary integration, but rather religious syncretism. They are overlaying their psychology with the Bible, which ultimately serves to disguise the psychological religious systems they are using. As we have shown through the years, this psycho-syncretism subverts and subtracts from the faith.

The syncretism of psychology and Christianity appeals to those Christians who believe that what is being discovered about the mind, the will, and the emotions is science, that it is part of God's creation yet to be discovered in the same way as discoveries are made in physics, chemistry, and biology. Since psychology presents itself as a science and psychotherapeutic ideas are organized into theories, many pastors believe that there is no syncretism of religion when adding the models and methods of counseling psychology. This faith in science and belief in a "scientific psychology" goes quite far back.

In his book *Americans and the Unconscious*, Robert Fuller says:

> Underlying the ability of late nineteenth-century Americans to embrace scientific psychology as a source of spiritual edification was a long tradition of seeing nature as fraught with theological significance. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, American Protestants were increasingly fascinated by scientific method.[56]

We realize that this includes the majority of those individuals, churches, denominations, schools, seminaries, mission agencies, and pastors in America! We stress "in America" because **the United States is where this sinful psychotherapeutic gospel found its most fertile ground**. It is through the psychotherapeutic gospel in America where the deceitful heart found its friendliest friend; where the sinful nature of man is given free reign; and where sinful speaking is expressed without restriction, questioning, or proof.

There are subtleties and similarities between certain ideas from psychology and Christianity that increase the vulnerability for one to begin thinking and ministering psychologically rather than biblically. That is why Christians need to be spending time in the Word and in prayer rather than looking for answers to life's dilemmas outside Scripture. Psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies are not science. They are human speculations about the soul with a pseudo-scientific façade.

Each of the approximate 500 different systems of psychotherapy has its own array of speculations, peculiarities, and methods. Most psychotherapists, clinical psychologists, and marriage and family counselors are eclectic. They dip into various systems and use what seems to work for them. In other words, they each have their own array of speculations, peculiarities, and methods. Those who are Christians attempt to accommodate the faith, but this syncretism will activate the flesh rather than minister to the spirit, because what is added comes from the world rather than the Word.

There has been so much searching outside Scripture to find ways to minister to suffering saints that a whole cadre of psychologically trained or at least psychologically tainted professionals and lay counselors are prepared to minister the ways of men and the wisdom of men along with Scriptures that seem to support their practice. This is syncretism. Others who are also guilty of syncretism are: (1) those Christian schools and seminaries that positively promote the use of counseling psychology and/or prepare individuals to become licensed to practice psychotherapy, especially those Christian schools that we

name elsewhere that have programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), such as Baylor University, Biola University, Fuller Theological Seminary, George Fox University, Regent University, and Wheaton College; (2) those pastors or others who promote and affirm those psychological ideas and/or refer congregants out to psychotherapists; (3) those authors and organizations that promote a psychological understanding of man; (4) those professing Christians who are deeply committed to this syncretism, which comes from not believing that Scripture is sufficient for life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3.)

CONCLUSION

Dr. Tana Dineen is a clinical psychologist who has written a book titled *Manufacturing Victims: What the Psychology Industry is Doing to People*. Dineen relates in detail how the psychological manufacturing of victims takes place. She differentiates between real victims and the ones manufactured by the "Psychology Industry," which involves a blurring between the two and spreads a net to include virtually everyone. She concludes her book by saying:

> The Psychology Industry can neither reform itself from within nor should it be allowed to try. It should be stopped from doing what it is doing to people, from manufacturing victims. And while the Psychology Industry is being dismantled, people can boycott psychological treatment, protest the influence of the Psychology Industry and resist being manufactured into victims.[57]

Dineen's conclusion also applies to the "Christian Psychology" industry.

Professor Jeffrey Kottler, in his book *On Being a Therapist*, says:

> Various studies of therapy dropouts estimate that roughly one-third of clients don't return after their initial interview, and close to half don't come back after the first two sessions.[58]

For those who make a living at psychological counseling, a prime motivating factor for the counselor is to keep each counselee in counseling as long as possible. While there is no scientific support for this idea, the justification involves the rationalization that the longer the counselee is in counseling, the greater good the counselor can do.

Underneath the rationalization is the reality of the revolving door of counselees, quickly and continually going out in large numbers and a need to have an equal number of counselees coming in. After all, the rent and utilities have to be paid and a sufficient income maintained. By our estimates, to make a decent living, a counselor would need to have at least 21 paying counselees per week. However, after the first counseling session, an average of 7 do not return, and after the second counseling session, the average increases to 10 non-returning counselees. Paid counselors not only have to "hold their breath" about the possibility of each new counselee not returning, but must be constantly on the prowl for new customers, as well as keeping old ones.

As we indicate elsewhere, quoting the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS), "there is no acceptable Christian psychology that is mark-

edly different from non-Christian psychology." CAPS confesses, "It is difficult to imply that we function in a manner that is fundamentally distinct from our non-Christian colleagues."[59]

Dr. Garth Wood ends his book *The Myth of Neurosis* with the following conclusion:

> In other words, all the inferiority complexes, the dream interpretations, the Oedipal factors, the collective unconscious, the free associations, are nothing but red herrings. **The vital ingredient is after all merely a caring listener who raises hopes and fights demoralization**.... But if this is all that is needed, what then of professional training in the intricacies of psychotherapy, what of the huge fees, what of the third-party medical insurance reimbursements, of the pretense and the rhetoric, of all the shams and the charlatans, the sound and the fury signifying nothing? **If this is all the great "science" of psychotherapy is, then let us sweep it away now and bother ourselves with it no more**.[60] (Bold added.)

If top researchers feel uneasy about the question, why do Christians believe that psychological counseling is necessary for people suffering from problems of living? If it is so difficult to perform studies and prove things in psychological counseling, why do Christians place such confidence in it? If both the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychopathological Association give mixed reports about efficacy, why do Christian leaders promote the promises of the psychological way? And if there

is little sound research, why are Christians so eager to substitute theories and therapists for the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit? If no one can say how much better psychotherapy is than other forms of help or even if it works at all, is it worth the billions of dollars spent annually for mental health care? Why has the church permitted the cure of souls ministry to be replaced by the cure of minds?

Instead of following the ways of the world, Christians need to search the Word to find out how God changes individuals from the inside out without one human being probing into another person's inner man, which only God can know. God does the primary work of change and has clearly set forth what believers are to do for one another: preach, pray, admonish, instruct, help, and encourage one another to seek the Lord **daily** through praying; worshiping; giving thanks; reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on Scripture; thinking biblically; walking by faith; loving, serving, and obeying God; and loving and serving one another. This care of souls is to be practiced mutually in the body of Christ so that all may grow and flourish in the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) There is no system or program. Instead, it is the very life of Christ in every believer bearing fruit and bringing each to maturity through the Word of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the fellowship of the saints.

Finally, a question: Did God leave the church helpless to deal with the issues of life for almost 2000 years before the current psychotherapeutic era? If the answer is "no," then why has the sinful psychotherapeutic gospel trumped the pure biblical Gospel throughout most of the church?

Fundamental to our charge of psychoheresy against individuals and organizations is the fact that they must not believe in the sufficiency of Scripture for the problems of living normally taken to a psychological counselor rather than being ministered to biblically by a fellow believer. When we name those individuals and organizations that are guilty of an insufficient view of Scripture because of their promoting psychoheresy, many Christians who are blessed to hear these guilty individuals and love these erring organizations become upset with us when they should be upset with them!

We challenge the majority in the church who have compromised on the sufficiency of Scripture for dealing with the issues of life and have turned to the psychological wisdom of man to provide a word-for-word counseling session or a detailed description of one that is truly biblical. We add that there are no literal psychological counseling cases that we could find after years of looking that are truly biblical. After calling several Christian counseling organizations we found almost no real cases with real counselors with real-time counseling, and what exists does not meet the acid test of being biblical.

Finally, in spite of the fact that there are numerous well-known and highly visible Christians who oppose the psychologizing of the faith that we call "psychoheresy," there are almost none who are willing to make a public issue of it by naming individuals and organizations that are promoting it and by publicly exposing their biblical errors. **While these very visible pastors, teachers, schools, authors,**

and others who oppose what we call "psychoheresy" would like to be known as defenders of the faith, most have failed to expose this one egregious, popular, and unbiblical practice that has engulfed the church.

12

Promises, Promises, Promises

Promises abound in psychological counseling. Most are direct but some are implied. Nonetheless, the psychological landscape is littered with them. Promises entice the needy, yet unwary person to sample the wares of the psychic merchants. The false promises of some psychotherapies range from the advertised 95 percent cure rate for Primal Therapy[1] to the mere ten minutes supposedly needed to cure phobias in Neuro Linguistic Programming.[2] Implied or direct promises of health, happiness, and self transformation abound. Distinguished medical doctor Byram Karasu, director of the Department of Psychiatry at the Bronx Municipal Hospital Center, says:

> Underneath the melodrama of who's right or wrong, all therapies have one thing in common. Much is promised and little is delivered, as with everything else in life.[3]

Art Levine, in his article "The Great Subliminal Self-Help Hoax," says:

> The appeal of human-potential programs has always been the promise they offered of quick, dramatic improvements in our lives. And over the last twenty years the claims made for these approaches have grown increasingly extravagant.[4]

Psychologist Bernie Zilbergeld reports that "changes made in counseling rarely live up to what is claimed by many therapists and believed by many clients."[5] **To put it simply, there is a huge discrepancy between promise and product in the psychotherapeutic shopping center.**

The psychological counseling marketplace is glutted with promises, but rarely produces the promised results. There are endless examples. One appeared as an ad in our local newspaper. It was an ad for an "anger exploration work-shop" which promised the following: "You will be able to **immediately** implement anger management activities, which are under your **control**."[6] (Bold added.) Many people have struggled for years with anger and now this workshop promises **immediate** results and **control**. The promise is open ended. It literally includes everyone, no matter how many years the problem has persisted or the number of workshops or seminars one has already attended. The message is that this one **will** work.

Well, it's wonderful if such a workshop does work and if the change is long lasting. However, any change is usually just a temporary quick fix. **Research does not support such promises and rarely reveals long term successes in anger management. Certain difficult areas, such as**

anger and various forms of addictive behavior, have extremely high relapse rates. This means that, even though there may appear to be immediate improvement, it is generally followed by deterioration. The seeming improvement is short lived. Can you imagine how a person might attend such a workshop with high hopes only to find out a day later, a week later, or a month later that the problem still persists?

CAMBRIDGE-SOMERVILLE YOUTH STUDY

The Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study is well known to researchers but little known to the public. If the promises of the project had been fulfilled it would have become a household word, but the results of follow-up research were too embarrassing. The goal of the project was the prevention of delinquency. The methods were highly touted and expensive. However, the project turned out to be a clear demonstration of how research results can contradict promises of success.

The study began by selecting 650 underprivileged boys between the ages of six and ten who were high risk with respect to becoming delinquents. Two groups were formed by matching the boys on a number of variables, such as age, IQ, and background. Then by a flip of a coin the boys were assigned to either a treatment group or a control group (no treatment). Those who were treated received, on the average, five years of psychotherapy in addition to academic tutoring, summer camp, and other involvement with organizations such as the Boy Scouts and

the Y.M.C.A. The boys in the control group were provided no services by the project.

At the end of the project the counselors believed that they had greatly helped the boys they had treated. Furthermore, a large majority of the treated boys claimed great benefit. Based upon testimonies of counselors and counselees, the project seemed to be a great success. It was a classic "they lived happily ever after" ending that was told over and over again as a testimony to the success of psychology in the remedy of human problems and the rehabilitation of human beings.

Imagine the bragging about salvation from a life of delinquency! Consider the financial benefits gained through the prevention of future crime! The psychological pats on the back were hard and loud. The profuse puffery promulgated as a result of this project was pathetic. It was pathetic because it was premature. No follow up studies had yet been done. No acid test of future delinquency had yet been made.

Imagine the surprise when the first follow up study was conducted and revealed slightly more delinquent behavior among the boys who had received the special treatment than among the boys who had received no treatment at all. Surprise turned to downright embarrassment when both groups were looked at thirty years after all the fuss. **In looking at both groups in terms of criminal behavior, mental problems, and alcoholism, the researchers discovered that the ones who had received treatment (on the average of five years of psychotherapy, academic tutoring, and participation in summer camp, etc.) were doing worse than**

those who had been left alone. Joan McCord, who conducted the follow-up study, concludes:

> The objective evidence presents a disturbing picture. The program seems not only to have failed to prevent its clients from committing crimes—thus corroborating studies of other projects—but also to have produced negative side effects.[7]

Without the control (untreated) group and without the later follow-up research to check out the promises, the Cambridge-Somerville project would have been deemed a huge success when in actuality it was a great failure.

This seeming success but actually a failure pattern predominates throughout psychotherapy. **Promises of success undergirded by testimonies of success do not equal true success.** People want to believe that such efforts as the Cambridge-Somerville project produce positive benefits. When research indicates the reverse of expectations built on promises, it is often ignored. After all, in a society that wants a quick fix, there is little interest in follow-up studies and scientific proof even among Christians.

Unfulfilled promises not only exist in the secular world. Similar promises are made by Christians. Christian therapists are often just a reflection of their secular counterparts. The promises are almost as prolific in Christianity as in society. One sees and hears them in abundance. We have chosen three examples.

PROMISES IN CHRISTIAN BOOKS.

Numerous examples could be given of exaggerated, unfulfilled promises in Christian books. The best-selling Christian book *Telling Yourself the Truth* by Dr. William Backus, a clinical psychologist, and Marie Chapian, a psychotherapist, is one of the many examples. **The book utilizes cognitive therapy and the Bible.** It promises that you will: "Find your way out of depression, anxiety, fear, anger and other common problems by applying the principles of misbelief therapy."[8] The authors state:

> Misbelief therapy *will* work for you. It will work for you even if nothing else has because its effectiveness depends upon very explicit psychological laws which are as universal as the law of gravity.[9] (Emphasis theirs.)

This is a universal promise that supposedly empowers the process (Misbelief Therapy) as if it were omnipotent over "depression, anxiety, fear, anger and other common problems." Like the "law of gravity" it will supposedly cause cure no matter what. **Common sense would dictate that if such promises were true everyone would be using Misbelief Therapy.** However, it is only one of a myriad of approaches used by therapists. In addition, no independent research or follow up studies exist to prove the phenomenal promises of Misbelief Therapy to the other practitioners of other psychological approaches.

The promises of *Telling Yourself the Truth* are erroneously supported by misunderstanding and misapplying Scripture. Backus and Chapian use

Proverbs 23:7, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" to promote their inflated promises and prescriptions "to help you possess the happiness you desire and to be the person you'd like to be" so that "You can live happily ever after with the person you are and make a profound affect on those around you because of it."[10] However, the full context of that verse says that one should not go solely on outward appearances.

> Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words. (Prov. 23:6-8.)

All the commentaries we read say that the "he" referred to in Proverbs 23:7 is a person not to be trusted.[11] The proverb is a warning to watch out for duplicity Proverbs 23:7 cannot be used to teach that if a person changes his thoughts he will possess the happiness he desires or will become the person he would like to be. Nor can it be used to support the idea that one will "live happily ever after" if he practices Misbelief Therapy, which sounds much like New Thoughters who declared that "As a man thinketh, so is he" was "a metaphysical law."[12] **When anyone begins with psychology and attempts to use Scripture to support an idea, he is likely to end up both misunderstanding and misapplying Scripture and misleading Christians.**

PROMISES IN CHRISTIAN MAGAZINES.

Our second example is that of Dr. Martha Rogers, a Christian clinical psychologist. In her article "A Family In Crisis," printed in a popular Christian magazine, she describes how four counselors might approach the problems. The four approaches include Nouthetic Counseling and three psychological approaches (behavioral therapy, psychoanalytic therapy, and family systems therapy). The family systems approach is described in the most favorable light of the four. That was the therapy used to treat the family discussed in the article. Rogers says that the husband's "depression was completely alleviated and he launched another business which is proving successful. His problem drinking was resolved." Rogers then says that the wife's "long-term migraine headaches were virtually eliminated."[13]

Talk about a happy ending? Rogers claims, "The couple grew much closer and were enjoying much more time together ... became more open with other people and were able to share their experiences as well as to extend help to others in their church body as a result of therapy."[14] And, all of this was accomplished in five months! Sounds easy, doesn't it? Research aside, family systems therapy is made to look like it provides a real bonanza of benefit to families and individuals that family systems therapy rarely achieves.

PROMISES IN CHRISTIAN MEDIA.

Our third example is Dr. Paul Meier, who is a well-known Christian psychiatrist at a large clinic for many years. In an interview on a radio station, Dr.

Meier made a number of statements about a variety of mental problems and some supposed cures. Two of the promises caught our attention. First, in discussing schizophrenia he said that it results "from severe inferiority feelings and genetic predisposition and a bunch of different factors and **it's curable if you catch it early**." Then he said, "**If you don't get medical help for about six months it becomes incurable. The biochemical pathways become permanent**." Second, in discussing sleep problems, this psychiatrist said, "Insomnia is a **one-hundred-per-cent curable problem**."[15] (Bold added.) Those sound like two wonderful promises, one being a cure for schizophrenia (if caught within the first six months) and the other being a cure for insomnia. Aside from Meier's claims about the two conditions, no literature or authorities we contacted could be found to support those promises. In fact, just the opposite! The authorities repudiated Meier's promises about those two problems. Such over-blown, over-hyped, yet unsupported-in-the-research-literature stories abound in psychological circles.

Unfortunately Meier has specifically used the dubious "curable if you catch it early" promise to criticize those who use the Bible. Both at Dallas Theological Seminary and in the Christian media, Meier has specifically said that thousands of Christians have been sentenced to a life of insanity because they have not been referred for proper medication during this so-called critical period.[16] Our purpose in mentioning this is to show that false promises and misinformation abound from all levels of the Christian professional counseling community.

We raise the question whether or not it is appropriate to speak of either a cause or a cure for schizophrenia as Meier does. Is it appropriate for him to say that schizophrenia results "from severe inferiority feelings and genetic predisposition and a bunch of different factors"? In addition, is it appropriate to say that "it's curable"? The first issue we will address is the involvement of "inferiority feelings" in the onset of schizophrenia. According to research psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey, schizophrenia does **not** result "from severe inferiority feelings."[17] Related to the ideas of cause and cure, the Harvard Medical School reports: "One in a hundred persons will at some time suffer from schizophrenia. **Its causes are obscure, and no way is known to prevent or cure it**."[18] (Emphasis added.)

In his book *Surviving Schizophrenia*, Torrey says:

> Contrary to the popular stereotype, schizophrenia is an eminently treatable disease. That is not to say it is a curable disease, and the two should not be confused. Successful treatment means the control of symptoms, whereas cure means the permanent removal of their causes. Curing schizophrenia will not become possible until we understand its causes; in the meantime we must continue improving its treatment.[19]

If, according to Harvard Medical School, "no way is known to prevent or cure" schizophrenia, then the statement by Meier that "it's curable if you catch it early" must be false. Repeatedly we see in the research literature that "not all cases of schizo-

phrenia respond to drug therapy."[20] Furthermore, there is no early detection assuring early cure for schizophrenia. In addition, Meier's statement, "If you don't get medical help for about six months it becomes incurable," must be false. Even if they were referring to control rather than cure being limited to those diagnosed within six months, the evidence indicates that control is not limited to early diagnosis or early treatment.

Torrey mentions "twenty-five studies in which schizophrenic patients had all been followed for an average of at least ten years."[21] He says that "over 4,400 patients were followed up in these studies." Then he summarizes:

> Based on the patients followed in the twenty-five studies, it seems reasonable to conclude that *one-third* of all patients hospitalized and diagnosed with schizophrenia will be found to be completely recovered when followed up ten years later.[22] (Emphasis his.)

At the "other end of the spectrum" are one-third of the patients who are unimproved. Torrey goes on to say, "This leaves the remaining one-third in the middle category of improved but not completely recovered."[23]

LET THE BUYER BEWARE.

In discussing the outcomes of therapy, Zilbergeld quotes therapist/researcher Dr. Hans Strupp:

> I believe we are entering an era in which the claims and aspirations of psychotherapy will become more circumscribed and more focused.

> It may also spell a return to greater modesty, from which we should never have departed.[24]

Zilbergeld comments on the promises of psychotherapy: "It is close to impossible, for example, to turn a chronically depressed person into a happy-go-lucky type."[25] He further notes that "**cures in therapy are not common" and that "symptoms or presenting complaints rarely disappear**."[26] (Bold added.)

After thirty years of practicing psychotherapy, Anthony Storr concludes that **there is no "convincing evidence that even years of analysis in the most expert hands, radically alter a person's fundamental 'psychopathology**.'"[27] (Bold added.)

Psychiatrist Jerome Frank, after commenting about research on brainwashing, says:

> These findings raise some doubts about the claims of certain schools of psychotherapy to produce fundamental personality change. From this perspective, **such changes may be analogous to false confessions**. That is, the person has not changed fundamentally, but rather has learned to couch his problems and report improvement in the therapist's terms.[28] (Bold added.)

We are not saying that change does not occur in or out of therapy. We are only stating that the research on psychological improvement in therapy does not warrant the promises that are extant in the books, workshops, talks, tapes, and ads of the various therapists and therapies and the pronouncements of the

practitioners and promoters whether in or out of the church. Zilbergeld says:

> **Changes made by the presumably sophisticated methods of therapy are usually modest and not much different from what people achieve on their own or with the help of their friends**.[29] (Bold added.)

We've all heard the expression that a psychotherapist is a "paid friend." We disagree with that definition! Yes, they are paid, but true friends they are not!!! As a matter of fact, we consider "paid friend" to be an oxymoron, i.e., a contradiction in terms. Prior to 60 years ago there were no such "friends" who had a license to counsel anyone about problems of living and therefore there were no such "paid friends" in existence. **Everyone knew then, as we should all know now, that true friends do not charge for conversations about personal and often painful matters.**

Only in the narrowest possible sense is the paid counselor a friend, and that is in the confines of the 50-minute hour and only in the office. Paid counselors do not have lunch or fellowship with their counselees or visit one another as real friends do. As one typical counselor instructed her counselee when invited to lunch, "I am your counselor, not your friend." We have never found paid counselors who did what often happens biblically in true Christian fellowships.

It is rather obvious that the more severe the problem, the more long term the problem; the more complex the problem, the less likelihood of a psychotherapeutic cure. Promises often produce hope

and hope can sometimes encourage cure. But, hope unfulfilled can also lead to despair, depression, and even divorce, or worse yet, suicide. False promises usually produce a false hope which usually leads to failure. Realistic promises usually produce a realistic hope which usually leads to realistic possibilities for success.

The worst of the primrose promises of Christian psychology is the promise that the Bible plus psychotherapy can provide better help than just the Bible alone. While this idea has been promulgated and promoted by many throughout the church, there is no research evidence to support it. No one has ever shown that the Bible needs psychological augmentation to be more effective in dealing with life's problems. **No one has proven that a Christianized cure of minds (psychotherapy) is any more beneficial than the original unadulterated simple cure of souls (biblical ministry).**

The research we quote in this book should certainly be a warning against the siren song of psychological promises that is sung throughout the church. Promises, direct or implied, are usually unwarranted and unsubstantiated and should serve as danger signals whenever and wherever discerned. **The blatant and grandiose promises of psychotherapy should be viewed with the greatest suspicion. But even the subtle, implied and indirect promises should be viewed with alarm.**

13

Amalgamania

The psychologizing of the church has reached epidemic proportions. By psychologizing we mean treating problems of living by the use of psychological rather than or in addition to biblical means. This psychologizing occurs in almost every important facet of Christianity.

First, we hear it in psychologized sermons. Psychologists are quoted as authorities and psychological ideas are presented and even promoted.

Second, church counseling has become psychologized. The Bible is supposedly not enough. Thus, psychological understanding is sought and psychological techniques are applied.

Third, those who want to help people in the church who have problems of living become psychologically rather than biblically trained. We have found this to be true in even some of the remotest areas of our land and in some of the most unsuspected places.

Fourth, there is promiscuous referral. When people with problems of living seek help from their pastor, they are regularly referred to a professional psy-

chological counselor. This often happens with even the most basic of problems.

Fifth, there is evidence that reveals the rising number of churches providing psychological counseling with psychologically trained and licensed individuals within the church itself. The increase includes even the most conservative churches and conservative denominations.

Sixth, many Christian schools, colleges, universities and seminaries rely either partially or even entirely upon teaching psychological rather than biblical solutions to life's problems.

Seventh, it is almost mandated that marriage and family counselors or psychologists be present at conferences whether in or out of the church and especially at the favorite camp or conference locations. Having conferences now necessitates some psychological presence like the necessity of having a pastor present at a wedding. This thought-to-be-ideal combination of psychology and theology is just another insidious dilution of Scripture and diminution of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The inclusion of such trained professionals is one additional testimony to the psychologizing of Christianity and the secularizing of the church. It demonstrates a lack of faith in what God has provided and a misplaced faith in what man has contrived.

Last, but not least, nearly all of the people who are selected to review books about helping individuals with problems of living are tilted towards the psychological. Their bias is almost as automatic as their belief that the earth is round. John Sanderson, in reviewing a book that integrates Scripture and psychological insights, compares the content of

the integrationism of the book with a purely biblical position. Sanderson confesses his own lack of expertise on the matter but confirms the integrationist's position. That this particular book was reviewed in a conservative Christian magazine by a conservative Christian who concluded by supporting the integrationist position is tragic but typical of the extent of the psychologizing of the church.[1]

It would be possible to extend this list by including books, tapes, workshops, and seminars that are psychologized in one way or another. Paul Bartz says that "well-intentioned, but ignorant, Christian leaders have widely adopted psychological models to deal with everything from counseling to church growth."[2] One does not need a well trained ear, eye, nose, hand or tongue to hear, see, smell, touch or taste the evidences of the psychologizing of Christianity. It is so all pervasive that, if anything, our senses have been dulled to it. The psychologizing is rampant to say the least.

THE PSYCHOLOGIZERS

We have grieved over those multitudes of Christians who have turned to the psychological wisdom of men in the midst of their problems instead of solely relying on God and His provisions. We want to encourage Christians to find Jesus Christ and the Word of God sufficient for matters of life and conduct. We yearn for believers to rely on the Bible for understanding themselves and others and to learn to walk according to the Spirit, grow in Christian maturity, and thereby confront problems of living.

A very telling graphic titled "The Roots and Shoots of Christian Psychology" shows a tree with branches bearing the names of some of the well-known psychological integrationists situated on branches labeled "Spiritual Seekers," "Family/Marriage," "Clinical Care," "Dissociative Disorders," "Self-Esteem," and "Pastoral Counseling."[3] The roots labeled "Secular & Humanistic Pioneers" include Carl Rogers, Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud, Abraham Maslow, B. F. Skinner, and Virginia Satir, all of whom opposed Christianity, with at least the first three involved in blatant occult practices. Each of these "roots" had strong metaphysical beliefs that comprised their unbiblical, anti-Christian belief systems.

What kind of tree is this, with occult and secular humanistic religious roots? It is clear that the roots are ungodly. Is this a tree from which Christians should eat? Or, does it more resemble "the tree of knowledge of good and evil"? (Genesis 2:9.) Jesus said:

> Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (Matt. 7:15-19.)

After studying the 1223 page *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology*,[4] Ed Payne, M.D., Associate Professor of Family Medicine, says:

> Many pastors and laymen may be deceived by the Christian label of this book. Such psychology presented by Christians is a plague on the modern church, distorting the Christian's relationship with God, retarding his sanctification, and severely weakening the church. No other area of knowledge seems to have such a stranglehold on the church. This book strengthens that hold both individually and corporately.[5]

This is a dramatically different view from the one that has enveloped the church. However, this strong statement is made by one who has the background to do so. Unfortunately, these remarks made by Payne about that book, which was written by 163 of the finest evangelical scholars, also apply to other psychological activities that are being promoted in the name of Christianity. Psychology does have "a stranglehold on the church"! Payne also warns:

> I find the supposed attempt at the "integration" of psychology with Scripture to be a most arrogant and serious claim. With all the warnings in Scripture of "being in the world, but not of the world" and the separation of God's truth from all other claims represented as darkness and light, the impossibility of integration of avowedly pagan psychologists with Scripture seems obvious. One begins to

> wonder whether these promoters of psychology have any biblical discernment.[6]

Some years ago Dr. J. Vernon McGee, in an article titled "Psycho-Religion—The New Pied Piper," complained about the psychologizing of Christianity. He said:

> If the present trend continues, Bible teaching will be totally eliminated from Christian radio stations as well as from TV and the pulpit. This is not a wild statement made in an emotional moment of concern. Bible teaching is being moved to the back burner of broadcasting, while so-called Christian psychology is put up front as Bible solutions to life's problems.

He also referred to "so-called Christian psychology" in magazines and books and said, "So-called Christian psychology is secular psychology clothed in pious platitudes and religious rhetoric."[7] Elsewhere he said, "I see that this matter of psychologizing Christianity will absolutely destroy Bible teaching and Bible churches."[8]

We criticize the work of a number of individuals and organizations in this book because they have been a part of the unnecessary psychologizing of Christianity They serve as examples of what is happening in the church today. We mention them in order to give specific examples and encourage discussion of this very important issue. We have always been open to public discussion of these matters and believe that the end result will be a stronger church and a purer theology. Church history, from its early

beginnings through the Protestant Reformation, reveals that such discussion has always existed and can be beneficial. Open dialogue is an indication of strength in the church, whereas the current avoidance of such discussion is a sign of fear and weakness. Open discussion of crucial matters certainly occurred in the New Testament.

Our original book and this revision are efforts to bring to the level of serious discussion the reasons for a dramatic change that occurred in the church during the twentieth century: a change from the way problems of living were biblically addressed in contrast to how they are psychologically therapized today. The research offered throughout this book presents a rationale for restoring the cure of souls ministry. **The research results also call for an elimination of the cure of minds (psychological counseling) in all of its forms, no matter where it exists in the church and no matter how popular and talented the psychologizers.**

In the following sections we reveal the psychoheresy that is being promoted through individuals and in the next chapter through churches, higher education institutions, mission agencies, and through the largest Christian organization of counselors. **The common thread is that those who are listed cannot possibly believe in the sufficiency of Scriptures for the issues of life that are talk therapized.**

PAUL TOURNIER

Early on, one of the most highly regarded promoters of psychology in Christendom is Dr. Paul

Tournier. He has probably had the greatest influence in making psychotherapeutic theories attractive to Christian intellectuals. Even though he points out shortcomings of the different theorists, he gives them great credibility in the search for self understanding.

In reference to the contributions of Freud, Jung, Adler, and other theorists, Tournier says, "I am fully persuaded that they all have something interesting, true and useful to contribute to the understanding of people. But they explain only mechanisms of the mind." He attributes scientific status to psychological theories and naively says, "It is precisely because objective scientific disciplines are involved that we are able to form a picture."[9]

Tournier admitted that neither psychotherapy nor medicine could give a full understanding of a human being. Nevertheless, he saw psychotherapeutic theories as contributing to that understanding. Tournier himself relied heavily upon his own intuition and experience. That is not unusual. Since psychotherapy is not science, one can use whatever pleases him—personal intuition, ideas from others, a bit of the Bible. Thus, Tournier could freely pick and choose among the theorists and then form his own interpretation based upon his own intuition and life experience. He says:

> There are then two routes to be followed in the knowledge of man: one is objective and scientific, the other is subjective and intuitive.... One proceeds by logical analysis and precise assessment; the other by a total understanding.[10]

That kind of thinking is erroneous on two counts: (1) Psychology and psychotherapy in particular are not "objective and scientific," nor do they proceed by "logical analysis and precise assessment." They are loaded with subjectivity. (2) Subjective and intuitive approaches do not lead to "total understanding." There is only one person who has total understanding and that is God Himself, and He has revealed His understanding of the condition of humanity in His Holy Word. To elevate intuition to such a high status contradicts the Word of God which says:

> The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10.)

God does not give the same kinds of "self understanding" that Tournier does. Tournier's ideas on self-understanding resemble Carl Jung's more than the Bible. In fact, Tournier's book *The Meaning of Persons* relies heavily upon Jung's theories about the self.[11] Tournier adopts and adapts what he wants from Freud, Jung, and others. In his discussion of Freud, he supports Freud's understanding of the unconscious. In discussing a particular patient, he confesses:

> I sent her of course to a Freudian colleague of mine, in whose hands patients like her recognize themselves to be quite different from what they believed. It is the Freudians also who have shown us how many infantile

> attitudes and reactions persist into what we fondly call adulthood.[12]

He has replaced the sinful condition of humanity with "infantile attitudes and reactions." Why did he need Freud or anyone else to show this to him? Why did he need to see sin as "infantile attitudes and reactions"? One very possible reason is that, if sin is seen as a psychological problem, psychological solutions seem necessary. Of course Tournier, as all amalgamators, attempts to bring that so-called perfect combination of counseling: the Bible plus psychology. Or is it psychology plus the Bible?

Christians feel safe with Tournier and other amalgamists because they do reveal the shortcomings and inadequacies of psychotherapy that they do not happen to agree with. For instance, Tournier says,

> Psychoanalysis, of course, does nothing to remove the contradictions of the human heart. Psychoanalysts would be the first to admit this. Their methods are only a way of treating inhibitions and serious psychical disturbances, a means of giving back to their patients some capacity for happiness, for normal activity and social life.[13]

Notice how Tournier praises psychoanalysis at the same time he criticizes it. He was not in touch with the research done by many, which has revealed the actual lack of support for psychoanalysis. Tournier both criticizes and praises psychotherapeutic theories in order to demonstrate that psychology needs Christianity and Christianity needs psychology.

One of us met for a week with Francis Schaefer at La Brie, discussing with him our pro-Bible, anti-psychotherapy position. Schaefer's total disagreement with us was based upon his confidence in Tournier and therefore his support for Tournier's view.

CLYDE NARRAMORE

One of the early leaders of the integration of psychology and the Bible was Dr. Clyde Narramore. His book *The Psychology of Counseling*[14] was published in 1960. He was one of the first to promote the wedding of secular psychology with the Scriptures. Narramore's message demeaned the role of pastors, supposedly limited to Scripture in the understanding of the human condition. He promoted the psychological understanding of man in addition to Scripture but downplayed some of the humanistic and psychoanalytic teachings. Narramore's integrationist teaching, along with his Foundation, was a seed bed of the numerous similar teachings that followed. Many of the early integrationists, such as Dr. James Dobson, were directly and greatly influenced by Narramore. And, of course Narramore and those that followed him swallowed whole the sinful problem-centered psychological format.

Narramore was in the forefront of the movement to have pastors accept the lie that they could only deal with spiritual matters (with a very limited definition) and that only those who were psychologically trained were equipped to deal with psychological matters (which virtually included everything about understanding the nature of man and how to help him change).

Marvin L. Fieldhouse, a missionary to Japan, wrote a book with a chapter titled "The Blasphemy of the Religious Psychologist." In it he lamented:

> The increasing numbers of missionaries leaving the field for training in philosophy and psychology is highly indicative; and so is the fact that home mission directors are now themselves catching the Clyde Narramore scent and are taking his short term courses in "Christian" counseling, based in worldly psychology. In fact, before too long we will see psychology slipping into the curriculum to be studied as a compulsory requirement for every prospective missionary before he ever goes to the mission field.[15]

Fieldhouse expresses further concern about counseling psychology:

> One day we are all going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. There we will all have to answer the question, in essence, which Jesus put to the Pharisees in Matthew 21:25: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" And like you, I, too, will have had about seventy years on this earth to answer that question by the sum total of all that I did and said; so that when I am asked my answer for it at the Judgment Seat of Christ, my yea might be a clear yea or my nay a clear nay, with no nervous, no shifty, no evasive using of the kind of human psychology on God Almighty that I should never in the first place have used on men.

> And what I say here, I say to the entire Body of Christ in any and every generation: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8). Yes, and to those of you who are determined to infect others with your deadly philosophies and vain deceits, regardless of what God or His men say against it, then I say this to you as from the spiritual mood of Acts 8:20: "Thy psychology perish with thee, for thou hast thought that the work of God might be done by the Philistines! 'Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity'" (Acts 8:21-23).[16]

Narramore must be held responsible for his role in helping transform the sense of failure experienced by many pastors into an acceptable liaison between professionals: professional evangelical pastors and professional mental health specialists. With his example and encouragement, he also influenced a number of evangelical Christians to become psychologists and educated the church regarding the importance of psychological theories and therapies in the lives of Christians.

JAMES DOBSON

Dr. James Dobson, with his Focus on the Family radio broadcasts, books, and speaking engagements, is arguably the greatest psychologizer of Christianity in the church. One of the most popular themes of Dobson is that of self-esteem. In his popular book *Hide and Seek,* he talks about the prevalence of low self-esteem and claims that women are particularly afflicted with it. He says:

> If I could write a prescription for the women of the world, it would provide each one of them with a healthy dose of self-esteem and personal worth (taken three times a day until the symptoms disappear). **I have no doubt that this is their greatest need**.[17] (Bold added.)

In his book *What Wives Wish their Husbands Knew about Women*, Dobson describes low self-esteem:

> It is sitting alone in a house during the quiet afternoon hours, wondering why the phone doesn't ring ... wondering why you have no "real" friends. It is longing for someone to talk to, soul to soul, but knowing there **is** no such person worthy of your trust.... It is wondering why other people have so much more talent and ability than you do. It is feeling incredibly ugly and sexually unattractive. It is admitting that you have become a failure as a wife and mother. It is disliking everything about yourself and wishing, constantly wishing, you could be someone else. It is feeling unloved and unlovable and lonely and sad. It

> is lying in bed after the family is asleep, pondering the vast emptiness inside and longing for unconditional love. It is intense self-pity. It is reaching up in the darkness to remove a tear from the corner of your eye. *It is depression!*[18] (Italics his.)

Is that low self-esteem or is it a collection of self-centered thoughts? Low self-esteem is popular because it's much easier to accept the idea of having "low self-esteem" than confessing evil, ungodly, self-centered thoughts and then repenting through believing what God has said in His Word. Low self-esteem calls for psychological treatment to raise the self-esteem. Sinful thinking calls for confession, repentance, restoration, and walking by faith in a love relationship with God provided by the cross of Christ. We would suggest that one look to Scripture to discover one's greatest need and to find an antidote to life's problems, rather than to attempt to scripturalize some psychological fad. Mankind's greatest need is for Jesus Christ, not self-esteem.

Psychological research reveals that low self-esteem is **not** the number one mental health problem. Social psychologist Dr. Carol Tavris reports:

> Preliminary results from a comprehensive study by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), designed to assess the prevalence of mental disorders in the United States, suggests that anxiety disorders are the number one mental health problem for women.[19]

Contrary to what Dobson reports, anxiety disorders, not low self-esteem, afflict women. Of course

one could argue that anxiety is due to low self-esteem. However, other psychologists could equally argue that anxiety is due to rejection or rage or early psychosexual stages of development or the primal pool of pain or whatever they choose.

Nevertheless, Dobson warns about the enormous possible national consequences of low self-esteem. He says:

> The matter of personal worth is not only the concern of those who lack it. In a real sense, the health of an entire society depends on the ease with which the individual members gain personal acceptance. *Thus, whenever the keys to self-esteem are seemingly out of reach for a large percentage of the people, as in twentieth-century America, then widespread "mental illness," neuroticism, hatred, alcoholism, drug abuse, violence, and social disorder will certainly occur*.[20] (Italics his.)

In response to Dobson's statement, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon say in their book *The Seduction of Christianity:*

> This idea that low self-esteem is rampant and the root of almost all problems is confidently stated as though it were proven fact. Yet many other psychologists would strongly disagree. Although the author sincerely desires to be biblical, he has based his ministry upon a belief that was not derived from Scripture, but is only one of many conflicting psychological theories.[21]

There is a strong possibility that encouraging self-esteem may lead to self-sufficiency rather than dependence on God, self-deception rather than reality, pride rather than humility, and self-centeredness rather than Christ-centeredness. In a word, *narcissism*. While some would have us believe that this is an era of low self-esteem, biblical data and the research show that this is an era of narcissism. American historian Christopher Lasch describes this era in his book *The Culture of Narcissism,* and Dr. Aaron Stern has written a book titled *Me: The Narcissistic American* in which he says:

> The United States is now sailing unsteadily in the wake of a level of success unmatched in the history of mankind, a success that goes far beyond the mere mechanics of affluence and pleasure. We have become the narcissistic society. [22]

> Today men seek the kind of approval that applauds not their actions but their personal attributes. They wish to be not so much esteemed as admired. They crave not fame but the glamour and excitement of celebrity. They want to be envied rather than respected. Pride and acquisitiveness, the sins of an ascendant capitalism, have given way to vanity. Most Americans would still define success as riches, fame, and power, but their actions show that they have little interest in the substance of these attainments.[23]

The subtitle of Drs. Michael and Lise Wallach's book *Psychology's Sanction for Selfishness* is *The*

Error of Egoism in Theory and Therapy. In their book they say:

> We have seen in earlier chapters how selfishness is promoted by urging realization and expression of the self. Those who have done this urging—particularly Horney, Fromm, Maslow, and Rogers—have held that if people are really actualizing themselves, they will in fact be good to one another. But, as we have discussed, this cannot keep the encouragement to focus on oneself and one's own development from supporting concern for self in contrast to concern for others. Far as it was from their intention, these psychologists inevitably promote selfishness by asking us to realize ourselves, to love ourselves, to view the environment as a means for our own self-actualizing ends, and to consider whether something will contribute to our own development as the only real criterion for what we should do.[24]

Even though one primary goal of self-esteem may be to feel good enough about oneself in order to become other-centered, there is no guarantee that people will naturally move from self-esteem to other-centeredness. Just looking at our society and considering the growing influence of these teachings since the days of Adler and Maslow should lead one to have a dubious view of such expectations.

Dr. William R. Coulson, a former colleague of Rogers and Maslow, says that in his later years Maslow did not agree with much of what he had theorized in his earlier years. Coulson quotes from the second edition of *Motivation and Personality*:

> . . . the high scorers in my test of dominance-feeling or self-esteem were more apt to come late to appointments with the experimenter, to be less respectful, more casual, more forward, more condescending, less tense, anxious, and worried, more apt to accept an offered cigarette, much more apt to make themselves comfortable without bidding or invitation.
>
> **The stronger [high self-esteem] woman is much more apt to be pagan, permissive, and accepting in all sexual realms. She is less apt to be a virgin. . . more apt to have had sexual relations with more than one man. . . .** (Bold added.)[25]

In other words, Maslow found that satisfying the so-called self-esteem needs did **not** produce the desired results. And that is the problem with so many of the self theories. They begin with fallen flesh and simply end up with another face of fallen flesh. Dobson and Christians who follow him seem to ignore these results.

In his article "The Social Usefulness of Self-Esteem: A Skeptical View" in the October, 1998, issue of *The Harvard Mental Health Letter,* Dr. Robyn Dawes says:

> Hidden lack of self-esteem is the New Age psychologist's ether. The ether was a substance that was supposed to fill all space as a vehicle for the travel of light waves. It proved undetectable, and the concept was discarded when Einstein introduced the special theory of relativity. A belief in undetected low self-

> esteem as a cause of undesirable behavior is even less plausible; all the available evidence directly contradicts it.[26]

Dawes sums up the research on self-esteem at the end of his article with these words: "The false belief in self-esteem as a major force for good can be not just potentially but actually harmful."[27]

Few Christians suspect that raising self-esteem might be harmful; even fewer understand the actual harm that elevated self-esteem does to one's spiritual life. They believe the gospel of self-esteem and will have a difficult time separating this erroneous belief from their faith in God, because influential teachers, such as Dobson, have convincingly connected God with high self-esteem.

Dobson's psychological self-esteem prescription echoes the world. And, aside from his personal opinion about the matter, there is no research to prove conclusively that people need high self-esteem. In fact many authorities would greatly disagree with Dobson and some would state just the opposite. Dr. Edward Stainbrook, a nationally-known expert on human behavior, believes that "self-preoccupation is jeopardizing America's future."[28]

GARY COLLINS

Gary Collins, a licensed clinical psychologist, has written extensively in the promotion of integrating psychotherapy into Christianity. He authored over 50 books, served as "general editor of the thirty-volume Resources for Christian Counseling series of professional counseling books … and the twelve-volume contemporary Christian Counseling series,"

and written many articles having to do with what he calls "Christian counseling," even though the teachings he gleaned from psychotherapy came from secularists, atheists, and occultists. Collins was the first president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and has had an enormous influence in the psychologizing of Christianity.[29] We have a lengthy critique of Collins' defense of the integration of psychology and theology in his book *Can You Trust Psychology?*[30] on our web site.[31] The following is excerpted from our numerous criticisms of his psychoheresy:

> Self-esteem theories are based on faith in the autonomous human being. According to the humanistic scheme, everyone is born perfect and the final authority and measure of all things is the self. Self is therefore the god of humanistic psychology. And as self relates with itself, the therapists are the priests. The shift in emphasis from God to self has come into the church through the incorporation of such humanistic ideas as self-esteem, especially by those who embrace the teachings of humanistic psychologists.

Society's move from self-denial to self-fulfillment revealed a new inner attitude and a different view of life. Self-actualization is its major focus and self-fulfillment its clarion call. And, self-fulfillment, with all its accompanying self-hyphenated and self-fixated variations such as self-love, self-acceptance, self-esteem, and self-worth, has become the new promised land. Then as the church became psychologized, the emphasis shifted from God to self.

In Collins' chapter, "Is an Emphasis on the Self Really Harmful?" Collins supports his pro-position on self-esteem by quoting the secular humanist Dr. Nathaniel Branden, who says:

> I do not know of a single reputable leader in the human potential movement who teaches that self-actualization is to be pursued without involvement in and **commitment to personal relationships**. There is overwhelming evidence, including scientific research findings, that the higher the level of an individual's self-esteem, the more likely that he or she will treat others with respect, kindness and generosity.[32] (Bold added.)

Collins says, "This is a perspective that critics of selfism rarely report."[33] The reason why we, the critics of selfism, do not report this statement is because **it is not true**, as we have demonstrated earlier and elsewhere.[34] Who is Branden speaking of anyway? Himself? Although he was married, Branden was involved in a lengthy adulterous relationship with Ayn Rand, who was 24 years his senior and who was the author of *Atlas Shrugged* and other books that support a highly self-centered ideology. Or is Brandon referring to Carl Rogers? Or Abraham Maslow? As we quoted earlier, Carl Rogers said:

> The man of the future . . . will be living his transient life mostly in temporary relationships . . . he must be able to establish closeness quickly. He must be able to leave these close relationships behind without excessive conflict or mourning.[35]

Dr. William Kirk Kilpatrick says of the above quote, "A statement like this raises the question of how close a relationship can be that is gotten in and out of with so little cost."[36]

Collins readily uses the vocabulary of humanistic psychology. He both adopts it and adapts it with biblical explanations. He attempts to explain how the "Bible does not condemn **human potential**," how God "molds us into new creatures with reason for **positive self-esteem**," and how "the Supreme God of the universe enables us, through Christ, to find **real self-fulfillment**."[37] (Bold added.) Self-fulfillment is not the same as fulfillment through serving God. The first is the autonomous self and self-will being fulfilled. The second is a person fulfilling God's will and purpose through dying to self and living unto God. Temporary pleasure may come from fulfilling the self, but true joy comes from fulfilling His call on our lives by His grace.

Why would anyone want to borrow vocabulary from humanistic psychology, which is based upon a secular humanistic view of humanity and which does not even recognize the Supreme God of the universe? Many psychologists would say it's because these terms can be explained biblically. However, human potential, positive self-esteem and self-fulfillment all evaporate when one reads the following verses:

> If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (Luke 9:23.)

> This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. (2 Tim. 3:1-4.)

> And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Cor. 12:9-10.)

Do these sound like human potential, positive self-esteem and self-fulfillment? Collins says, "We have dignity, value and purpose."[38] However, the Bible says:

> The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9)

> But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (Isaiah 64:6.)

Collins says, "We have dignity, value and purpose ... because the God of the universe created us

and declared that his creation was good."[39] Dignity has more to do with how one behaves than intrinsic worth. However, because Jesus said that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, we are to treat one another with dignity. God has dignity, value and worth in Himself and called His creation good. However, humanity has frightfully tarnished the original creation. For us to attempt to bolster ourselves up with self-worth and intrinsic self-value is pointless when our old self is counted crucified, dead, and buried (Romans 6) and our new self is "not I, but Christ." (Galatians 2:20.) Dignity, value, and purpose for the Christian are **in Christ**, rather than in self. In other words, He is our dignity, value, and purpose, just as He is our righteousness.

Collins clouds the issues so drastically that the new life in Christ becomes blurred with self-enhancing terms, when it is to be no longer I, but Christ. Rather than majoring in humanistic psychology and encouraging selfism, Collins needs to major in walking in the Spirit in an eternal love relationship with Christ. (Romans 8.) When he defines psychological vocabulary in biblical terms it is confusing at least and heretical at worst.

PAUL MEIER AND FRANK MINIRTH

Psychiatrists Dr. Paul Meier and Dr. Frank Minirth, have been well-known for many years for their best-selling books, nation-wide radio and television programs, and clinic, which was one of the largest private psychiatric clinics in America. Having taught in past years at Dallas Theological Seminary, they are certainly among the ranks of the

most popular psychologizers of Christianity in the contemporary church.

In *Happiness Is a Choice*, Meier and Minirth discuss the hysteric personality type in one chapter and the obsessive-compulsive in another. Throughout both chapters the so-called unconscious dynamics are discussed. As we said earlier, little is mentioned of Freud in that book. However, the Freudian theory of depression is used in reference to the hysteric and obsessive-compulsive personality types. Meier and Minirth say:

> The dynamics of obsessive-compulsive (perfectionist) and hysterical (emotional) individuals have been outlined in the preceding chapters. All of these factors predispose a person to depression.[40]

The elements in depression of repression, pent-up anger, guilt and the unconscious are all repeated and related to the hysteric and the obsessive-compulsive personality types. Meier and Minirth also seem to enjoy discussing these on their broadcasts. The following comments, which reveal the way they relate depression to personality types, were made on one of their programs:

> So obsessives not only get angry more often, but they're aware of anger less often than most people are.... An obsessive feels angry in his gut and doesn't know he's feeling angry.... They don't even know it's anger that they're experiencing. So they stuff their anger and they hold their anger in. They hold in unconscious vengeful motives.[41]

In order to understand the "unconscious dynamics" of an "hysterical adult female,"[42] Meier and Minirth discuss an hypothetical case. They say:

> She felt, moreover, that special privileges were accorded to men; she reacted with **competitive envy** and developed what is known as **castration behavior**.[43] (Bold added.)

Note the words *competitive envy* and *castration behavior*. The origin for those ideas is Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex.

Freud believed that during what he called the phallic stage of development every boy desires to kill his father and have sexual intercourse with his mother; and every girl desires to kill her mother and have sexual intercourse with her father. Freud attributed those desires to all children between the ages of three and six. Meier and Minirth's version of the Oedipus complex is very interesting. They say:

> During these years most children go through a stage of thinking that somehow they will grow up but the parent of the opposite sex will stay the same age. The idea that they will somehow replace the parent of the same sex by marrying the parent of the opposite sex is known as the Oedipus complex. Although the oedipal stage of development was greatly overemphasized by Sigmund Freud and others, it has been documented repeatedly as occurring in probably a majority of children.[44]

They obviously believe in the Oedipus complex, but their version of it in contrast to Freud's is amusing. For Freud, the male sex organ is prized. His sex-

ual system establishes genital superiority for men and genital inferiority for women. Freud said that during a girl's early life development she discovers that the boy has a protruding sex organ while she has only a cavity. According to Freud's theory, the girl holds her mother responsible for her condition, which causes hostility. She thus transfers her love from her mother to her father because he has the valued organ, which she wants to share with him in sex.

In Freud's wild scheme, the girl fears that her mother will injure her genital organ because of her sexual desire directed at her father. But, the girl senses that she has already been castrated and thus ends up desiring the male sex organ. The female castration anxiety results in what Freud called "penis envy." According to Freud, every woman is merely a mutilated male who resolves her "castration anxiety" by wishing for the male sex organ. Thus, the source of Meier and Minirth's diagnosis of "competitive envy" and "castration behavior" is Freud.

In both their books and popular radio programs, Meier and Minirth repeatedly emphasize the importance of early childhood. For example, they say that "the roots of the hysterical personality reach back into childhood."[45] In a special note they say:

> Over one-third of the hysterical females we have treated have had sexual intercourse with their fathers or stepfathers. Usually they claim they were raped by their fathers, **denying the obvious fact that they also had a strong hand in the situation by seducing them, either consciously or uncon-**

> **sciously** [of course, this in no way diminishes the responsibility of the father or stepfather].[46] (Brackets theirs, bold added.)

Our focus here is their statement about the little girls "denying the obvious fact that they also had a strong hand in the situation by seducing them [fathers or stepfathers], either consciously or unconsciously." The source for that repugnant idea is obviously the Freudian Oedipal theory.

One wonders how many women have been betrayed by psychotherapists who have perpetrated this unproven Freudian theory. And then as a result, how many have been submerged in years of analysis to get over the false condemnation of having seductively encouraged the rape? And if a woman becomes outraged at this preposterous indictment, the Freudian-trained therapist accuses her of "castration anxiety," "hysteria," and "penis envy." Although children sing-song the rhyme, "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me," the word power of psychiatrists has done more damage than breaking bones, which heal more rapidly than unfounded condemnation from trusted authority figures.

While both the male and female hysterics are listed as seducers, Meier and Minirth usually refer to the female. They say, "Many a female hysteric seeks a good man to bring down sexually, so she can tell everyone that he seduced her, thus ruining his reputation."[47] The emphasis on the female seducer fits the Freudian scheme better than that of the male seducer. Dr. Theodore Lidz, a professor of psychiatry whose work is quoted and recommended by

Meier and Minirth, says: "Freud recognized that the girl does not usually repress her desire for the father so completely as the boy represses his erotic feelings for his mother."[48] He also says that "the girl is likely to retain fantasies of becoming the father's sexual choice over the mother."[49] This female-hysteric-sex-seducer emphasis amplifies the obviousness of their Freudian Oedipal ideas.

Meier and Minirth's view of battered women fits into their Freudian ideas of women's so-called unconscious sexual desires. This is important to look at because of the vast numbers of battered women and the research dealing with this serious problem. Any attempt to estimate the prevalence of battered women in our society is difficult simply because many abused women refrain from reporting the assault. Regardless of the figures used, it is a serious problem needing careful appraisal and sensitive remedies.

Dr. Irene Frieze and Dr. Maureen McHugh say:

> As we reviewed the research dealing with the reactions of *all* types of victims, we found a general tendency for victims to blame themselves. It is not uncommon, for example, for victims of unprovoked sexual assaults or of battering to take personal responsibility for the crime.[50] (Italics theirs.)

Frieze and McHugh say that even when battered women try very hard to avoid the violence, "these efforts are rarely successful in stopping the battering." In fact, they say that "it is more common for the violence to become more severe and frequent over time."[51]

What do Meier and Minirth have to say about this serious and extensive problem? They say:

> On the other hand, whenever a battered wife comes seeking advice and consolation because her husband beats her up twice a week, **our usual response is, "Oh, really? How do you get him to do that?"** In all the scores of cases of this nature that we have analyzed in depth, there was only one case in which the battered wife was not provoking (usually unconsciously) her explosive husband until he reached the boiling point (of course, this does not diminish the husband's responsibility). After a beating, the husband usually feels very guilty and spoils his wife for several weeks. In the meantime, she is getting from people around her the sympathy which she craves, and **she is satisfying her unconscious needs to be a masochist**.[52] (Bold added.)

When they say that "she is satisfying her unconscious needs to be a masochist," they are demonstrating their attachment to Freudian ideas. Freud's ideas about sex also relate masochism to sexual energy. The *Dictionary of Psychology* defines *masochism* as "a sexual disorder in which the individual derives satisfaction from the infliction of pain upon himself."[53]

It is difficult to tell how much Meier and Minirth relate masochism to sex, but it was Freud who coined the term *masochism*. Coupled with the fact that Meier and Minirth refer to "her **unconscious** needs to be a masochist," it becomes transparent that they are using Freudian theory again. (Bold added.)

Prior to the rise of the popularity of counseling psychology in the church an accusation of someone being a Freudian would discredit them in the eyes of Bible-believing Christians. However, in spite of their Freudian teachings and practices, they, like James Dobson, are still among the most popular psychologizers of Christianity in the church.

TIM LAHAYE

One of the most prolific promoters of the **occult theory of the four temperaments** is Dr. Tim LaHaye. We have confronted his work, as well as that of many others, in our book *Four Temperaments, Astrology & Personality Testing*.[54]

LaHaye introduced the four temperaments to evangelical Christians in 1966. The four temperaments had virtually been discarded after the Middle Ages and discounted as a valid means of understanding people, until a few lone souls discovered them among relics of the past and marketed them in twentieth-century language. One of those lone souls was Dr. Ole Hallesby, a Norwegian theologian who wrote *Temperamentene i kristelig lys*, published in 1940 and translated into English in 1962 as *Temperament and the Christian Faith*.[55] LaHaye says he "drew extensively" from *Temperament and the Christian Faith* in writing his book *Spirit-Controlled Temperament*, which was published four years after the English translation of Hallesby's book.[56]

Hallesby's book has no footnote references to undergird his statements about each of the four temperaments. Therefore, his book is a combination of his own limited observations and the opinions of other

unnamed individuals. Nevertheless, as he discusses the characteristics of a Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy, or Phlegmatic person, he speaks as though what he says is fact. LaHaye follows in the same tradition. Although he does credit Hallesby for much of his material, he has no research or other support for the detailed delineation of characteristics. The categories and descriptions have been passed down through the ages in the same way as old wives' tales, against which Scripture clearly warns. (1 Timothy 4:7.)

LaHaye continued to promote the defunct four temperaments in his book *Transformed Temperaments*. In that book he makes several errors regarding the history of the four temperaments. He apparently did not understand the depth and extent of the work by Claudius Galen of Pergamum in the delineation of the characteristics of the four temperaments. Moreover, he mistakenly says that Galen lived in the 17th rather than the second century.[57] While this may seem inconsequential, it reveals the lack of solid research conducted in preparation for a book that purports to tell people how to utilize the four temperaments theory of personality for the purpose of spiritual growth.

LaHaye seems to have used minimal resources for his descriptions of the four temperaments. He primarily drew from Ole Hallesby's book (which is totally devoid of academic references or research) and quotes from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, as recorded in Eysenck's book *Fact and Fiction in Psychology*.[58] LaHaye surely could not have taken the rest of Eysenck's book seriously or he would have come up with somewhat different cat-

egories and would have been far more cautious in his pronouncements about the wholesale use of the four temperaments for spiritual growth.

In spite of LaHaye's declaration that "the four-fold classification of temperaments is still widely used," psychological theorists had generally abandoned the four temperaments typology. In fact, it is difficult to find recent academic material dealing with the four temperaments. Aside from their historical value, the four temperaments have all but disappeared from the research scene as antiquated, out-dated means of analyzing and understanding human nature. As for validation with external criteria, it is interesting that LaHaye would attempt to validate the temperament theory on the basis of handwriting experts.[59] These graphologists claim that a person's handwriting reveals his personality. However, numerous research studies have refuted their claims.[60]

Just as Freud believed that man is driven by unseen forces in his unconscious, LaHaye teaches that a person's temperament is "the unseen force underlying human action." He says:

> There is nothing more fascinating about man than his temperament! It is temperament that provides each human being with the distinguishing qualities of uniqueness that make him as individually different from his fellowmen as the differing designs God has given to snowflakes. It is the unseen force underlying human action, a force that can **destroy** a normal and productive human being unless it is disciplined and directed.[61] (Bold added.)

Immediately one assumes that knowing one's temperament is essential if one is to escape destruction and become productive.

LaHaye also includes the occult psychiatrist Carl Jung's Introvert-Extrovert typology in his scheme and places the Sanguine and Choleric under the Extrovert type and the Melancholy and Phlegmatic under the Introvert type.[62] He also assigns the "universal sin" of anger to the Sanguine and Choleric and the "universal sin" of fear to the Melancholy and Phlegmatic.[63] The charts and descriptions make the whole set-up look factual and reliable. However, these are arbitrary classifications and combinations. Throughout his later books he adds and embellishes the lists and even makes up a test that people can take to fit themselves into his system.

LaHaye contends that the four temperaments theory of understanding humanity is compatible with the Bible. He says:

> The four temperaments seem to appeal to Christians because they are so compatible with many scriptural concepts. Just as the Bible teaches that all men have a sinful nature, the temperaments teach that all men have weaknesses. The Bible teaches that man has a besetting sin, and the temperaments highlight it. The Bible says man has "an old nature" which is the "flesh" or "corruptible flesh." Temperament is made up of inborn traits, some of which are weaknesses.[64]

Then, since the Bible does not directly teach the four temperaments, LaHaye presents four major persons from the Bible in terms of the temperaments.

LaHaye warns people about indiscriminately using the four temperament classifications on others.[65] Nevertheless, he audaciously presumes to apply the four temperaments to Peter, Paul, Moses, and Abraham in *Transformed Temperaments*. He turns Peter into a Sanguine, Paul into a Choleric, Moses into a Melancholy, and Abraham into a Phlegmatic.[66]

In his book *Why You Act the Way You Do*, LaHaye turns King David into a combination of Sanguine and Melancholy.[67] But, another teacher of the four temperaments, Florence Littauer, says that when people seem to have opposite temperaments, such as Sanguine and Melancholy, one of the temperaments is actually a mask.[68]

LaHaye says that his four temperament books have reached "two to three million people,"[69] but he is unwilling to debate this issue of the four temperaments publicly. In an effort to support his theory, LaHaye claims that "Solomon saw four kinds of people in Proverbs 30:11-14, more than three thousand years ago. About five hundred years later Hippocrates, 'the Father of modern medicine,' gave the temperaments their names."[70] Like many other justifications LaHaye gives in his attempts to support his defunct occult theory, this one fails upon inspection.

Let's start by looking at Proverbs 30:11-14, which LaHaye uses in his effort to biblicize the four temperaments.

> There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

> There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

Now compare those four verses describing evil actions and attitudes with the four temperaments. To help clarify the comparison, we place one generally accepted characteristic next to each of the following four temperaments.

Sanguine — Cheerful

Choleric — Optimistic

Melancholy — Melancholy

Phlegmatic — Calm

It becomes immediately apparent that there is no relationship between the four verses in Proverbs and the four temperaments, except the number four. The Proverb writer is speaking of a generation or group of men who are prideful and rebellious and who are morally and spiritually corrupt. While he happens to list four groups, one can find other similar uses of the word translated "generation" in Scripture besides those four, such as the "generation of the righteous" (Psalms 14:5), the "generation of them that seek Him" (Psalms 24:4-6), and "a stubborn and rebellious generation" (Psalms 78:8). Yet LaHaye propagates this falsehood to millions, as he contends that "God has used my books and teachings on this subject to help two to three million people."[71]

LaHaye says, "I always tell my critics that if they don't like this theory for helping people—come up with a better one and I'll use it."[72] We recommend something much better and it's not a theory. It is TRUTH found in God's Word. And it needs no augmentation or amplification by Freud, Jung or any temperament theorist. Will LaHaye use and recommend it as sufficient for life and godliness? He hasn't thus far.

While one of the ostensible reasons for using the temperament theory is to help people see their weaknesses and sins so that they overcome them, the Holy Spirit does not need extrabiblical theory to point out sin. Because of the system's pagan nature and the errors involved, a Christian may come into the bondage of trying to fix himself up through modifying his weaknesses and exercising his strengths, rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to work in His way.

If we truly want to identify our besetting sins and our sinful habits, the Lord will give us ample opportunity to discover them. Our problem is not that we cannot discover our sinful tendencies without knowing the four temperaments. Our problem is not wanting to notice our own sinfulness. But when we are ready, the Lord is faithful to answer such a prayer as Psalms 139:23-24.

> Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

LARRY CRABB

Effective Biblical Counseling by Dr. Lawrence (Larry) Crabb, Jr., is another excellent example of the amalgamation of biblical truths and psychological opinions. Crabb states: "Again, let me insist that psychology does offer real help to the Christian endeavoring to understand and solve personal problems."[73]

Crabb believes that he, unlike some integrationists, is "spoiling the Egyptians" by taking only the best and only the biblically sound ideas from psychology. He calls other attempts at integration the "tossed salad" approach. And, he criticizes those who would use solely the Scripture as "nothing buttery."[74]

Crabb implies that his form of integration is the result of having accurately evaluated everything from secular psychology in the light of Scripture.[75] Thus we wonder how Anna Freud's writings on ego-defense mechanisms survived his careful examination. Anna Freud was Sigmund Freud's daughter who not only embraced her father's theories but expanded them. Of course all of this is from the perspective that a person is an autonomous creature without responsibility to a real God and without the possibility of relationship with the God who has revealed Himself in the Bible. Her observations are not only from an unbiblical point of view. They are biased from a subjective perspective rather than from scientific investigation. Nevertheless, Crabb recommends her writings in that area.[76]

Crabb also refers to Dr. Erich Fromm's "helpful" insights on people's need for love.[77] And much of what

Fromm says may seem very appealing. However, once again one wonders what a person divorced from the God of love truly knows about love. In his book *Man for Himself* Fromm says, "Love is not a higher power which descends upon man nor a duty which is imposed upon him; **it is his own power** by which he relates himself to the world and makes it truly his."[78] (Bold added.) He thus denies that God is love and that He is the source of love. Fromm, along with the other humanistic psychologists, believes that man is intrinsically good. He refutes God's diagnosis of sin as the basic problem with mankind. Fromm's underlying philosophy and system of understanding of the human condition is in opposition to the Bible.

Besides extolling the contributions of Anna Freud and Erich Fromm, Crabb highly regards Carl Rogers's contributions to the importance of relationship in counseling[79] (even though Rogers repudiated Christianity and turned to the occult).[80] Crabb says, "Christians would do well to read Carl Rogers on the need for profoundly accepting the client as a worthwhile human being." Then he quotes Rogers:

> I launch myself into the therapeutic relationship, having a hypothesis, or faith, that MY liking, MY confidence, MY understanding of the other person's inner world will lead to a significant process of becoming…I enter the relationship as a person.[81] (Bold added.)

Rogers' approach clearly leaves the God of the Bible out of the picture. Having repudiated the God of the Bible as the one who can enable a person to grow and develop, Rogers sets himself up as the one who will enable another person to grow and develop

through his own wonderful ways. He offers another god—the therapist—and he offers another salvation and another standard for living.

The Bible speaks of love and relationship. God Himself is the source of love and He calls individuals into a profound relationship with Himself. His love enables them to love and to live according to His design. Yet Christians whose profession is to help people live more productive lives have turned to ungodly men to discover the meaning of love. Problems of living are not outside of God's revelation. He is the one who has given humanity the Manual for living. Nevertheless integrationists evidently do not find enough truth in Scripture. Instead, they encourage counselors to wade through a long list of psychological theories to find what is needed for counseling.[82]

When we look at what Crabb has "spoiled the Egyptians" for, we find that he has taken the need structures of such people as Abraham Maslow. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (including self-actualization) is an unbiblical way of trying to understand people. Such systems place man and his needs at the center of the universe rather than God. Furthermore, they operate as though God does not exist. They represent one of the misunderstandings about life which Jesus addressed in the Sermon on the Mount:

> Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God,

> and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:31-33.)

Psychological need structures are based on what the "Gentiles seek." They go beyond physical needs to so-called psychological needs, but they are still what the "Gentiles seek." They are not based upon an understanding of Scripture. Although the physical needs for food, shelter, and clothing are the same for all, the approach to meeting the needs is quite different. Furthermore, when one goes into the other so-called needs there is distortion.

Two of the primary so-called needs are security and significance. Crabb has picked from the tree of so-called needs and decided that a need for security (female's so-called main need) and significance (male's so-called main need) are basic to all problems.[83] The need for significance and security seem to supersede a person's other needs. Furthermore, Crabb encourages psychological acceptance as voiced by unredeemed minds.

It is understandable why people who do not know God think that man's greatest needs (apart from food, clothing, and shelter) are security and significance. However, relationship with God is man's greatest need and everything else comes from that relationship. Security and significance are miniscule aspects of relationship with God. The psychological emphasis on security and significance tends to focus a person's attention on himself and his own desires rather than on God and His will and supply.

Rather than focusing on a person's need for security, the Bible emphasizes the need to trust God. Instead of emphasizing significance, which can eas-

ily lead to a prideful sense of importance, the Bible calls for obedience to God's will and involvement in His work. How can man's so-called need for security and significance explain the martyrs of the first century, or a mother who risks her life by running in front of a car to save her child, or a missionary who leaves father, mother, sister, brother and worldly security to serve the Lord? Only love can explain such self-giving acts. Trust and obedience to God, which come from a love relationship with Him, will provide what a person may call "security and significance." However, such words tend to place the focus on self rather than on God and a person's active relationship with Him.

Crabb also proclaims that Christians "need" to have personal worth and that such self-worth comes from the "needs" of security and significance being met. Then, much is said about self-acceptance. He says,

> Self-acceptance for so many people depends upon performance. What a tragedy in light of the fact that Christ's death provided God with a basis for accepting us in spite of our performance.[84]

There is a confusion between self-acceptance and God's acceptance. Again it is the psychological shift from God to self. If God accepts us, shouldn't our response be love for Him rather than love and acceptance for ourselves? When there is love between two persons the gaze is not upon the self, but on the other. God accepts us because He loves us and provided the costly means to make us acceptable in Jesus. Such acceptance is received by faith that looks

to Him rather than to self. A. W. Tozer emphasizes the direction of the soul that believes God:

> Faith is the least self-regarding of the virtues. It is by its very nature scarcely conscious of its own existence. Like the eye which sees everything in front of it and never sees itself, faith is occupied with the Object upon which it rests and pays no attention to itself at all. While we are looking at God we do not see ourselves—blessed riddance.... Sin has twisted our vision inward and made it self-regarding. Unbelief has put self where God should be, and is perilously close to the sin of Lucifer who said, "I will set my throne above the throne of God." Faith looks *out* instead of *in* and the whole life falls into line.[85] (Italics his.)

Rather than a Christ-centered Gospel, Crabb seems to be offering a self-centered gospel. He says:

> My thesis is that problems develop when the basic needs for significance and security are threatened. People pursue irresponsible ways of living as a means of defending against feelings of insignificance and insecurity. In most cases these folks have arrived at a wrong idea as to what constitutes significance and security. And these false beliefs are at the core of their problems. *Wrong patterns of living develop from wrong philosophies of living*. "As [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).[86] (Italics his.)

As we have shown in the previous chapters, misunderstanding and misusing Proverbs 23:7 comes in

very handy when one is trying to mix psychological theories with the Word of God.

With Crabb guilt is also related to lack of significance and security. He seems to think that people continue in self-defense patterns so that they won't have to feel guilty about failure and that the church needs to show bases for significance and security. If the church busies itself with relieving guilt through making people feel significant and secure, what happens to God's old remedy of confession, forgiveness, and restoration as the means of relieving guilt?

We have looked at just a few of Crabb's ingredients in what he would never label a "tossed salad." The distinction that Crabb makes between the "tossed salad" ingredients and his own brand of "spoiling the Egyptians" is a false one. In fact, no integrationist would identify himself as a "tossed salad" type. All would insist that they are "spoiling the Egyptians." However, it is impossible to make sense of the fact that all Christian psychotherapists hope they are spoiling the Egyptians (that is, taking only the best that's out there) while their often conflicting myriad of approaches creates the opposite impression.

The variety of psychological approaches used by the variety of Christian integrationists should raise a question. Who is being spoiled? The Egyptians or the Christians? If all Christian psychotherapists are "spoiling the Egyptians," taking only the best and only that which seems to fit with Scripture, why is it that there is such a mixed bag, such a variety of salads? Every psychotherapist is eclectic. Each one picks and chooses what he wants from multitudes of man-made theories and techniques. Christian psychological counselors follow such a wide variety of

conflicting approaches with all claiming to be consistent with Scripture. Thus the Bible has been made to conform not only to one psychological approach, but to many conflicting approaches. Rather than being used as a standard of measure for truth, it is twisted and bent to fit whatever psychological theories appeal to the therapists.

The concept of "spoiling the Egyptians" is revealing because what is being taken is truly from Egypt, which represents the ways of the world in contrast to the ways of God. Indeed every Christian who has attempted to integrate the psychological way with the biblical way has "spoiled the Egyptians." However, they have spoiled the Egyptians of the very things that God warned against. When God directed the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians, He was referring to material wealth. He did not direct them to take along Egyptian ideology or idolatry into the Wilderness. When they did, they were in direct disobedience to God. The Golden Calf and the serious consequences that followed came from hearts that had given up on God and turned to man-made solutions.

During the years following the popularity of *Effective Biblical Counseling* people have told us that Larry Crabb has changed. So we ask: How has Larry Crabb changed? Has he moved away from integrating psychotherapeutic theories and techniques with the Bible? From the vantage point of having read Crabb's books over the past twenty years, we contend that Crabb has made some cosmetic changes, but they are not substantial. He has not discarded his confidence in psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies. Instead, he has expanded his eclec-

ticism and his involvement in churches. Our book *Larry Crabb's Gospel* gives evidence to show that he continues to integrate psychotherapy and its underlying psychologies with the Bible.[87] **He has never repudiated any of his books, which have led many people away from the sufficiency of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.**

RICHARD DOBBINS

Numerous are the examples of Christian psychologists who are ordained ministers. They begin with a desire to Christianize psychology and end up psychologizing Christianity. Dr. Richard Dobbins is an example of the many ministers who have turned to psychology with the inevitable result of their theology conforming to psychology. Dobbins, founder of Emerge Ministries, has been very popular and influential within his own denomination (Assemblies of God) and has done a great amount of teaching, speaking, and writing. One of his teaching films epitomizes the well-intentioned desire to wed psychology and theology, which results in elevating humanistic psychology and corrupting biblical theology. In Dobbins's teaching film *The Believer and His Self Concept* he leads the viewers through a series of steps to end up chanting, "I am a lovable person. I am a valuable person. I am a forgivable person."[88] The confusion that occurs is between the biblical fact that God loves, values and forgives us and the humanistic psychological lie that we are intrinsically lovable, valuable and forgivable. While God called all of His creation good, sin came in and mankind became depraved to the point that while we were yet

sinners there was no essential loveliness or value or forgivability in any of us. All goodness, loveliness, and value are in Christ.

God has chosen to set his love upon us because of His essence, not because of ours, even after we are believers. His love, His choice to place value upon us, and His choice to forgive us is by grace alone. It is fully undeserved. It is not because of who we are by some intrinsic value of our own or by our own righteousness.

The paradoxical, profound and powerful truth of Scripture is that, though we are not intrinsically lovable, valuable, or forgivable, God loves, values, and forgives us. That is the pure theology of Scripture and the overpowering message of Christ's death and resurrection. The hymn writer states it much better than the psychologist. "Nothing in my hand I bring. Simply to Thy cross I cling." Nothing? Nothing! The biblical truth is better presented as: "I am not a lovable person. I am not a valuable person. I am not a forgivable person. But, Christ died for me!"

The focus of the Christian should be directed at Christ as the lovable person, the valuable person, and the forgiving person. In his book *Man: The Dwelling Place of God*, A. W. Tozer declares:

> The victorious Christian neither exalts nor downgrades himself. His interests have shifted from self to Christ. What he is or is not no longer concerns him. He believes that he has been crucified with Christ and he is not willing either to praise or deprecate such a man.[89]

The alternative to self-love is not self-hate, but rather love in relationship with God and others. The alternative to self-esteem is not self-denigration, but rather an understanding of the greatness of God dwelling in a weak vessel of flesh. The alternative to self-fulfillment is not a life of emptiness or meaninglessness. It is God's invitation to be so completely involved with His will and His purposes that fulfillment comes through relationship rather than through self. The awesome realization that the God and Creator of this universe has chosen to set His love upon human beings should engender love and esteem for God rather than for self. The amazing truth that He has called us in relationship with Him to do His will far surpasses the puny dreams of self-fulfillment.

Dobbins wrote a four-part series on "Anger: Master or Servant," which appeared in the *Pentecostal Evangel*.[90] The series was based on a chapter from his book *Your Spiritual and Emotional Power*.[91] His writings on anger need to be examined from both a scientific and a biblical perspective to see whether or not they contain truth or error.

Prior to the last 25 years self-control was encouraged and was the model for behavior. If one were angry the advice and the encouragement was for internalizing it rather than externalizing. Now, however everyone seems bent on self-expression rather than self restraint and many reasons are given to do so. We have moved from an era of restraint to one of release.

It is easy to see where Dobbins is on the matter. He says, "People who attempt to control anger by clamming up risk damaging themselves." He adds, "Psy-

chosomatic illnesses feed on unexpressed anger."[92] To explain his theory, Dobbins says, "..energy cannot be destroyed; it can only be transformed. Once you are angry you are in possession of energy which cannot be destroyed."[93] Dobbins warns, "If you don't develop ways of getting that energy out of you in nondestructive activities, sooner or later it will find symptomatic expression among the weakest of your organic systems. So don't clam up and run the risk of damaging your physical health."[94] To release this energy Dobbins recommends tackling dummies, pounding mattresses, and punching bags as well as other activities.

Dobbins's first error is to take a physical law about energy (energy cannot be destroyed) and to apply it to the mental world (anger is energy which cannot be destroyed). As any philosopher of science would tell him, it is a grave error to equate the physical world and the mental world. There is as much difference between physics and emotions as between nerves and nervousness. The idea that the energy associated with anger is like the energy in the natural world and must therefore be expended outwardly to prevent internal damage is without academic support.

Researchers refer to this particular model as the hydraulic model of emotions. The model says simply that if emotional energy is blocked in one place it must be released elsewhere. Researcher Carol Tavris says, "Today the hydraulic model of energy has been scientifically discredited." She goes on to tell how psychologists expand the hydraulic idea to all emotions **contrary to research**. She says that in spite of the research evidence against the idea,

"These therapists still argue that any feeling that is 'dammed up' is dangerously likely to 'spill over' and possibly 'flood' the system."[95] Tavris declares, "There's little evidence that suppressing anger is dangerous to health."[96]

Leonard Berkowitz, who has extensively studied violence and aggression, disagrees with the idea that it is desirable to let out one's aggressive feelings. Those therapists that encourage such active expressions of negative emotions are called "ventilationists." Their therapies, according to Berkowitz, stimulate and reward aggression and "heighten the likelihood of subsequent violence." He declares, "The evidence dictates now that it is unintelligent to encourage persons to be aggressive, even if, with the best of intentions, we want to limit such behavior to the confines of psychotherapy."[97] Berkowitz finds that ventilation-by-yelling has no effect on the reduction of anger.[98] This is also true of tackling dummies, pounding mattresses, punching bags and other such activities recommended by Dobbins.

Studies on both adults and children do not support the idea of hold-it-in-and-it-will-hurt-you and let-it-out-and-it-will-help-you. Research on heart disease and anger does not suggest suppressed anger as a contributor to heart disease. If anything, the men at highest risk are over-expressing anger.[99] Dobbins directs parents to encourage aggressive play for children and to reward them for it. However, studies show that children who are permitted or encouraged to play aggressively do not become less aggressive. They become more aggressive![100] Tavris says, "Expressing anger makes you angrier, solidifies an angry attitude, and establishes a hostile habit."[101]

There is a middle ground between repression and expression. And that middle ground is suppression. The Japanese suppress such feelings as anger. They are aware that such feelings exist. However, they do not act upon them. We know for certain that the Japanese physical health rate is far better than the American. Could it be that emotion suppressed is one factor that causes the Japanese to be so healthy?

In addition to his hydraulic-ventilationist position, which is contradicted by research, psychologist Dobbins also holds other unsubstantiated notions about anger. He relates anger and hurt in a way that may reveal more about himself and how he experiences hurt than about others and how they might experience it. Dobbins says, "We won't permit people who come to Emerge Ministries to say they hurt unless they are willing to acknowledge at the same time they are angry." Dobbins insists that all people who are hurt are automatically angry. He says, "After all, how can someone hurt you without making you angry?"[102]

It may be that every time Dobbins has been hurt he has responded in anger, but it does not follow that others respond in the same way. We have seen many individuals in our own biblical ministry over the years who were hurt in a variety of ways completely without anger. And almost everyone can think of situations of hurt that have not resulted in anger. Hurt is sometimes, not always as Dobbins contends, accompanied by anger. The problem of insisting on the relationship as Dobbins does is that it eventually forces an individual to be convinced about a condition which may not be true.

Dobbins relates anger and depression in a way that reveals his own love of Freudian ideas rather than any knowledge about research. He says, "Depression is another hiding place for anger. More frequently than not, situational depression is aggravated if not initially caused by anger which the person unconsciously turns inward as a form of temporary self hatred." He adds, "In most depressed people there is a large amount of disguised anger."[103] The Freudian unconscious turns out to be a good hiding place for all kinds of unproven ideas and can be used to support almost any idea one wishes. Freud and others have used it most effectively to hide unproven ideas. Researcher Judy Eidelson says, "The traditional approach to depression has been psychoanalytic [Freudian], which is based on the concept of 'anger turned inward.'" She goes on to say, "There are different causes of anger and different causes of depression; neither necessarily 'causes' the other."[104]

Psychologist Dobbins also strikes out from a biblical perspective. Is it okay to be angry'? Dobbins says, "If God is angry with the wicked every day, and Jesus experienced anger, then maybe our fear of our own anger and subsequent guilt are exaggerated reactions to a normal human emotion."[105] Dobbins's reasoning is based upon his erroneous idea that if God and Jesus became angry then maybe we shouldn't be too hard on ourselves for becoming angry. While it is true that not all anger is sin or results in sin, much of it is and does. Dobbins, through some interesting verbal gymnastics, assures his readers that anger is merely unexpressed energy. However, the Bible makes it clear that much anger is wrong because the reason and/or the expression are sinful.

Dobbins even goes so far as to encourage individuals to express anger at God. He says, "If you're angry with God, tell Him you're angry with Him. Go ahead and tell Him. He's big enough to take it."[106] Where in Scripture do we have an example of it's okay to be mad at God? Jonah was mad at God to his own detriment, but no example can be found in Scripture where anger at God is condoned.

Even Michael the archangel, "when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." (Jude 9.) How much more serious to vent anger on God, who is our righteous, just, and loving Creator! We know that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. It would follow that to be angry at God is the beginning of foolishness. King Solomon warns, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few." (Eccl. 5:2.)

In Scripture we are instructed to hate sin. Therefore we may be angry over sin and evil. One may certainly speak to God about anger over sin and evil, but it is wrong to be angry at God. If a person is indeed angry at God, he must admit his anger and confess his sin**.** One should also be encouraged to confess all ungodly anger just as one should always admit and confess sin to God according to the promise in I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Denying the existence of angry thoughts and feelings prevents confession and cleansing and thus leaves the person in his sin.

Knowing and acting according to the truth of God enables individuals to overcome explosive expressions and internally prolonged anger, which may lead to wrath, bitterness, and depression. Changed thinking is a great help for those who have problems with anger. Emotions are not independent. They have to be nursed and expressed and encouraged to remain by thinking the kinds of thoughts that will fuel them. Proverbs 14:29 gives wisdom concerning anger: "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." Even when things go wrong, Psalms 37:8 urges: "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."

A Christian can use an initial emotion of anger as a signal to quickly turn to God for guidance. Looking at a situation from God's perspective may lead people who have formerly been destructive in their anger to solve problems God's way. Each incident which stimulates a feeling of anger may provide another opportunity to put away the anger and to choose a new way of acting so that problem solving with the wisdom and strength of God will replace the expression of wrath or the internal nurturing of bitterness and resentment.

Chronic anger may be due to bitterness about circumstances, resentment against God, and unforgiveness of people. Anger may stem from wanting one's own way and not getting it. A habitual attitude of anger affects every thought, emotion, and action. Only choosing to believe the goodness of God, choosing to relinquish one's will to Him, and choosing to forgive others will bring the needed change.

Whenever psychology is intermingled with Scripture it dilutes the Word and deludes the church. Anger is more complex than the dangerous simplicity that Dobbins portrays. His biblical basis for expressing anger is weak at best and misleading at least. Dobbins's articles and his book are based upon his own personal, unproven psychological opinions. Unfortunately for him, his opinions and conclusions do not square with the research. Apparently Dobbins would like us to believe what he says because he says so. However, **to subscribe to the defunct hydraulic-ventilationist theory and to prescribe tackling dummies, pounding mattresses, punching a bag, etc. and to recommend getting mad at God without research or biblical proof is scientifically unreliable and biblically inexcusable**.

ROBERT MCGEE

Robert McGee begins his popular book, *The Search for Significance*, with these words:

> When Christ told His disciples, *You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free* (John 8:32), He was referring not only to an intellectual assent to the truth, but also to the application of truth in the most basic issues of life: our goals, our motives, and our sense of self-worth.[107]

McGee teaches that self-worth and self-esteem are essential to the Christian life. His primary concern is the source of personal worth, esteem, and significance. He contends that these are "compelling needs" and that too many people are seeking secu-

rity and significance from worldly sources rather than from God.

McGee intertwines three strands throughout *The Search for Significance*: (1) some very basic Bible teaching, (2) unbiblical psychological teachings, particularly from Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Albert Ellis, and (3) emotionally charged stories that fit the theories he is trying to promote. As with most Christians who try to combine psychology with the Bible, McGee does not seem to notice inherent contradictions between his biblical and antibiblical teachings.

McGee's drink at the cisterns of psychology is similar to Larry Crabb's. Both teach that people are driven by needs deep within them, outside their awareness. And, because these needs for worth, security and significance have not been adequately met, people suffer more than they realize. They are, nevertheless, driven by inner pain and unconscious beliefs developed early in life from not having those needs met. McGee says:

> We are hurt, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually, but because we aren't aware of the extent of our wounds, we can't take steps toward healing and health. Our problem is not stupidity, but a lack of objectivity. Because of this, we fail to see the reality of pain, hurt, and anger in our lives.[108]

That statement teaches that if we are to live godly lives we must explore the origin of the hurt and dig up the pain. In reference to his own life, McGee says:

> I began to be honest with myself and with God. The tough exterior I had developed started cracking, and I began to experience the pain I had neither wanted nor allowed myself to feel.[109]

McGee's Defense Mechanisms

McGee presents an Adlerian adaptation of Freud's defense mechanisms. McGee declares: "Human beings develop elaborate defense mechanisms to block pain and gain significance."[110]

McGee speaks of defense mechanisms as if they are established facts. Instead, they are an elaborate system of guessing about what is going on inside another person. In fact, much psychological counseling has to do with trying to figure out people's inner motives and drives. And, the theories end up being personal opinion, because only God has access into the inner man.

The best these theories can do is give some kind of glimpse into how individual theorists saw into their own inner life. For instance, Freud believed people are determined by early life experiences and driven by strong sexual impulses from deep within the unconscious. One of Adler's doctrines was that we are driven by the need for self-worth, expressed in security and significance. Already, one can see their influence on McGee: unmet needs and deep inner pain driving a person from a powerful unconscious.

McGee speaks much about how much pain people have and how past pain affects their present lives. He says:

> Some of us have deep emotional and spiritual scars resulting from the neglect, abuse, and manipulation that often accompany living in a dysfunctional family ... but all of us bear the effects of our own sinful nature and the imperfections of others.[111]

Unholy Mixture: Psychology and Theology

Because he is presenting some Bible and some psychology, McGee speaks of personal sin as well as the failures of others. That is why a Christian could naively read his book and think it is biblical. At times he has entire paragraphs which are biblical, but that makes the reader even more receptive to the errant psychological doctrines laced among Bible verses. The danger of the mixture can be seen in his statement of purpose:

> The purpose of this book is to provide clear, biblical instruction about the basis of your self-worth by helping you: 1. Identify and understand the nature of man's search for significance. 2. Recognize and challenge inadequate answers. 3. Apply God's solution to your search for significance.[112]

He wants to "provide clear, biblical instruction" and that's wonderful, but what he wants to "provide clear, biblical instruction" about is not to be found in Scripture, but rather in godless humanistic psychology. And, when he gives Scriptures, they do not and cannot support those secular theories.

McGee has embraced the need theology of secular psychology. He says:

> Our desire to be loved and accepted is a symptom of a deeper need-the need that often governs our behavior and is the primary source of our emotional pain. Often unrecognized, this is our need for self-worth.[113]

McGee attempts to support this secular theory with Scripture. He says:

> In the Scriptures, God supplies the essentials for discovering our true significance and worth. The first two chapters of Genesis recount man's creation, revealing man's intended purpose (to honor God) and man's value (that he is a special creation of God).[114]

In one fell swoop, McGee equates the need for significance with "man's intended purpose of honoring God," and he turns the fact of God creating mankind into "man's value," that is, his worth. Instantly God's Word is restated in Adlerian terms and understood through the colored lenses of need psychology.

McGee presses on. He says:

> An accurate understanding of God's truth is the first step toward discovering our significance and worth.[115]

An "accurate understanding of God's truth" leads to significance and self-worth? Until the twentieth century, an accurate understanding of God's truth was the first step towards understanding our own depravity and God's goodness.

Hunger for Significance and Self-Worth: Biblical or Worldly?

Paul was so overwhelmed by the goodness of God and by the gift of grace God had given him to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," that he referred to himself as "less than the least of all saints." (Eph. 3:8.) Saints of earlier centuries abhorred the thought of self-esteem. Charles Spurgeon put it bluntly: "Anything is better than self-esteem."[116]

But McGee follows the trend of the second half of the twentieth century, along with many other Christians who have become wed to the psychological way. He attempts to give support to his position by quoting Dr. Lawrence Crabb (whose doctrines he follows throughout his book) as saying, "The basic personal need of each person is to regard himself as a worthwhile human being."[117] McGee then declares:

> Whether labeled "self-esteem" or "self-worth," the feeling of significance is crucial to man's emotional, spiritual, and social stability, and is the driving element within the human spirit.[118]

Note that this "feeling of significance is crucial." Crucial for what? It certainly was never taught by Jesus or the apostles. Throughout Scripture meekness, lowliness, and humility are the sought-after attributes, not self-esteem, self-worth and significance. If these things are to be found "within the human spirit," why are they not clearly proclaimed in the Gospels and Epistles? They more clearly fit an Adlerian adaptation of a Freudian unconscious, with its "driving element." McGee seems to be turn-

ing man's spirit into that kind of unconscious, filled with powerful energy driving behavior.

Even though Scripture never encourages self-worth, McGee insists that, "We must understand that this hunger for self-worth is God-given and can only be satisfied by Him." Therefore, throughout the book, McGee explains how "hunger for self-worth" is filled by God.[119]

Having turned to psychological theories to understand human nature and how to help people change, McGee declares:

> Since the Fall, man has often failed to turn to God for the truth about himself. Instead, he has looked to others to meet his inescapable need for self-worth.[120]

McGee, himself, is looking outside Scripture to find "truth about himself." Then, he takes secular need psychology and makes God the fulfiller of what those psychologists suppose are the needs that motivate behavior. Once he turns God into the fulfiller of needs (which are never established in Scripture), McGee goes through the same litany as his secular counterparts. He also presents the devil's activity as fooling people into thinking they must fulfill these needs for self-worth through such things as performance and pleasing others. McGee lists "four false beliefs resulting from Satan's deceptions," and of course they're all "false beliefs" about meeting a so-called "God-given" need for self-worth. McGee lists four categories of false beliefs, describes them and then gives what he thinks is "God's answer" for each one. Here is how they line up:

"False Belief Category"—"God's Answer"

"The Performance Trap"—"Justification"

"Approval Addict"—"Reconciliation"

"The Blame Game"—"Propitiation"

"Shame"—"Regeneration"[121]

By putting psychological words together with theological words, McGee makes his system appear biblical to the unwary. Further deception results as he juxtaposes psychological doctrines with biblical doctrines as if they go together, when they are miles apart. For instance, he says:

> Thankfully, God has a solution for the fear of failure! He has given us a secure self-worth totally apart from our ability to perform. We have been justified, placed in right standing before God through Christ's death on the cross, which paid for our sins.[122]

Here he has an opinion gleaned from humanistic psychology sandwiched between two true statements. He further declares: "By imputing righteousness to us, God attributes Christ's worth to us."[123] That is a misleading statement which comes from self psychology.

McGee and RET

The kind of psychology we are talking about is not science; it is philosophy and ends up being antibiblical theology. However, McGee does not seem to worry about where he finds answers to why we are the way we are and how we can change. This is evident in his use of the Rational Emotive Therapy of

Albert Ellis, an avowed atheist who considers Christianity to be dangerous to a person's mental health. McGee says:

> Changing how we think, feel, and act is a process that involves the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, honesty, time modeling, affirmation, and truth. As a starting point, however, we will use a model adapted from psychologist Albert Ellis's Rational Emotive Therapy.[124]

McGee sounds no caution. He simply juxtaposes Ellis with the "supernatural work of the Holy Spirit." This would be anathema to Ellis, and it should be anathema to Christians. But because he has so fully embraced Ellis's system, he says:

> We often interpret the situations we encounter through our beliefs. Some of our interpretations are conscious reflections; **most of them, however, are based on unconscious assumptions.** These beliefs **trigger** certain thoughts, which, in turn, stimulate certain emotions, and from these emotions come our actions.[125] (Bold added.)

The above is a simplified version of how Ellis adapted the Freudian unconscious. With Ellis, unconscious beliefs and assumptions direct present thinking, feeling, and behaving. Crabb teaches the same thing, since he borrowed from the same sources (Freud, Adler, Maslow, Rogers, and Ellis). And, since Crabb's first books preceded McGee's by 8 and 10 years, it is safe to assume that McGee is

indebted to him for his general system of misunderstanding the nature of man.

Unlike Crabb, McGee does not attempt to justify his use of psychology. Instead, he simply juxtaposes. He interweaves biblical teachings with psychological teachings so that the reader assumes all is Christian. He involves God as the provider of self-worth. He uses theological words along with psychological theories—all to support his notion that mankind's need is self-worth.

Humanity's True Need

But, mankind's true need is not self-worth, self-esteem or feelings of significance. Mankind's true need is to know God, for without knowing God, there can be no salvation, no growth in sanctification. Paul declared that to know God was his greatest passion. (Philip. 3.)

Peter's second epistle clearly shows that God's "divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, **through the knowledge of him** that hath called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3, bold added.) Knowing the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest need of all. He makes Himself known through His Word and His Holy Spirit, not through secular psychological theories of men.

Looking at self is not even the way to know oneself. To truly know ourselves, we must come to know Christ more and more. Then we discern what is of Him and what is of us. When we see what is of us apart from Him, we must conclude that it is of the flesh. It is worthless. It is worse than worthless. That is why Job abhorred himself when he saw God.

All the attributes given to us in Christ, such as His righteousness and the fruit of the Spirit are of Him. He is the worthy one. We are vessels which would do well to decrease in self-aggrandizing thoughts, rather than increase. Paul's teachings are pure. McGee's teachings are contaminated. Paul rejoiced to say:

> For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (2 Cor. 4:6-7.)

In commenting about this Scripture, A.W. Pink says, "God has placed His treasure "in earthen vessels"—not steel or gold—easily cracked and marred, worthless in themselves."[126] Indeed, integrationist teachers of need psychology (like McGee) often confuse the container with its contents to establish some kind of inherent self-worth.

At one time McGee operated Rapha Christ-Centered Hospital and Counseling Care, which had "120 beds in 12 units around the country for an annual income of more than $12 million." It was reported that "Nearly 7,000 congregations have opened their doors to Rapha trainers, who teach pastors, counselors and lay leaders how to organize and run support groups."[127] It was certainly a convenient means of finding prospective patients! And, because the support groups were trained by Rapha they were psychologically based. **Rapha provided psychotherapeutic treatment that mixed godless**

humanistic theories and the Bible. But, instead of providing the best of both worlds, Rapha ended up selling broken cisterns that hold no water. (Jer. 2:11-13.)

H. NORMAN WRIGHT

H. Norman Wright is a licensed Marriage, Family and Child Therapist who headed Christian Marriage Enrichment (CME), which is an excellent example of the naive and unnecessary amalgamation of biblical and psychological ideas. The CME conferences, workshops and seminars gather together an array of individuals from somewhat biblical to very psychological.[128] The mainline CME workshopper is one who blends and brews psychological and biblical concoctions that are exemplary of the psychologizing of Christianity.

The CME conferences present much psychological advice. The psychological advice covers topics from communication to crisis counseling and from teenagers to testing. However, the conferences promote psychological opinions more than the promises of God. CME conferences are one example of amalgamania run rampant. The conferences are a perfect picture of what has happened in the church. The change from the cure of souls to the cure of minds or a mixture thereof is clearly seen. The promotion of psychological solutions ahead of theological solutions and of psychotherapists ahead of pastors is transparent.

The CME conferences also included the unnecessary promotion of psychological testing. The test most touted by CME is the Taylor-Johnson Temper-

ament Analysis (TJTA). The CME announcement referred to the TJTA as producing a profile that is "extremely useful in premarital, marital and individual counseling." The come-on litany is as follows:

> Have you ever been "stuck" in counseling?
> Have you wondered whether to work with a person yourself or refer?
> Have you wanted a way to discover a person's problems immediately without taking ten hours of counseling time?
> Would you like to be able to use a personality indicator both for counseling & group Bible studies?
> Would you like to know "What to do" in counseling sessions
> Have you ever wanted to know how to help someone struggling with worry, anger, depression or negative self-talk?
> If you have any "yes" answers, the TJTA seminar is for you.[129]

The promises associated with the above are many, but entirely without the proper scientific support.

The most important factor related to a test is its validity. Validity tells to what extent a test does what it claims to do. Psychological Publications, which prints and distributes the TJTA, claims an empirical validity for the test, the evidence of which does not exist.[130] The TJTA is only one example of a variety of tests naively used by many Christian counselors and pastors to supposedly understand people in order to help them. People take the tests and view the numerical results as if they give an objective and meaningful representation of the person. However,

they have been intellectually numbed by the numbers and do not realize how little is returned for the effort given. To compound the lack of integrity, the tests often give a sense of confidence of knowing that is not statistically warranted.

It is a well-known statistical fact that the deeper the human quality being measured, the less likely that one can meaningfully measure it. One can generally rely upon the results of a typing test because it measures a very discreet human ability to produce words, sentences and paragraphs with a degree of accuracy using a specific device. But, when one moves from a test of ability (such as a typing test) to tests of achievement, aptitude, intelligence and finally to personality tests, there is a significant loss of test integrity.

Dr. David Myers, in his book *The Inflated Self,* makes a very sobering remark about personality tests:

> People's believing horoscope data about themselves in the same way as personality test data, and their being most receptive to personality test feedback on tests that have the lowest actual validity, raises some disconcerting implications for psychiatry and clinical psychology. Regardless of whether a particular diagnosis has any validity, the recipient is likely to stand in awe of it, especially after expending effort and money to receive it.[131]

Many who are propelled by the promises of psychological revelation based upon the use of the TJTA and other such tests are flocking in to be trained, but unaware of the lack of usefulness of those instru-

ments. Worse yet, they leave with a naive confidence that they will know or learn something of value about the individuals who take the tests.

Wright's Commitment to Critical Incident Debriefing

Wright's "current focus is grief and trauma counseling and critical incident debriefings."[132] The two well-known critical incident debriefing approaches are Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)." The *Australian Psychologist* ran a research article titled "Caveat emptor, caveat venditor, and critical incident stress debriefing/management (CISD/M)." The article was reviewed and summarized in *The Scientific Review of Mental Health Practice*. The reviewer states that the researchers conclude:

> ...that critical incident stress debriefing and critical incident stress management appear to be essentially equivalent treatments. Moreover, they maintain that CISD/M has become a multimillion-dollar industry despite the lack [of] evidence that it is efficacious [effective]. In addition, they note that approximately 28% of Americans were offered trauma counseling following the September 11 attacks, and that tens of thousands of individuals are trained in CISD/M and related methods each year. They conclude that there are **"no reliable studies demonstrating the efficacy of group debriefing" and that there are reasons to suspect that debriefing may be harmful in some instances.**[133] (Bold added.)

In the field of counseling there has been a huge gap between what the researchers say and what the practitioners do. Nowhere is this gap more evident than in the practice of CISD/M when the promotion and practice are contrasted with scientific research.

Keeping in mind that CISD and CISM "appear to be essentially equivalent treatments" and also remembering the tremendous support, endorsement and promotion of CISM by the American Association of Christian Counselors, note what the *Psychotherapy Networker*, a publication for mental health professionals, says about such interventions:

> Despite its widespread application, considerable research indicates that those who receive CISD typically do **no** better than those who don't, and that a significant number of people treated with CISD **do even worse** than those who didn't receive any treatment. This negative reaction seems to emerge because, for some people, the very act of focusing on their negative feelings in CISD increases their distress and leads to more difficulties, such as flashbacks, nightmares, and anxiety attacks. According to trauma expert Richard Gist, "Not only did CISD not deliver much in the way of preventive efficacy, it seemed to inhibit natural resolution for some." The Cochrane Collaboration of Great Britain, one of the most prominent gatekeepers in medicine, charged with assessing the effectiveness of procedures ranging from open heart surgery to psychotherapy for depression, evaluated CISD and

> found it to be **without empirical support**.[134] (Bold added.)

In spite of the thousands of counselors trained in CISD/M and similar early interventions, most scientifically controlled studies demonstrate no positive effects of these interventions. Think about the fact that CISD/M is "without empirical support."

Caveat Emptor (Let the buyer beware) and Caveat Venditor (Let the seller beware) are two warnings that have not and apparently will not be heeded by Wright and others promoting such programs. **Wright's use of CISM is just one piece and admittedly a large piece of the unholy mixture of psychology and the Bible that is called integration, which we call psychoheresy**.

M. SCOTT PECK

Psychiatrist M. Scott Peck has become an extremely popular speaker and writer. His books *People of the Lie*[135] and *The Road Less Traveled*[136] have appeared on a leading evangelical magazine's Book of the Year list. The list is a result of votes cast by a group of evangelical writers, leaders, and theologians selected by the magazine. A *New York Times* book reviewer reveals, "The book's main audience is in the vast Bible Belt." The reviewer describes *The Road Less Traveled* as "an ambitious attempt to wed Christian theology to the 20th-century discoveries of Freud and Jung."[137] In an interview which appeared in *Christianity Today,* Peck was asked "what he meant when he called Christ 'Savior.'" The reviewer writes:

> Peck likes Jesus the Savior as fairy godmother (a term I'm sure he does not use flippantly) and as exemplar, or one who shows us how to live and die. But he does not like the idea of Jesus the Atoner.[138]

The reviewer goes on to say,

> Peck's view of God is even more disturbing. He ends up looking suspiciously like a psychotherapist. Peck declares that God does not punish evil.[139]

The writer accurately sums up Peck's major problem and main weakness by saying, "He lets what he deems to be psychological necessity dictate theological truth."[140]

Peck's understanding of the nature of God and the nature of man comes from a blend of Jungian psychology and Eastern mysticism rather than from the Bible. In *The Road Less Traveled* he says of God and man:

> God wants us to become Himself (or Herself or Itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution. It is God who is the source of the evolutionary force and God who is the destination. This is what we mean when we say that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.[141]

The Bible says quite the opposite:

> Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. (Isaiah 44:6.)

Peck continues:

> It is one thing to believe in a nice old God who will take good care of us from a lofty position of power which we ourselves could never begin to attain. It is quite another to believe in a God who has it in mind for us precisely that we should attain His position, His power, His wisdom, His identity.[142]

The only words that approach this description are those describing the thoughts of Lucifer.

> For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Isaiah 14:13-14.)

And indeed Peck claims godhood for those who will take the responsibility for attaining it.

> Nonetheless, as soon as we believe it is possible for man to become God, we can really never rest for long, never say, "OK, my job is finished, my work is done." We must constantly push ourselves to greater and greater wisdom, greater and greater effectiveness. By this belief we will have trapped ourselves, at least until death, on an effortful treadmill of self-improvement and spiritual growth. God's responsibility must be our own.[143]

What a contrast to Jesus' words!

> At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

> because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light. (Matt. 11:25-30.)

Peck defines original sin as human laziness. He proposes that it is laziness that prevents people from listening to "the God within them" which is "the knowledge of rightness which inherently resides within the minds of all mankind."[144]

The prophet Jeremiah would not have agreed with Peck.

> O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. (Jer. 10:23-24.)

Thus, from Peck's perspective, God resides in every single person and every single person knows what is right. He goes even further into the morass of Eastern mysticism and Jungian occultism when he says: "**To put it plainly, our unconscious is God. God within us. We were part of God all the**

time. God has been with us all along, is now, and always will be."[145] (Bold added.) In contrast, the Bible reveals that the only way a person comes into relationship is through faith. Until a person is born of the Spirit he resides in the kingdom of darkness and is under the dominion of Satan.

> And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved). (Eph. 2:1-5.)

Paul states very clearly that every person is alienated from God until he is saved by Christ Jesus:

> That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. (Eph. 2:12.)

Peck's theology as well as his psychology has been greatly influenced by Jung. However he takes Jung's concepts of the unconscious a step further than Jung was willing to go. Peck says: "In my vision the collective unconscious is God; the conscious is man as

individual; and the personal unconscious is the interface between them."[146] First he says that a person's unconscious is God; then he says that the collective unconscious (the unconscious of everyone who has ever lived somehow rolled together into one) is God. Then he reduces God's will to "the individual's own unconscious will,"[147] whatever that might be.

Christians seeking a deeper and closer walk with God have turned to *The Road Less Traveled.* In hopes of venturing on their own spiritual quest, many college students have read the book for their own spiritual development. However, according to Peck spiritual growth is to realize one's own godhood:

> Since the unconscious is God all along, we may further define the goal of spiritual growth to be the attainment of godhood by the conscious self. It is for the individual to become totally, wholly God.[148]

Thus Satan's lie in the Garden of Eden has been recast into a blend of Eastern mysticism and western psychology.

Since writing *The Road Less Traveled* Peck says he has become a Christian. However, to date he has not repudiated anything he has written in that book. Peck, in an interview with *New Age Journal,* referred to *The Road Less Traveled* as a "gift from God" that was "dropped" on him. The interviewer describes the book as "a distinctly '80's blend of up-to-date psychology and down-to-earth religion." The interviewer then says, "Peck, in fact, insists that there is no difference between the two."[149]

Peck describes his twenty-five years of Zen Buddhism as "the ideal training ground for spiritual

paradox." He says, "Without that, I don't think there was any way that I would have been able to swallow the god-awful paradoxes of Christianity."[150] **Aside from his continual unabashed amalgamation of psychology and theology since his conversion, there is no way to tell whether his Christianity is based upon the Jesus of the Bible or of the Jungian collective unconscious.**

H. NEWTON MALONY

Dr. H. Newton Malony is an Emeritus Professor of Psychology and a practicing psychotherapist, having used Transactional Analysis in his therapeutic practice. Transactional Analysis (TA), a therapeutic approach developed by Dr. Eric Berne and popularized by Dr. Thomas Harris in his book *I'm OK, You're OK*,[151] reached its crest of popularity some years ago and is now on the decline. The study of the history of psychotherapy reveals the rise and decline of one psychotherapy after another with none seeming to disappear because a newer model, newer version or newer idea comes along.

Harris discusses such biblical concepts as sin, being born again, absolutes, and grace. However, in each case his opinion on the matter is contrary to biblical Christianity. Harris does not believe that a child is born into a condition of sin. He contends that a child chooses that condition. Thus, for Harris sin is a decision that a child makes about himself (I'M NOT OK) rather than a condition in which a child finds himself. The Bible teaches that man is fallen by his inherited condition rather than by his own

decision. There is a subtle, but gigantic theological difference between TA and the Bible.

As one can imagine, with a massive misconception of sin, Harris's resulting teachings about the born-again condition are not biblical. According to Harris, it is the civilizing process that forces a person into the position of sin, and one is born again by deciding to change from I'M NOT OK to I'M OK. Thus, just as the condition of sin is a decision of man, so is the born-again experience. Here again there is a subtle, but powerful difference between the TA "truth" and biblical truth. It is the difference between the work of man to save himself and the work of God. The idea that I decide to be OK and then I am OK without the cross of Christ is a new theology.

Harris declares, "There are no doctrinal absolutes."[152] Furthermore he contends:

> The truth is not something which has been brought to finality at an ecclesiastical summit meeting or bound in a black book. *The truth is a growing body of data of what we observe to be true.*[153] (Italics his.)

This is Harris's way of saying that the basis for truth resides in man, not the Bible.

Besides distorting the biblical concept of sin, being born again, and absolutes, Harris mutilates the concept of grace. He has misshapen it to fit his own gospel of self-forgiveness and self-salvation. He says:

> The concept of grace ... is a theological way of saying I'M OK—YOU'RE OK. It is not YOU CAN BE OK, IF or YOU WILL BE ACCEPTED, IF, but

> rather YOU ARE ACCEPTED, unconditionally.[154] (Emphasis his.)

Man is not accepted by God unconditionally as Harris believes. According to the Bible, man is saved (accepted) through faith in God, not faith in self. There is only one way to receive and that is through God's Son. That is a clear teaching of the Bible. Harris probably deplores that teaching the same way he deplores other absolutes.

Harris's concept of sin, born-again, absolutes, and grace are all distortions of biblical truth. Nevertheless, at one time TA was one of the most popular therapies used by Christians. Can you imagine how the use of TA could open a person up to all kinds of possibilities for biblical distortions and theological aberrations?

We use the example of Malony for two reasons. First, as an illustration that there is a rise and decline of various therapeutic approaches and, more importantly, to demonstrate how adopting a particular approach can cause a theological change. In describing how he used TA, Malony says:

> In Transactional Analysis terms, I stay as close to my Free Child as possible. I am confident, as was Berne, that there is within the child part of me an area of primitive intuition (often termed the Little Professor) that can be trusted. I implicitly count on this part of my own psyche to guide me in making judgments and in making interventions.[155]

Please notice the words used by Malony and particularly the power given to the Free Child. It

is trusted and it is counted on to guide. This raises the question: Where is the Holy Spirit? Malony says that "this [free child/little professor] may be one of the ways God's Holy Spirit works in my life."[156] Here is a prime example of how psychology influences theology. Without these TA terms we are certain that Malony would speak directly of the Holy Spirit as guide. **With the use of TA, Malony's theology has now become mostly psychology, and the Holy Spirit "may" now work through his "Free Child" or "Little Professor," though Malony can't say for sure.**

JOSEPH PALOTTA

Dr. Joseph L. Palotta, a Christian who is also a psychiatrist and hypnotherapist, combines the worst of two evils into a practice that he calls "hypnoanalysis." His system is an amalgamation of hypnosis and the Freudian psychosexual stages of development. His book *The Robot Psychiatrist* is filled with unproven Freudian concepts such as the subconscious determinants, abreaction and the supposed determinism of early life experiences. He says that his book contains "extremely rapid systems of treatment for emotional disorders." He promises, "These methods bring about definite therapeutic change of the underlying emotional problem."[157]

Palotta is completely sold on the Oedipus complex. He, like Freud, claims that this is "a universal experience in the emotional development of every person."[158] As we describe earlier, the Oedipus Complex states that every child is filled with a desire for incest and homicide, every child desires sexual inter-

course with the parent of the opposite sex, every child wants the like-sex parent to die, and every child is confronted with unconscious anxiety. Palotta says:

> The universal conclusion that little boys and little girls make is that somehow the little girls have lost their penises and have nothing.[159]

He goes on to describe how "little girls feel that they have been castrated, that their penises have somehow been cut off" and that little boys "fear that they will lose their penises." He says, "The little girls develop what is termed penis envy." As noted earlier, this idea comes directly from Freud with his fixation on lust, incest, castration anxiety, and for a woman, penis envy. Freud was convinced that people are psychologically determined by age five or six according to how they dealt with these macabre fascinations. Can you think of a more macabre, twisted and demonic explanation for the human predicament?

The Oedipus Complex is based upon the Greek play entitled *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. Dr. Thomas Szasz, a psychiatrist who is well trained in Freudian ideas and well aware of their origins says, "By dint of his rhetorical skill and persistence, Freud managed to transform an Anthenian myth into an Austrian madness. "He calls this "Freud's transformation of the saga of Oedipus from legend to lunacy."[160]

So the first evil is Freudian psychology at its worst. And, the second evil is the use of hypnosis. In our book *Hypnosis: Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?* we consider the various problems with the use of hypnosis and show that even though it may now be used by medical doctors it originated from and

is still practiced by witch doctors.[161] Research psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey aligns hypnotic techniques with witchcraft.[162] Such techniques have been used for thousands of years by witches and shamans. After considering research on results, the occult origins, and the biblical prohibitions, we say that "Hypnotism is potentially dangerous at its best and is demonic at its worst."[163] We conclude by saying:

> Because there are so many unanswered questions about its usefulness and so many potential dangers about its usage, Christians would be wise to shun hypnosis.[164]

Palotta promises much from his hypno-psychoanalytical merger. However, recent writings from both in and out of the psychiatric profession indicate that the Freudian concepts are in question because of their tainted origins and because their tarnished history predicts a tenuous future for them. The major Freudian ideas have not stood the test of time nor have they withstood the scrutiny of research. **Palotta provides a prime example of one who has combined the fallacies of Freud with the hypocrisy of hypnosis as he attempts to synthesize his theories and to synchronize them with Scripture, but it is a false alchemy.**

CECIL OSBORNE

Primal Integration Therapy (PIT), developed by Christian psychotherapist Dr. Cecil Osborne, is actually a form of Primal Therapy (PT), which was invented and popularized by psychotherapist Dr. Arthur Janov. Because PIT is based upon PT, we will

first describe Primal Therapy. We describe Janov's approach elsewhere as follows:

> The sacred words of Primal Therapy are *Primal Pain,* which are always capitalized for emphasis. It is around these words that the central doctrines of Primal Therapy revolve. According to Janov, as the child grows he has a dilemma between being himself and conforming to the expectations of his parents. During this period of development, the child accumulates Pain from the injuries of unmet needs, such as not being fed when hungry, not being changed when wet, or being ignored when needing attention. Primal Pain occurs as a result of the conflicts between self need and parental expectation. Through the process of growth, as conflicts continue to occur, the accumulation of Primal Pain results in what Janov calls the "Primal Pool of Pain."
>
> When the Pool gets deep enough, just one more incident supposedly pushes the child into neurosis. This single significant incident is labeled the "major Primal Scene." Janov contends: "The major Primal Scene is the single most shattering event in the child's life. It is that moment of icy, cosmic loneliness, the bitterest of all epiphanies. It is the time when he begins to discover that he is not loved for what he is and will not be." It is at this point that the child finally gives up the idea of being himself in order to gain his parents' love. In the process of gaining parental approval, the

> child supposedly seals off his real feelings and becomes an unreal self. Janov calls this dissociation from one's feelings "neurosis."[165]

Janov believes that the Primal Scene occurs between the ages of five and seven and is buried in the unconscious. Primal Therapy requires a return to the early years of life in order to find healing and help. Janov's single-cause-single-cure formula is simple. Blocked pain causes neurosis; PT cures it.

To be cured the neurotic is led back to his major Primal Scene in order to experience the emotions associated with it and to suffer the Primal Pain. The intense, acted out emotions associated with this event are called a "Primal."

This is a feeling therapy in which feelings are encouraged and emotions dominate. Screaming and crying are necessary ingredients to change, and verbal aggression is a mandated part of the package. Screaming, screeching, sobbing, gagging, thrashing, writhing, gurgling, choking, and wailing are all promoted and practiced.

Janov claims a 95 percent cure rate for his customers. His claims for cures are impressive. Mental, emotional, and even physical cures and transformations are promised. He claims cures for everything from asthma to arthritis and from migraines to menstrual cramps. Janov even claims that "about one-third of the moderately flat-chested women independently reported that their breasts grew."[166]

Osborne's PIT approach is a derivative of PT and is a blend of Freudian theory, rebirthing,[167] and just a dash of "I'm not OK"[168] from Transactional Analysis. As one reads the PIT approach, one sees the

principles, practices, and promises of PT (Primal Therapy). Though he does not make as rigid a claim as Janov does, Osborne nonetheless uses the single-cause-single-cure idea.

Osborne states his central theme about "human ills" in this way: "A lack of proper love in childhood is the cause; Primal Integration therapy in a loving Christian atmosphere is the solution for emotional distress."[169]

Both Janov and Osborne offer their Primal promises in the same pattern with the same zeal. Testimonies of persons who tried other methods that failed and then "found it" in PT or PIT are presented by both Janov and Osborne. Osborne tells about a case of a man with a doctorate who had tried all kinds of psychotherapeutic approaches and even one Christian approach. However, nothing helped until he tried PIT. Osborne quotes the man as saying, "Primal Integration has become for me the equivalent of the Holy Grail, the Fountain of Youth. I've found it!"[170]

Osborne, like Janov, is long on promises, but short on independent scientific research to support his claims. Claims of cure by Osborne and Janov are based upon their own say so and not upon independent research and follow up.

Osborne, like Janov, is quick to make glib, unscientific and unsubstantiated claims. Osborne's book presents many unscientific, unsubstantiated statements offered as fact with minimal or no justification. Some examples are:

> ... parental failure to love properly... is the root cause of all neuroses.[171]

> Everything that has ever happened to us, including the birth experience, is stored in some portion of the mind.[172]
>
> It is axiomatic that virtually all neuroses (all over-reactions) *have roots that go back to childhood.*[173] (Italics his.)
>
> Feelings do not age.[174]
>
> Time does not diminish childhood hurts. Those memories are inscribed indelibly. They do not erode or disappear. Adult insight in no way lessens them.[175]
>
> The unconscious never forgets.[176]
>
> Some women, deprived of a father when quite young, become sexually frigid, or partly so, not having had an opportunity to live through the Oedipal stage—the period when the small girl falls in love with daddy, and fantasizes marrying him.[177]

Osborne rattles off these and other statements to validate his PIT approach—never mind that these statements are scientifically inaccurate or untrue or debatable.

Osborne, like Janov, claims one cure after another to entice people into treatment. His use of the Freudian opinions about the past, the unconscious determinants, and the emotions are unfortunate in an age that is more and more criticizing Freudian ideas and where even therapists are using them less and less. *Free Inquiry, a* secular humanist publication, ran an article on "The Death Knell of Psychoanalysis."[178] Psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey wrote a book entitled

The Death of Psychiatry.[179] And, Adolf Grunbaum, in his book *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis,* seems to have placed the last nails in the coffin of Freudian theory.[180]

Nevertheless, Osborne and other Christian psychotherapists seem bent on proclaiming PIT and other such therapies as the Holy Grail of help. PIT is at best a mammoth example of extreme hysteria and at worst an open door for demons. **Doubly unfortunate is the fact that Jesus is dragged into PIT and especially into the melee that results from the cacophonous and cataclysmic combination of convulsions, cataplexies, calamities, and claimed cures.**

CHARLES SOLOMON

Dr. Charles Solomon of Grace Fellowship International has written several books about his own approach to counseling. He describes his position in his book *Counseling with the Mind of Christ.* He says:

> Rare, indeed, is the individual who employs psychology exclusively for purposes of understanding the psychodynamics of the behavior in question while allowing the Spirit of God to apply the Word of God to produce a child of God and that child being "conformed to His image." (See Romans 8:29.)[181]

Solomon approaches the understanding of problems of living through psychological, not biblical, eyes. And, his psychological understanding of man is seen almost exclusively through the concept of rejec-

tion. Just as Freud viewed human problems through the early life Oedipus Complex, Solomon sees human problems through an early life rejection syndrome.

The Rosetta stone of rejection is to Solomon what the Oedipus Complex was to Freud. Rejection is the cornerstone of Solomon's theoretical amalgamation. Just as Freudian analysts' patients report the Oedipal ideas and feelings to them, so do Solomon's patients report the rejection syndrome to him and his followers.

Solomon says:

> ... the majority of mental and emotional symptoms have roots traceable to childhood rejection which has limited the person's options in coping with responsibility and stress.[182]

Solomon outdoes Freud in how far back he is willing to carry the possibility of rejection. In his book *The Rejection Syndrome* he says:

> Research has also substantiated a cause-and-effect relationship between a mother's rejection of the unborn child and the psychological difficulties of the child in later life.[183]

While this might be an interesting psychological idea, research has not substantiated any such cause-and-effect relationship. A single phone call to any medical school with faculty in child development or pediatric neurology will reveal this. **Though Solomon proposes a spiritual solution to the rejection syndrome, his model of man is definitely psychological.**

PSYCHO-CONFUSION

Because of the multitude of theories and myriads of techniques it would be exhausting to be exhaustive in order to exemplify the confusion (and even quackery) that exists in psychotherapy. Over 7000 psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers attended a meeting described by its organizer as "the Woodstock of psychotherapy." Psycho-celebrities such as Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, R. D. Laing, Bruno Bettleheim, and Joseph Wolpe were present. Carl Rogers, who has influenced more therapists in America than anyone else, received a standing ovation. The full range from compliments to criticisms of psychotherapy was voiced throughout the convention. Criticisms by the speakers themselves included reports that most of the present distinct schools of psychotherapy are doomed to fizzle, that psychiatry is not a science, and that nothing new in human relations has surfaced from a century of psychotherapy.[184]

The various debates and differences of opinion led behavior therapist Dr. Joseph Wolpe to confess that "an outside observer would be surprised to learn that this is what the evolution of psychotherapy has come to—a Babel of conflicting voices."[185] The rifts which resulted from the range of therapies and therapists could easily lead one to title the conference "Babble from Babel."

From the unconscious determinants of Freud to the congruence, accurate empathy and positive regard of Rogers, and from the archetypes of Jung to the I'm-OK-You're-OK of Harris, the field of psychotherapy is saturated with confusion and subjec-

tivity. The whole array is simply subjectivity garbed in the pseudosophistication of a scientific sounding vocabulary and garmented by academic degrees and licenses. But it nonetheless stands naked before the eyes of true science and research.

Subjectivity exists wherever psychotherapy exists whether in or out of the church. Just because this subjective (supposedly scientific) practice is used by Christians and sometimes baptized by adding Scriptures does not raise it to the level of truth. Attempting to sanctify psychotherapy by adding Bible verses only secularizes Scripture.

The result of all attempts to sanctify psychotherapy has only led to as great a confusion of approaches concocted by Christian practitioners as by non-Christians. Behind all the rhetoric supporting the marriage of Scripture and psychotherapy is the reality of confusion. There is almost as wide a diversity of theories and techniques amongst Christians as amongst non-Christians. Differences between Christian professionals exist on even the most basic and important elements of psychotherapy. For example, one group emphasizes the unconscious determinants of behavior and another group avoids them all together. One group of Christians will use a system such as primal therapy and another group will call it demonic. It is perplexing and paradoxical how such a mess could have mesmerized Christians.

It is clear that the prevailing psychotherapeutic systems merely reflect the current culture. In fact, American psychotherapeutic approaches were almost nonexistent in other parts of the world until exported from this country. They are not universal but rather socio-culturally restricted. We know that

the truths of Scripture transcend culture and time. They are eternal. Which so-called truths discovered only by psychotherapists are eternal?

If psychotherapists would spend more time reading the research on outcomes in psychotherapy and less time defending their psychotherapeutic faith, they would see that the "rock" on which they stand is sinking sand. As we have shown, psychotherapy is not science and does not involve scientific theory. We will later demonstrate that it rests upon the erroneous assumption that problems of thinking and living constitute illnesses and therefore require cures by psychologically trained counselors.

14

More Amalgamania

> A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James 1:8.)

Amalgamania has spread from the counseling room to nearly every aspect of the Christian life. Distinctions between the ways of the world and the ways of God have blurred so that psychological ideas are accepted as biblical truth. The psychologists are not the only ones who are busy attempting to merge messages; the clergy have joined them. William Kilpatrick has said that "most popular psychology flatly contradicts the Christian message, and yet many priests and pastors seem hell bent (if I may use that term) on blending the two."[1]

The error committed by these well-intentioned, but ill-informed psychologizers is that they take what each regards as the best and seemingly biblical of the psychological wisdom of man and amalgamate it with the Word of God. Never mind that each psychologist sees it differently. Never mind about the confusion of theories and techniques. And, never mind the lack of scientific proof or justification.

There is no need for amalgamania! Problems of living in the lives of Christians require Holy Spirit led, biblical solutions; not wisdom-in-the-flesh psychological solutions. The fact is that many Christian psychologists have become popular through their speaking and writing. And, popularity has taken precedence over purity in the church.

CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Psychotherapy with its underlying psychologies is one of the biggest and most demonic deceptions in the church today! Our research leads us to conclude that psychoheresy has **infected practically every facet of the church**. Almost every pastor, church, Bible college, seminary, Christian university, mission agency, and denomination are influenced by or infected with psychotherapy. In our writings over the years, we have given numerous examples of this throughout the entire church from liberals to the most conservative.

Churches

For years we have surveyed the seven largest churches in America and found them all guilty of psychoheresy. We do not list them here as over the years which churches are the seven largest vary, but not by much. A quick way to check this out is to do an internet search for the "largest churches in America," visit each web site or call the churches to see how the need for counseling is handled.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest Protestant denomination in the United

States. Over the years we have examined their presidents to see if they truly believe in the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life normally taken to a psychotherapist. At the time of this writing the current president of the SBC is Bryant Wright, pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church. The immediate past president of the SBC is Dr. Johnny M. Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Georgia. Before him is Dr. Frank Page who was at the time the pastor at First Baptist church of Taylors, South Carolina. We interviewed all three of these SBC presidents' churches at the time they were in office and found that all three churches referred their congregants out to licensed psychotherapists or supported the use of them.

It is interesting to add that Page, Hunt, and Wright also have no problem with referring male congregants to female licensed therapists! The startling thing about this is that women are prohibited from preaching in their pulpits and yet these women are doing pastoral work with these men, guiding them in issues of the soul (psyche), which are, of course, spiritual issues.

In addition we have researched many churches of all denominations across America and found very few that are not free of psychoheresy, either by referrals to mental health counselors or in one of a number of other ways, such as psychologized sermons, recommending psychologized books, or recommending psychologized organizations.

We have examined the following churches and hold the named pastors and churches guilty of psychoheresy—**meaning that these pastors and churches must not believe in the sufficiency**

of Scripture for the issues of life taken to a psychotherapist and are not opposed to Christians going to them: Bethlehem Baptist Church (John Piper), Fellowship Church (Ed Young), Lakewood (Joel Osteen), Redeemer Presbyterian Church (Tim Keller), Saddleback Valley Community Church (Rick Warren), Sagemont Church (John D. Morgan), Saint Andrews (R.C. Sproul), Second Baptist Church (Ed Young), Shadow Mountain Community Church (David Jeremiah), Southeast Christian Church (Daniel Dabney), The Potter's House (T.D. Jakes), and Willow Creek Community Church (Bill Hybels). While the listed pastors may not be there in the future; based on years of examining a multitude of churches over the years, it is doubtful that much will change. Though a pastor departs from a church, psychoheresy remains.

Christian Higher Education

We have surveyed a number of Bible colleges, seminaries and Christian universities and found them infected with psychoheresy to a small or great degree, i.e., they demonstrate unbelief in the sufficiency of Scripture for the nonbiological issues of life. Among the worst are those approved by the American Psychological Association, such as APA accredited Azusa Pacific University, Baylor University, Biola University, Fuller Theological Seminary, George Fox University, University of Laverne, Pepperdine University, Regent University, Seattle Pacific University, and Wheaton College.

The following higher education institutions that are also guilty of psychoheresy are just the tip of the iceberg of Christian schools across America that

are equally guilty: Covenant Theological Seminary, Crown College (MN), Denver Seminary, Liberty University, Louisiana Baptist University, Philadelphia Biblical University, Southern California Seminary.

Sixty years ago no Christian higher education institution was infected with psychoheresy. However, **the Christian higher education institutions that are entirely free of psychoheresy are now rare exceptions**. This is understandable when one knows that psychology is one of the most popular majors in these institutions, meaning more students and therefore more income for the institutions.

A little over 50 years ago these personal and interpersonal problems were handled by Christians in the family, among close friends, or in the church. Licensed psychotherapists did not exist! We quickly add that this referral to licensed therapists and the use of them in some form is standard practice in the churches and denominations across America—meaning there are many in the church guilty of psychoheresy and **who therefore must not believe in the sufficiency of Scripture when it comes to problems of living**.

MISSION AGENCIES

In writing our book *Missions & PsychoHeresy* we surveyed mission agencies on the use of mental health professionals and psychological tests for evaluating missionary candidates and on the use of mental health professionals for providing care for missionaries on the field who are suffering from problems of living. To conduct the survey we decided

to ask only a few questions and, to simplify the interview, these questions could be answered with a "yes" or a "no." After considering a variety of questions, we chose the following three:

1. Do you use mental health professionals to screen or evaluate missionary candidates?

Those mission agencies that regularly used, ever used, or favored the use of mental health professionals to screen candidates were counted as "yes" replies. However there were only a few mission agencies that did not regularly use such individuals.

2. Do you use psychological tests to screen or evaluate missionary candidates?

Not all missionary agencies gave us the names of the tests. However, we tabulated the names of the tests that were reported and concluded that the following were the most popular: Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and the DiSC.

3. Do you use or favor the use of mental health professionals to assist missionaries if they are experiencing problems of living?

Those who provided such care directly or through insurance plans were counted as "yes." If missionaries raised their own support and obtained their own health care coverage, we indicated a "yes" response if the mission agencies were open to the use of mental health professionals. Also if the mission agency supported the use

of mental health professionals upon the recommendation of the sending church we listed it as a "yes" reply.

In our search to find answers to the three questions, we turned to World Vision's *Mission Handbook 1998-2000: U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*. One of the tables in the book ranks the U.S. Mission agencies by number of overseas personnel serving over four years.[2] We used this table in selecting mission agencies to contact. We primarily used the mission agencies with the highest numbers of missionaries. However, the last one on our list, the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., International Ministries, was selected because of the size of the denomination rather than the number of missionaries. The following 35 mission agencies, in order of size (number of overseas personnel serving over four years), were selected and interviewed regarding the three questions given:

Southern Baptist Convention International Mission Board
Wycliffe Bible Translators USA
Assemblies of God, General Council
New Tribes Mission
Christian Churches/Churches of Christ
Churches of Christ
Baptist Bible Fellowship International
Youth With A Mission (YWAM)
TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission)
Campus Crusade for Christ, International
ABWE (Assn. of Baptists for World Evangelism)
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Baptist Mid-Missions

Baptist International Missions
CB International
SIM USA
Church of the Nazarene, World Mission Division
Mission to the World
Africa Inland Mission International
Presbyterian Church (USA), Worldwide Ministries
Navigators, U.S. International Ministries Group
UFM International
United Methodist Church, Board of Global Min.
Evangelical Free Church Mission
United Pentecostal Church International
Gospel Missionary Union
Greater Europe Mission
OMF International
Mission Aviation Fellowship
Pioneers
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod—Board of Mission Services
Frontiers
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
Division for Global Mission
World Gospel Mission
American Baptist Churches in the USA.
International Ministries

Of the 35 mission agencies surveyed, 33 either use or are not opposed to the use of mental health professionals and psychological tests to screen missionary candidates and either use or are open to the use of mental health professionals to care for missionaries. Two of the mission agencies, Churches of

Christ and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, were impractical to survey church by church, but would probably not object to the above as implied by the representatives contacted.

While we were examining only a few ways in which psychoheresy has invaded missions, these are clear and objective facts. They reveal the obvious use of psychology in both evaluating missionary candidates and providing treatment for missionaries experiencing problems of living. **In giving psychology such a place in selecting missionary candidates and in providing treatment of missionaries, mission agencies clearly demonstrate their trust in psychologists and psychological devices and their veneration of the psychological wisdom of men, which is the very wisdom of men about which God warns His people.**

As part of our research we used the *Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches 1998*. Table 2 in that volume lists the thirty-one largest denominations in the U.S.[3] In comparing this list with the prior list in the *Mission Handbook 1998-2000*, we noticed a number of large denominations not present on the mission agency list. We called the following nine of these largest denominations in order of size:

National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
Church of God in Christ
African Methodist Episcopal Church
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.
National Missionary Baptist Convention of America
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
United Church of Christ

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World

None of the representatives of the above denominations complained about the use of mental health professionals or psychological tests for screening or psychological mental health care for missionaries.

After interviewing 35 of the largest mission agencies and 9 of the largest denominations, we emphatically state: No one, but NO ONE, questioned the use of mental health professionals and psychological tests for screening missionary candidates, and no one, but NO ONE, questioned the use of mental health professionals to care for missionaries.

It is certain that numerous other mission agencies and denominations are just as seduced by the psychoexperts and their tests and therapies as the ones listed above. The mission agencies and denominations interviewed represent more than the tip of the iceberg of the problem of psychoheresy, because they are among the largest of the mission agencies and church denominations representing the largest number of career missionaries and church members of the two lists we used.

Missions & PsychoHeresy only touches the most obvious aspects of missionary use and dependence on psychological theories and therapies. How much penetrates into the message of missionaries can only be surmised by looking at the extent to which it has engulfed North American churches, Bible colleges, seminaries, books, and so-called Christian media. North American Christianity has become a vast

referral system that sends suffering saints to psychiatrists and other mental health professionals.

Missions today are promoting a mixed message of the Bible plus psychology, the Holy Spirit plus personality tests and psychological counselors, and God's Gospel plus a psychological gospel. As mission agencies import psychological interviews, tests, and treatment into missions they are surely exporting confidence in these kinds of psychology. How much is being exported by missions we do not know. But, we pray that mission agencies, as well as the entire church, will rid themselves of these psychological theories and therapies and cling only to the Lord and His Word as applied by the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

AACC: A SHAM AND A SHAME

We have written about the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) a number of times and demonstrated how the organization is immersed in psychoheresy. These articles are available on our web site.[4] In comparing the AACC membership with that of the three best-known professional organizations that provide psychotherapy, the American Psychological Association (APA) is larger than the AACC, but the American Psychiatric Association with 38,000 members and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT) with 25,000 members are both smaller. The AACC is the largest Christian organization of its kind in the world.

The AACC held its 2011 World Conference at the Opreyland Hotel, Nashville, TN, with the central

theme of "Celebrate Your Faith." This conference, as well as their past conferences and no doubt future conference, reveals the dark underbelly of what the AACC is truly all about instead of what they purport to be.

AACC a Sham

We say bluntly that the AACC is a sham. The dictionary defines *sham* as "something that is not what it purports to be; a spurious imitation … a cover or the like for giving a thing a different outward appearance."[5] The AACC is "not what it purports to be" and it is a "spurious imitation." The AACC has a Christian façade with a conservative statement of faith which serves as "a cover … for giving a thing [integrationism] a different outward appearance." Even the title of the conference with 1 Cor. 15:58 quoted beneath it on the conference brochure is a sham. At first glance the "Celebrate Your Faith" sounds like celebrating the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), but the faith that is really being celebrated and promoted is faith in psychology with a bit of Christianity mixed in. The AACC sham attracts and deceives naïve Christians, including those who are the promoters, as well as the ones who buy into the Bible-plus psychology, psychoheresy mentality. And, by the way, there appears to be far more psychology involved than the Bible in the conference agenda.

The enticingly attractive brochure lists the speakers and workshop leaders with their bright colorful photos. Most of the titles are man-centered. In fact, in the 46 preconference workshops offered, God is mentioned in only one talk title, but Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and sin are not mentioned or referred to at

all. Space will not allow us to list all the workshops, but here are ten of them:

- "Emotionally and Relationally Intelligent (ERQ) Leadership"
- "Successful Life Coaching: Building the Fee-for Service Practice of Your Dreams"
- "Sliding vs. Deciding: What You Need to Know About Commitment, Cohabitation and the Emerging Hookup Culture"
- "After the Fight: Helping Couples Process and Repair Arguments"
- "Helping People Forgive Themselves and Others"
- "Building a Biblical Counseling Practice"
- "Whistle-Blowing Women, Love-Frozen Men: A Liberating Look at Gender"
- "Cyberporn, The Male Brain and Sex Addiction"
- "New Advances in Treating Complex Trauma"
- "Transitional Coaching: Guiding Your Client into Coaching after Grief, Divorce, Abuse, Recovery or Crisis"

In the 20 Counseling Tracks that are listed, the words *God*, *Jesus*, the *Holy Spirit*, and *sin* are totally absent. The two new tracks being offered are:

- "Neuroscience, Primary Care & Mental Health"
- "Technology, Social Networking & the Future"

Five of the others are:

- "Grief, Crisis & Disaster"
- "Abuse, Violence & Trauma"
- "Marital Therapy & Enrichment"
- "Addictions & Recovery"
- "Life Coaching, eCounseling, Financial & Career Planning"

The title of one of the topics to be covered is: "'Selling' is Not a Dirty Word—Embrace It." All in all, these 46 Pre-conference Workshops and 20 Tracks sound like those offered at the American Psychological Association (APA) and marriage and family therapy (MFT) conferences. With God mentioned only once and the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and sin not at all in the titles of the pre-conference talks and the 20 conference tracks, we wondered how often God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and, yes, even sin would be mentioned in the presentations. Our guess was barely at all, or just enough to sound Christian.

Sufficiency Denied

The brochure lists over 100 speakers (plenary, workshop, and track participants). Those that are counselors are guilty of psychoheresy; the others are at least indirectly guilty of psychoheresy by supporting the AACC by speaking at this world conference.

Let us take a simple and important biblical doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture. Does the Bible teach that Scripture is sufficient for the personal and relational issues of life to which mankind is subject? Let us look at this sufficiency doctrine from an historical perspective. None of these preconference and conference talks could have existed 50 years ago. **Remember—a little over 50 years ago there were no such degrees earned by most of the**

speakers, no such counseling licenses in existence, and no insurance reimbursements for such fee-driven counseling!

Some of the speakers have degrees from Christian higher education institutions that offer degrees supportive of counseling psychology and especially those mentioned earlier that have programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). As we have said in the past, we are not opposed to accreditation that sets standards for medical and other professions which are affiliated with Christian organizations. However, for good biblical reasons, we are opposed to those Christian institutions requesting, receiving, and being accredited by the APA. Those who complete such programs at APA-accredited Christian higher education institutions and become licensed psychotherapists are depending on the very wisdom of men about which God warns His people and thereby demonstrate unbelief in the sufficiency of Scripture.

Non-Discrimination Required

We assume that a number of the conference speakers are members of the APA or the AAMFT. Both organizations are heavily loaded with anti-biblical positions, which their members are expected to follow. One example is a "Non-Discrimination" clause from the "Code of Ethics for Marriage and Family Therapists": "Marriage and family therapists do not condone or engage in discrimination or refuse professional service to anyone on the basis of race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic, or marital status."[6] All of

the national associations, such as the ones for psychologists, psychiatrists, and marriage and family therapists have equivalent requirements, which the AACC state-licensed therapists must follow or risk losing their licenses.

Consider the reference to "sexual orientation." Every state has its own licensing requirements for clinical psychologists and marriage and family therapists (MFTs) as well as other therapists such as psychiatric social workers. We decided to ask our two state licensing offices here in California questions with regard to a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) person coming to a licensed counselor. Could the psychologist or MFT refuse service to such a person? Could the psychologist or MFT attempt to talk the person out of his/her orientation? If the LGBT person desires to live more peacefully as an LGBT person, would the psychologist or MFT be obligated to assist with this objective? Of course the answers to these questions apply equally well to a Christian licensed psychologist and MFT. In each case the answer from our California State offices was that if an LGBT person filed a complaint because of the refusal to serve, or an attempt to talk the person out of his/her sexual orientation, or failure to assist, an investigation would surely follow. Now we were not told what the outcome would be, but it doesn't take much imagination to see that at minimum there would be a reprimand and a need on the part the licensed Christian psychologist or MFT to follow the "Non-Discrimination" section of the "Code of Ethics" or lose his/her license!

Other requirements for licensed Christian psychologists and MFTs about which we will not elabo-

rate have to do with abortion and same-gender marriage. In addition, Christian psychologists and MFTs would be required to assist occultists, Satanists, Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and individuals of all faiths without being able to proselytize, persuade, or dissuade in matters of faith and practice. In summary, Christian licensed counselors are by license and profession to operate within the bounds of using their psychological training, techniques, theories, and methodologies within the framework of a professional code of ethics, absent their Christian beliefs, no matter how contrary their counselees' beliefs and practices are to the Bible. **That is one of a number of reasons why we recommend against Christians becoming licensed as psychological counselors of any kind.**

Guilty of Psychoheresy!

The following were the Plenary Speakers for the AACC 2011 World Conference who thereby support the worldwide efforts of an organization that **demonstrates unbelief in the sufficiency of Scripture** for the trials, tribulations, and sufferings of life: Luis Palau, Lee Strobel, Josh McDowell, Wess Stafford, Mike Huckabee, John Ortberg, John Townsend, Diane Langberg, Ed Young, Jr., Henry Cloud, Michael Lyles, Larry Crabb, Gary Smalley, H.B. London, Jr., and Tim Clinton. Over 100 additional speakers joined them as prime promoters of psychoheresy, who **demonstrate unbelief in the sufficiency-of-Scripture** doctrine that was believed and practiced from the Day of Pentecost onward until the recent psychological craze. We list only 14 of these many popular speakers and authors

who **do not believe in the sufficiency of Scripture** for the issues of life: H. Norman Wright, Gary Oliver, John Trent, Les Parrot, Leslie Parrot, Greg Smalley, Cliff Penner, Joyce Penner, Everett Worthington, Frank Minirth, Paul Meier, Steve Arterburn, Eric Johnson, and Leslie Vernick.

Maximum Ecumenism

The AACC 2011 World Conference also includes Exhibitors and Sponsors. These include Christian universities, seminaries, ministries, publishers, psychological and psychiatric clinics, psychiatric retreat houses, and others. **The list is an ecumenical, theological, and psychological mishmash of profit seekers for their products and services, and the theological diversity among them is mind-boggling.** Although the AACC has a statement of faith, it is not necessary to subscribe to it. In fact, **anyone, regardless of faith or no faith, can become a member, whether or not they are atheists, New Agers, Christian cult or sect members, or Satanists who may join for business reasons**. In addition, non-member clinics, retreats, and businesses can be exhibitors or sponsors at conferences and even buy ads on the AACC web site.

As far as being psychologically ecumenical, we know that AACC includes many counselors who counsel from a variety of theories, techniques, and methodologies. As mentioned earlier, a number of years ago we conducted a survey with the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS), a national Christian organization composed of numerous practicing therapists. In our survey we used a

simple questionnaire in which we asked the psychotherapists to list in order the psychotherapeutic approaches that most influenced their private practices. We listed only ten approaches, but provided blank spaces at the bottom of the sheet for adding others before final ranking. We found in the CAPS survey how eclectic and, at the same time, contradictory to one another many of these CAPS members were. Psychoanalytic, behavioristic, humanistic, and transpersonal psychologies were all possibilities for CAPS members.

This same diversity exists among those practicing counselors who may not be CAPS members but are AACC members. One can read the books by various authors speaking at the conference and see that diversity. The one thing these counselors have in common is that they will not be biblically critical of one another. If this exists, we have not seen it.

With all this theological and psychological ecumenism in the AACC and so many well-known and popular Christians promoting it, one wonders if any one of them ever studied the biblical doctrine of separation. We don't think it would be much of a stretch to say that there is no biblical separation being exercised at the AACC as far as membership.

Bait-and-Switch?

The following is from the AACC "Statement of Faith": "The Scriptures, both Old and New testaments, are the inspired, inerrant and trustworthy Word of God, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of human beings, and the final authority for all matters about which it speaks." Note that the AACC agrees that the Bible is "the final author-

ity for all matters about which it speaks." **There are numerous verses in the Bible that would trump the possibility of Christians becoming psychological therapists and would dissuade Christians from seeking their help.** Also, these verses should prevent any discerning pastors from referring their congregants to such individuals trained in this psychological miasma. Just two of the numerous available verses are:

> All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17.)

> According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:3-4.)

It is understandable when emergent church advocate Rod Bell, who admittedly does not believe in the sufficiency of Scripture itself, would not believe in the sufficiency of Scripture for problems of living as revealed on his web site.[7] However, **it is puzzling and perplexing that the AACC's statement of faith would proclaim the sufficiency of Scripture while in practice the AACC denies the suf-**

ficiency of Scripture for problems of living as it does.

We do not accuse the AACC of directly making merchandise of God's Word, but we do accuse them of indirectly making merchandise of God's Word. The AACC is probably not purposely using a bait-and-switch approach. However, meaning to or not, they are providing the **bait** (Christian statement of faith with Christian speakers), which attracts many believers to the AACC conference, web site, and all of their offerings, and then making the **switch** to an integration, Bible-plus approach, which **denies the sufficiency of Scripture** alone to deal with the issues of life that are beyond the organic.

Rampant Commercialism

Commercialism runs rampant at the AACC 2011 World Conference. From the exhibitors to the sponsors, they are all there for income based on future students for educational institutions to book promotions to future clients for psych clinics and sales for other organizations. The prospectus for the conference gives the cost for the Sponsors and the Exhibitors:

- "AACC Platinum Sponsorship—$30,000 (4 available)"
- "AACC Gold Sponsorship—$15,000 (4 available)"
- "Silver Sponsor—$10,000"
- "Official Tote Bag Sponsorship—$10,000 (2 available)"

- "Lanyard Sponsorship—$10,000 (1 available)"
- "Bronze Sponsorship—$5,000"
- "Educational Sponsor—$2,500"
- "General Exhibit—$1,300 or $1,500 for Prime Booth"

Special Events

Another secular look-alike is found in the AACC "Special Events" as follows: "Silver Celebrity Golf Tournament"; "Let's Get it Started Celebration Event … special concert"; "Rock the Block Silver Celebration … features award winning comedian, Michael, Jr., and special guests, Newsong"; "Awakening: Nxt-Gen Celebration … the future of Christian counseling is now"; "Pastor to Pastor Luncheon … to honor our pastoral leaders"; "A Silver Tie Affair Dinner Theater…& Silver Tie Banquet … special evening of elegance"; and the unaccredited "Light University Graduation … Commencement Exercise! Full cap and gown regalia."[8] In addition, AACC provides "Networking Opportunities," which all include the word "Christian," but an in-depth look at all of them will reveal the stark darkness of secularism.

Psychological Integration

Psychotherapy is not neutral. It involves values and morals. With respect to treatment, Dr. Thomas Szasz, author and professor of psychiatry, says that "psychotherapeutic interventions are not medical but moral in character."[9] Szasz would recommend

against the wholesale integration of psychotherapy with its Christian façade by the AACC. Robert Watson and Stephen Morse state the obvious, that "values and moral judgments will always play a role in therapy, no matter how much the therapist attempts to push them to the background."[10]

The vast variety of moral standards within the psychotherapeutic framework originate from human conceptions of morality. Psychotherapies have relative, changing, and unreliable morality and value systems and basically disregard God and His Word. Why have these many professing Christians and AACC, which claims to be Christian, fallen for this amalgamation of the world with the faith? Even if psychotherapists are Christians, the psychotherapeutic theories, by which they are required to practice if they are licensed, will undermine values and morals that are distinctly biblical. Psychotherapy is not able to deal adequately with either morality or guilt. Neither is it able to guide a person into a biblically sound, virtuous life. So all of this psychologizing of the faith (psychoheresy) practiced by those in the AACC will detract and subtract from the faith once delivered to the saints. The AACC and the many Christian schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, organizations, and individuals at their 2011 World Conference have naively led the way into this perverted faith in psychology.

Based on our research and writings, which include both biblical and scientific reasons, we once again recommend that Christians not enter these licensed psychological professions and urge Christians not to enter into such unbiblical counseling that denies the sufficiency of Scripture for the very

issues of life that Scripture addresses. While APA-approved Christian institutions, organizations such as the almost 50,000-member AACC, licensed therapists, and promoters of psychoheresy are truly the most guilty, **Christian leaders who have a voice to be heard in opposition to this mania are also guilty for their silence or soft-speaking in not loudly warning God's people**.

While some Christian leaders are speaking out and condemning what we call psychoheresy, **they are not speaking out specifically by naming names**. Rarely do we hear even those Christian leaders who agree with us name names of individuals or organizations. Where are the pastors, theologians, and church leaders who are willing to speak out against this psychoheresy?

In conclusion, we have demonstrated why the AACC is a sham and a shame and have proven here and elsewhere why they are a quintessential last-days organization with a multitude of believers flocking after them as they are led down the psychoheresy primrose path.

LINK CARE

In *Missions & PsychoHeresy* (*M&PH*), we say, "Until what to now has **not** been proven (the value of using mental health professionals and psychological tests to screen missionary candidates) has been proven, mission agencies should **not** turn to pseudo-experts and their tests."[11] We thoroughly document our reasons for this recommendation.

We do not name any psych services used by any of the mission agencies in that book. However, one of the most popular providers of psych services is the Link Care Foundation, Inc., which provides psych services for many of the mission agencies. For the tax period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, Link Care's total revenue was $1,722,091.[12] Link Care is located in Fresno, California and is a psychological assessment agency used for a variety of purposes by mission agencies. They are unabashedly an integrationist organization and falsely claim to use "sound psychological principles," to be completely biblical, and at least not to violate Scripture.

Link Care uses personality as well as other tests and projective techniques. As the result of these tests, Link Care makes recommendations regarding those whom they have interviewed and tested. We indicate how subjective and unreliable such tests and interviews can be in *Missions & PsychoHeresy*.[13] Link Care does caution that their reports should not be used as a major determining factor, but **there is no academic justification for using psychological interviews and tests at all**.

Consider a man, woman, or couple preparing for the mission field being required to take one of the many personality tests used and, on the basis of the results, being rejected for service. Their future is thus determined by a faulty instrument that has nothing to do with the Bible and does not even meet scientific, criterion validity requirements. The proper level of criterion validity does not exist for any personality test to be used for this purpose, either when used alone or with other criteria.

One has to wonder what would have happened to the great missionaries of the past if they had been subjected to taking personality tests before going to the mission field. God only knows! No one should ever be rejected from missionary work or from the pastorate on the basis of a personality test score or even a battery of personality tests. Representatives of missionary agencies and denominations tell us that the psychological screening and testing is only one of several facets to look at the missionary candidate. However, three questions need to be asked of these missionary agencies and denominations: 1. Can a missionary candidate refuse to be screened by a mental health professional or psychological test without being rejected? 2. Has any missionary candidate refused such screening? 3. Has any missionary candidate who scores poorly on the personality testing and failed the mental health professionals' screening ever been sent to the field? The fact is that missionary candidates know that refusing the psychoexpert screening and psych tests will lead to being rejected by the mission agency. Missionaries have told us that as a candidate you just do it because it is required.

Think about it. If the mental health professionals and psychological tests were truly an objective means of evaluating missionary candidates, no other information would be needed. Selection would be based on the psych interview and psych test—period! The fact is that no one of any professional integrity would make such a recommendation.

A serious problem with the whole selection procedure, which is compounded by the use of mental health professionals and psychological tests, is that

only those who are selected go to the field, while those who are nonselected stay home. Any researcher will tell you that the reason this is a problem is that you create what is called an "untested homogeneity." What should be done is to prelabel all the candidates as either selected or nonselected and then send them all to the field **unlabeled**. At the end of their first service or another appropriate time, have some third party who is ignorant of the labels evaluate them. To our knowledge this has never been done. It may be that those labeled unselected would make the best missionaries. No one really knows.

Link Care conducted a survey some years back of "78 missionary sending agencies." While we do not name Link Care in the book, we mention the survey and note that they found that "psychological assessment as represented by interviews with psychologists, psychiatrists, or counselors occupies approximately one-fourth to one-third of the average selection interview time."[14] Regardless of the percentage of time devoted to psychological interviews and regardless of what mission agency, it is our estimate, based on our interviews with 35 mission agencies, that the psych screening is taken seriously and can make or break the selection, in spite of protests to the contrary by the agencies.[15]

Link Care and other such agencies make claims and offer services for a price. Therefore the burden of proof is on them to scientifically demonstrate that their services produce the results for which they have been hired. The best way for this to occur is for the mission agencies that use Link Care and other such psychological services to **hire an independent, third-party psychometric evaluation team. We**

predict that if this were done, it would expose the uselessness and possible damage of using such organizations as Link Care.

The Psychological Wisdom of Men or the Word of God?

When one considers the grip psychology has on missions in evaluating candidates and in providing treatment for missionaries experiencing problems, one must ask whether mission agencies believe the Gospel is enough. If the Word of God quickened by the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is not enough for missionaries themselves, how can they tell others the Good News, the Gospel that saves and sanctifies? (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:2-4.) God's Word declares it is sufficient, but if the Word of God is not sufficient for the life and godliness of missionaries, is it enough for those to whom they minister?

The following is excerpted from the beginning of an article that a missionary wrote after being at Link Care:

> Many times American Christians have told me that God's Word is important but not all-sufficient. That there are real problems from our past that must be dealt with by psychological probing, evaluating, and counseling. That validating past feelings is necessary for present healing. That simple trust in and obedience to God are just not adequate in dealing with modern "dysfunctions." That there is a "new" priesthood (Christian psychologists) who have hidden knowledge, which with a

sprinkling of Scripture equals healing truth. And all this for mere mammon.

At first I scoffed at this blatant defiance of GOD, His Spirit, and His Truth. But now I am so thankful to the Lord that He opened my eyes. I was able to undergo "Christian" psychology for 5 intensive weeks (for $5,000+). My suspicions and doubts of psychology are gone. They are now convictions based on God's truth and my experience. I now acknowledge this psychology as a "Trojan Horse" of Satan. It appears to be a gift from the world, but internally it is full of enemies set to steal, kill, and destroy. I cannot say that Christian psychologists are mal-intended or that all their counsel is wicked. I cannot even say that there are not some positive results. Some valuable points may be gleaned. However, whenever truth and error are mixed, the result is impurity and eventual diversion from devotion to GOD alone.

I am not about to write a book critiquing psychology. Rather, I simply want to present a few fundamental snares of the devil in "Christian" psychology. I certainly will not say anything new, but rather some things eternal and unchanging. The basis of this brief article is my experience during a five-week stint at LinkCare, a counseling center for Christian workers. My wife and I were directed there to get help for our marriage. We are missionaries and had returned to the states to grow

> stronger in our marriage. We had had no prior marriage counseling. However, we came away from this experience at LinkCare not only NOT helped, but instead rather more confused about our marriage and ourselves….

As a result of the Link Care Experience, this missionary concludes his article by saying:

> In a very real sense the end of the matter is this: LinkCare is ministering to the old man, the soulish man, thereby resurrecting that which God wants us to reckon as dead. Due to sensitivity for those who have been through LinkCare or who are still in bondage there, I have not mentioned other precious brethren who have experienced similar distress at the hands of LinkCare. It is for these dear saints and for those who may be exposed to LinkCare that I dedicate these brief words.[16]

CONCLUSION

The individuals and groups discussed in these chapters on amalgamania have psychologized the church with their unscientific and unproven ideas, have trivialized the Word of God, and have almost paralyzed much of the body of Christ. Christians would be better off entirely to listen to pastors trained and experienced in the Word of God than psychologists who are trained and experienced in psychology. Pastors and parishioners alike have not only capitulated to the psychologizers; they have sadly catapulted them to the place of high priests over the problems of living.

It is tragic that Christians have followed the psychological way and its false solutions to real problems. Not only have the psychologists succumbed to the deception of amalgamania, but pastors, leaders, and congregations have been deceived. As author W. Phillip Keller aptly puts it, "All of them together have put their confidence in the wrong cure, i.e., in the 'couch' instead of 'In Christ.'"[17]

As we have shown throughout this book, we do not agree that Christianity needs psychological theories to understand man, to comprehend why he acts the way he does, or to know how to help him change. The entire Bible is written to reveal God to man and to help man see himself from God's perspective. Such disclosure of the self is for the purpose of correction according to God's standard and means. Paul wrote these crucial words to Timothy:

> All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16-17.)

Psychology attempts to help us know ourselves apart from or in addition to knowing God. The focus is reversed. We can only become what He wants us to become by knowing Him, and in knowing Him we will know ourselves—as Job came to know himself when he saw God, as Peter did when he looked at Jesus after he had denied Him three times, as Paul did when he refused to put confidence in the flesh. Peter was changed by knowing Jesus and by receiving His

love and forgiveness by faith. Paul was changed by knowing Jesus so much that one of his greatest goals was to know Him even more. Knowing God does nothing for the old self, which is counted dead. The old self likes the search for self, the attention to the self, the understanding of self, and especially feeling good about the self. But, if we truly knew ourselves from God's perspective without truly knowing Him we would be devastated. In His love He reveals His mercy, grace, righteousness, power to restore and save while He allows us to see ourselves from His perspective. And, then there is the confidence that He will complete His work of transforming us into the image of Christ through our response of faith, hope, and love.

The Lord Himself is sufficient. His Word is living truth. He has given His Holy Spirit and His Word to guide believers in all matters concerning how to live and relate to others. He continues to call believers who are struggling with the challenges of life to come to Him.

> Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live.... Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. (Isaiah 55:2, 3, 6.)

15

The Emperor's New Clothes

The psychological way provides numerous theories about dealing with problems of living. The fact that the theories are not scientific seems to bother few people. The added fact that none of these often conflicting, nonscientific theories has been shown to be clearly superior to any of the others seems of little concern. No matter what psychological approach one develops, it will seem as valid as any other.[1] Anyone can do just about anything he wishes in the midst of the confusion of psychological theories and techniques. One look at the multitudinous contradictory psychological approaches with the competing claims of success should cause even the most ardent supporter of the psychological way to throw up his hands in despair. Howard Kendler in *Autobiographies in Experimental Psychology* says:

> Psychology is burdened with a scrap heap of empirical results that have contributed nothing to our field except to increase the number of publications and to justify academic promotions.[2]

For the Christian, the point is not simply whether or not psychotherapy works, but whether it works better than biblical ministry. The question for the church is this: Does psychological counseling have something better to offer than the cure of souls? To begin with, no one really knows if psychotherapy conducted by highly trained and long experienced therapists does any better than that done by untrained and inexperienced nonprofessionals. Additionally, no one even knows if professional psychotherapy does any better than hundreds of other promises for help, such as meditation, dog-fish-or-parakeet "therapy," laughter "therapy," or just plain blowing bubbles every day to overcome depression.[3]

The research has not advanced much beyond **attempting** to prove that psychotherapy works better than no treatment, probably because it has not even proven this very well. It is still not certain from a research standpoint whether or not psychotherapy works, and if it does, how well it works and why. It seems logical to conclude that, if researched, the use of biblical ministry would be shown to be as effective as the almost 500 present systems of promises for help. One professor of psychology reports:

> During the first half of the nineteenth century, when moral treatment was at its peak, at least 70 percent of the patients who had been ill for a year or less were released as recovered or improved.... Moral treatment did all this without tranquilizers, antidepressants, shock treatment, psychosurgery, psychoanalysis, or any other kind of psychotherapy.

He adds:

> The use of moral treatment declined during the second half of the nineteenth century. The results were disastrous. Recovery and discharge rates went down as moral treatment gave way to the medical approach.[4]

It may be that in the future there will be definite research proof for the efficacy of psychotherapy. However, in its present state of confusion over its questionable successes and unquestionable failures, it seems appropriate to recommend that the church minister to people with needs rather than turning them away to a costly, sometimes prolonged process of dubious value that is licensed to give worldly answers to spiritual questions.

People are suffering from anxiety, shyness, marital discord, drug abuse, alcoholism, sexual disorders, depression, and a host of other problems and fears. Regardless of what claims psychotherapists may make, **no one has ever shown that psychological counseling is superior to biblical ministry**.

No one really knows whether psychological counseling is superior to biblical ministry. There is only a massive, but mistaken assumption that it is. And, it is this false assumption which has caused the church to abandon its ministry to the suffering soul. Christians need not be submerged in this sea of confusion. Unfortunately psychotherapy has become entrenched in our society. It is a stronghold of the enemy to turn believers to another gospel—the gospel of "mental illness" and "mental health," the gospel of self and a myriad of other religious philosophies. Christians who suffer from problems of living

need to be helped by the church, not sent away to those who believe that problems of living are mental illnesses or that the psychological counselor has scientific cures.

Our primary objection to the use of psychotherapy, however, is not based merely upon its confused state of self-contradiction, nor upon its phony scientific facade, nor on its use of the misnomer of mental illness. Our primary objection is not even based upon the attempts to explain human behavior through personal opinion presented as scientific theory. **Our greatest objection to psychotherapy is that it has displaced biblical ministry among Christians without proof or justification of superiority.**

The frustrating part of all this is that there is absolutely no scientific justification for the replacement of the cure of souls ministry by psychotherapy. And yet, the path from the church to the couch has become so well-worn that few self-respecting clergymen will resist the temptation to send an ailing parishioner down that broad way, in spite of the questionable results and expense of the effort. Just because the world utilizes psychological counseling, it does not follow that the church has been wise in following the trend. The Bible warns us about using the world's systems and about trying to combine the world's ways with God's ways. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18.)

It is unnecessary to add psychology to the Word of God or to use psychology in place of the Word of God. Even those psychologies which seem to have elements of truth in them are unnecessary because the essential elements are already found in Scripture.

The way the theory is described may entice believers into thinking that psychology has something to offer more than the Bible. However, if stripped down to the core, each theory has some element of truth and just enough error to lead people away from God and into the ways of self and Satan.

One of the best-known behavior therapists is psychiatrist Dr. Aaron Beck. He has developed a short-term method for treating depression. The treatment is aimed at correcting three major thought distortions of depressives: "seeing themselves as deficient and unworthy; seeing the world as frustrating and unfulfilling; and seeing the future as hopeless."[5] These three aspects of one's life—the individual's view of himself, the world, and his future—are all spiritual matters. These can all be and should all be confronted biblically rather than psychologically.

Even if psychology can deal superficially as effectively as the Bible with individual deficiencies, frustrations and hopelessness, why turn to it? The Bible will more efficiently—and more accurately—deal with such conditions. Surely the Bible has more to offer than worldly systems. Moral treatment when administered in love and truth has had positive results. And, biblical ministry has more to offer the Christian than psychological treatment, because it affects the deepest levels of the soul and has eternity in view.

In a *Spiritual Counterfeits Project Journal* article on the human potential movement, Frances Adeney notes:

> Sketching the development of the human potential movement in this way seems to

> leave the Christian little choice but to discard Western psychology and its myriad therapies altogether.[6]

Although she backs away from such a conclusion, her article certainly leads one to it. **When one examines the research and ignores the myths, one could easily conclude that psychotherapy is an expensive hoax perpetrated unnecessarily upon Christians who are at a vulnerable place in life.** At such a critical time they should be ministered to by the body of Christ.

It is extraordinary that so many people have spent so much money for so many years on a system which has so little to give. About all that may be proven eventually through the herculean effort of all the psychotherapies offered, purchased, and evaluated (and all the billions of dollars that have changed hands) is this: "On the average, given any problem (psychological or otherwise) doing something about it is better than doing nothing at all." (Baboyan's Law.)

In an article titled "What is Vulgar?" in *The American Scholar*, the writer says:

> Psychology seems to me vulgar because it is too often overbearing in its confidence. Instead of saying, "I don't know," it readily says, "unresolved Oedipus complex" or "manic-depressive syndrome" or "identity crisis." As with other intellectual discoveries ... psychology acts as if it is holding all the theoretical keys, but then in practice reveals that it doesn't even know where the doors are. As an old *Punch* cartoon

> once put it, "It's worse than wicked, my dear, it's vulgar."[7]

Because the efficacy of psychotherapy has not been demonstrated, Alexander Astin contends that "psychotherapy should have died out. But it did not. It did not even waver. **Psychotherapy had, it appeared, achieved *functional autonomy*.**"[8] (Italics his; bold added.) **Functional autonomy occurs when a practice continues after the circumstances which supported it are gone.** Astin is suggesting that psychotherapy has become self perpetuating because there is no support for its efficacy. Astin concludes his comments with the following dismal note:

> If nothing else, we can be sure that the principle of functional autonomy will permit psychotherapy to survive long after it has outlived its usefulness as a personality laboratory.[9]

In spite of all the research to the contrary, psychotherapy with its multitude of approaches, educational requirements, licensure, and high fees will continue on with more and more people seeking and obtaining psychological treatment for their problems of living. This is functional autonomy! It keeps on going in spite of its only mild to moderate helpfulness and also in spite of its 10% to 40% harm rate. Psychotherapy has not been affirmed by scientific scrutiny and only remains because of the usual inertia that results when a movement becomes established and then entrenched.

With the questionability of the results of psychotherapy and the certainty that damage sometimes

occurs, it is difficult for many critics of psychotherapy to understand either the glib pronouncements of its practitioners or the confidence of those who refer individuals to this treatment. The suspicions of psychotherapy **are** justifiable and the sensitivities of psychotherapists to criticisms are regrettable.

After having listened to a taped message by a well-known Bible teacher, we listened to a tape by a well-known psychologist who is a Christian. There was a gigantic difference between the two presentations. The Bible teacher elevated God, the Word of God, and the Son of God. The psychologist emphasized man, the desires of man, and how to satisfy these desires (all in a Christian way, of course, or so he said). The Bible teacher touched on the deep, significant, biblical truth of God in relationship to man. The psychologist stressed the superficial, insignificant (by comparison) opinions of men and included some Scriptures to justify his ideas. **After reviewing all of the research, one could conclude that psychotherapy is one of the greatest deceptions in the world and in the church today.**

The largest of the four branches of psychotherapy is the humanistic one. The Association for Humanistic Psychology is the professional association of humanistic psychologists**. Its president, Dr. Lawrence LeShan says, "Psychotherapy may be known in the future as the greatest hoax of the twentieth century."**[10] **It may also be known as one of the greatest heresies of modern-day Christianity.**

In *The Emperor's New Clothes* after the little boy cried out, "He has no clothes!" the people knew that what the boy said was true. But, the greatest trag-

edy was not the discovery (no clothes), but the continuation of the deception by the Emperor. The story goes one:

> The Emperor squirmed. All at once he knew that what the people said was right. "All the same," he said to himself, "I must go on as long as the procession lasts." So the Emperor kept on walking, his head held higher than ever. And the faithful minister kept on carrying the train that wasn't there.[11]

And so, like the naked Emperor, psychotherapy and all its psychologies will "go on as long as the procession lasts." For many of us the procession is over. The cure of minds (psychotherapy) never was and never will be a satisfactory replacement for the cure of souls (biblical ministry).

Psychiatrist Thomas Szasz has recommended taking mental health care away from the professionals, such as M.D.'s and Ph.D.'s and giving "this whole business back to the ministers and priests and rabbis."[12] This also means taking it away from the Christians who are professionals. **We predict that if this is done both the mental and spiritual health of the nation will dramatically improve. It is time for Christians to reclaim and restore the cure of souls ministry and to do it now!**

In the book of Nehemiah, Tobiah was an opposer and ridiculer of the building of the wall. When the Temple was restored, Tobiah was given a room in the house of the Lord. When Nehemiah heard of it he came and threw him out. (Neh. 4:3; 6:1; 13:4-9; 1 Kings 11:2, 3.) This is what needs to be done with the Tobiah of psychotherapy in the church. Psycho-

therapy, with its facade of science needs to be purged from the church so that Christians will once more: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.)

16

Choose You This Day

In spite of the religious nature of psychotherapy, in spite of the evidence that problems of living are not disorders needing therapy, and in spite of the research data which cannot prove that psychotherapy is better than the biblical ministry that was part of the church from the day of Pentecost onward, the main thrust of pastoral counseling continues to be problem-centered in format and/or referral to an outside, professional therapist. The faith in the psychological way has become wedded to faith in God so completely that often those persons who truly desire to help others turn to psychological studies rather than biblical studies.

The new faith is a mixture and each Christian therapist believes that he has culled the very best from both worlds. Is it possible to combine psychological counseling theories and techniques with biblical ministry and lead a person into a deeper spiritual walk whereby problems of living may be overcome? Or must a Christian choose between the psychological way and the spiritual way?

CRUCIAL DIFFERENCES

Both psychological counseling and biblical ministry claim to lead a person out of problems of living and into changes in thinking, feeling, and behaving. However, they are quite different. The differences between psychological counseling and biblical ministry also include differences between psychological approaches; therefore, not all of the differences cited in this chapter can be used as an indictment against all psychological counseling. But, all psychological counseling fails in one or more of the ways described on the following pages. Many points of difference apply to psychological counseling used by Christians as well as non-Christian therapists no matter how sincere their desire to help. Psychotherapy in the hands of even the most conscientious Christian is still founded upon psychological opinions which are subject to one or more violations of biblical doctrine.

The psychological ways of counseling are based upon man-made philosophies which teach that man is intrinsically good, that there is no personal God, that man can rise above his circumstances and become his own standard of right and wrong. Most Christians who practice psychology would not agree with one of the most basic premises of psychological theories: that man can become a better human being without God. Nevertheless, when Christians supplement Scripture with psychology they clearly give the impression that psychology helps people. Since such therapies are conducted with or without God, the inference is that people can become better human beings without God. Just because God and His Word are added to the theories does not undo the unbibli-

cal inference that man can become a better human being with psychological help, with or without God.

On the other hand, the biblical way of ministering, changing, and living depend fully on God and are based upon the life of Christ in the believer as revealed in Scripture through the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, biblical ministry is love in relationship and truth, because the Lord is the counselor, because it follows the precepts and doctrines of the Word of God, and because it relies on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and enable obedience.

Paul warned the Colossians about following the ways of men:

> As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. (Col. 2:6-10.)

When the Bible speaks of "philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men," it is speaking to a larger bulk of psychological studies than one might suppose. Although some disciplines in the broad field of psychological study have contributed some information about people, much of the information that has filtered down into popular

literature and into the psychologist's office is spurious.

The most seductively dangerous area of psychology is that part which seeks to explain why people are the way they are and how they change. The theories and techniques of psychological counseling fall into this category. Although testimonials abound, the research, as we have shown earlier, does not support the promises or the claims of success. The many psychologies that claim to understand the nature of man and tell people how to live are full of misinformation and confusion.

The psychological way originates with man, utilizes man-made techniques, and ends with man. The biblical way originates with God, employs gifts and fruits of the Spirit and leads a Christian into a greater awareness of God and of himself as created by God. The goal of the psychological way is enhancement of the self. The motivation for change is personal benefit. The goal of the biblical way is to glorify God. The motivation is love for God and the desire to please Him in response to His love. Thus the source for both the motivation and the enablement is God Himself.

The psychological way is limited to man-assisted self-effort. The biblical way is accomplished through God's provision of new life and through His indwelling Holy Spirit who enables the believer to cooperate with the changes God is making within him. In addition, He has provided fellowship with other believers who are also in the process of being transformed into the image of Jesus.

The psychological way includes many theories about why people are the way they are and how they

can change. The biblical way says that problems of living are due to separation from God because of the sinful condition of mankind and the presence of sin in the world after the Fall. The biblical answer is Jesus, who has provided the only means to re-establish relationship between God and man and to enable people to live by faith in God.

A great number of the theories say that the past determines the present. That is, what a person does today is not by present choice but is rather predetermined by his past. Endless hours of searching memories, which are known to be faulty, to find the key in the past which supposedly drives a person to do what he does in the present is lengthy, costly, and horribly flawed.

The past belongs on the cross and under the blood of Jesus. The new life begins at salvation. The old is done away with and buried. The past cannot be reconstructed. A Christian may be sorry about his past, including what he did and what was done to him, but he believes God's Word that says that he has been born again. Jesus said:

> Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:3, 5-6.)

The principle is also stated clearly at the beginning of the Gospel of John:

> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13.)

Although Christians may have developed wrong attitudes and habits in the past, they can deal with them in the present through the presence of Christ within them. They can repudiate the past through present choices, but they should not blame the past. Any backward glance should be one of gratitude for salvation and new life, not for excuse of present sin. Paul repudiated his past, both the good and the bad, and said:

> Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philip. 3:13-14).

Many psychological theories include the idea that each person is compelled by unconscious drives to do what he may not consciously choose to do. The unconscious is blamed for all kinds of behavior and problems, but God speaks to the conscious mind. The Bible addresses human behavior from a conscious point of view. God's Word commands a person to love, to believe, and to do. There is no indication in Scripture that what one says or does is determined by unconscious drives. When Paul cried out

his despair over wanting to do one thing and doing another, he did not blame the unconscious or past determinants of behavior. He identified the problem as sin—not only in deed, but in condition.

After many years of counseling, secular psychologist Carl Rogers claimed that his crowning discovery was the importance of love in relationship. Nevertheless, the love promoted by psychological theorists is from the point of needing and receiving love. Much more is said about needing to be loved than needing to love. In other words, it ends up to be self-centered love or, at best, human love.

The biblical way, on the other hand stresses God's love. Next to that, it stresses loving God and others. All biblical ministry is based upon the love of God. God has provided for the redemption of man and for all the changes that are necessary for him.

> But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved). (Eph. 2:4-5.)

The entire message of the Bible is one of love. However, God's love is not sentimental, but just and righteous. Therefore, sin had to be dealt with, and by His love God has provided for all that each believer needs in order to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

Some psychologies are wed to evolution, which sees humanity not in a class by itself but simply further along than the apes. But, evolution does not end here, because there is the idea that man himself is continuing to evolve. According to many theories

in the humanistic and transpersonal psychologies, mankind is moving towards greater and greater potential to become divine. The biblical way teaches that man is a spiritual being created in the image of God and that man cannot find his true identity apart from God. The biblical way begins and ends with the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

The biblical way not only teaches that man was created in the image of God. The Bible also teaches that Christians are to approach life from a different basis from nonbelievers because of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that Christians have the mind of Christ. He is their life. The presence of God indwelling them through His Holy Spirit makes all of the difference.

The process of change is also different as God works from the inside and calls us to cooperate so that there are external changes as well. God is the one who has given new life and He is the one who continues to transform each of His children. The process is through relationship with God and by faith in His love and His Word, as demonstrated in obedience.

How can psychological systems of counseling which have originated in minds "alienated from the life of God" be applied to those who have been given "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"? (Eph. 4: 18,24.) There is a tremendous difference between the resources of the Christian and resources the world attempts to provide. Psychological diagnosis and methods do not apply to the new self created in Christ Jesus. The difference is clearly stated in Ephesians:

> This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart…. But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. 4:17-18, 20-24.)

God has provided the Manual of operation and thus of change for Christians. It is the Bible. Any counseling which uses philosophies and methods other than Scripture will not nourish and build a believer's relationship with God. Such counseling may, in fact, strengthen the independent autonomous self, which the Bible says to "put off."

Psychological counseling, which has been devised by unredeemed men with unredeemed minds for unredeemed people, can only affect and change that which has already been called "dead" in Scripture. Psychological counseling can and will work with the old nature and may even "improve" the old nature. But Christians have been told to put off the old nature (old self) and put on the new nature which has been created by God.

Biblical ministry differs drastically from psychological counseling in spite of the seeming similari-

ties. Both systems may use information gained from accurately observed and recorded behavior. But, the biblical way submits the observations to the light of Scripture. In the psychological way the theories and techniques are limited to human understanding, opinion, and bias. The biblical way encourages faith in God—in His faithfulness, love, power, and Word. The psychological way encourages faith in the therapist, in his professional training and status, and in the psychotherapeutic theories and methodologies. The biblical way exalts Christ. The psychological way emphasizes self. The biblical way is God-centered. The psychological way is man-centered.

THE BIBLICAL WAY OF CHANGE.

From the point of initial new life, the most fundamental choice of change is choosing to walk after the Spirit (according to the new nature) rather than after the flesh (according to the ways of the old nature). Although the believer is a new creation in Christ, he nevertheless undergoes transformation as he daily yields himself to God.

> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2.)

Such yielding is choosing to walk after the Spirit as Paul spoke of believers, "who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4.) The choice between following the flesh and following the Spirit is crucial and continual.

When one walks in the flesh (self-effort, self-rule), he will fulfill the lust of the flesh and all of those expressions of the flesh, of pride, and of the unyielded self, as listed in Galatians 5:19-21 and elsewhere. When one walks in the Spirit, he is dependent upon the Lord.

> But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans 8:9-11.)

Those who belong to Christ have the choice to walk by the Spirit. However, there is indeed a struggle between the flesh and the spirit. **The psychological way strengthens the flesh and the biblical way encourages the life of the spirit.** The psychological way emphasizes self with its selfisms, which include self-effort, self-evaluation, an overemphasis on feelings, and self as personal ruler. The biblical way emphasizes God and His work within the human heart in combination with the person's cooperation in active, obedient dependence upon God. The psychological way emphasizes human potential. The biblical way emphasizes faith in the God of the universe.

The psychological way attempts to treat guilt feelings, but generally avoids or dismisses the problem of sin. It looks for reasons for problems other than the sinful condition of self. The biblical way reveals the problems of sin and leads to confession for personal sin and a readiness to forgive others. Rather than being left with remorse or a structure of rationalization, a Christian can be transformed through repentance, a process which is more than just being sorry for sin. The psychological way, especially through the many self theories, has fed pride, rebellion, and self-will. The biblical way teaches humility and submission to the perfect will of God.

The biblical way gives real hope, not just empty promises. God has given the believer both the instructions and the ability to follow them. Every command is coupled with God's enablement to obey. Every promise will be fulfilled according to all righteousness.

> Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:2-4.)

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT

God has provided a better way than the flesh. In fact, He is constantly working on our behalf to draw us into a walk by faith according to the Spirit rather than onto a treadmill of rules, self-effort, and defeat.

> Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage....
>
> For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another....
>
> This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
>
> For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Gal. 5:1, 13, 16, 17.)

There is a battle going on between the flesh and the Spirit. The flesh may be defined here as everything within ourselves—our attitudes, thoughts, motivations—that places self at the center, independent from the life of the Holy Spirit. The fallen flesh, which came from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is thus a mixture. It was developed as self attempted to rule and meet its own needs and desires apart from a dependent relationship with God. However, the self is not adequate to live independently from God, for it then reverts to

the ways of the world and of Satan. Satan can only influence a person through the flesh and the mind. The extent of his influence is thus determined by the person's choice to walk in the flesh rather than in the spirit.

When the believer learns who he is in Christ, he discovers that the rulership of the flesh can be denied its former power. Its authority has been severed so that the believer does not have to follow its affections and lusts, motivations and drives, feelings and distorted perceptions. Nevertheless, if a believer chooses to follow the flesh he may develop its strength once again. On the other hand, if he chooses to follow the Spirit, the flesh will lose its power to influence.

Galatians presents the key: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. 5:24.) Habits of thinking, feeling, speaking, and acting may be firmly established in the flesh, but by identifying with Christ's death we have crucified the flesh. The outworking of crucifying the flesh is following the rulership of the indwelling life of Jesus, rather than following the former inclinations of the flesh and its desires and feelings. Jesus said

> If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (Matt. 16:24-25.)

Denying self is following Jesus rather than self, obeying and following King Jesus rather than the pretender to the throne, and walking after the Spirit rather than after the flesh. The continual activity of

taking up the cross daily, putting everything that is flesh-motivated on that cross, and giving moment-by-moment rulership to Jesus affirms the fact of the believer's new identity and life. Believers strengthen the new life within them as they think according to the ways of God and obey Christ and the Word of God instead of feelings and desires. Some of the results of walking after the Spirit are listed in Galatians:

> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (5:22-23.)

On the other hand, a person strengthens the flesh when he listens to old thought patterns and follows the feelings and desires of the flesh. Some of the ugly results of walking after the flesh are listed in Galatians also:

> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these*;* Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. (5:19-21.)

The external out-workings of a person's life will reveal whether he is walking after the flesh or the Spirit. However, we must keep in mind that the flesh appears much more attractive in some people than in others.

SELF EFFORT OR FAITH IN GOD?

As important as choice is, choice alone is not enough. As important as personal involvement in change is, such personal involvement is not enough. Both choice and personal involvement must be undergirded by faith in God. Choice to do what seems right apart from faith in God may lead a person away from God and into self. He may be left with self-effort to accomplish what he himself believes is right and good. Jesus said that apart from Him one can do nothing of eternal value. Apart from walking by faith according to the Spirit one cannot please God (Romans 8:5-8). Therefore biblical teaching and ministry are what Christians need instead of an imperfect psychology of counseling.

Personal involvement apart from God will ultimately fail in attempting to do God's will because there is no real power to do what is right apart from God. This is the quandary which Paul so aptly describes in Chapter 7 of Romans:

> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (7:18-20.)

Self-effort cannot perform the will of God, but God dwelling within a person can. A Christian is able to obey God by faith rather than by self-effort.

Obedience to God comes through relationship by faith and love. The law of the Old Testament was good, but it was weak in that it did not provide the ability to obey. Christians must not throw away the moral law of God, but recognize that the rules and regulations themselves do not enable one to please God. They are right and good, but powerless in themselves. The commandments of Jesus in the New Testament are actually stricter and more difficult to obey through self-effort than those of the Old Testament. But, Jesus has made it possible for believers to please God by grace through faith in all that Jesus accomplished on the cross.

> For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:3-4.)

The coupling of obedience with faith can also be seen in Paul's admonition as he stresses that such obedience comes through the work that God is accomplishing in the believer.

> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philip. 2:12-13.)

Love for God is the motivation for obedience, and faith in God is the basis for obedience. Both faith

and love are essential. All change which should come through biblical ministry is towards greater love and obedience through faith. All ministry must be in accordance with God's will for the person and it can only be accomplished through faith in relationship to God.

> Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21.)

Therefore, the self-effort which comes from self trying to improve or change itself cannot be the biblical way of ministry or change.

Because psychological counseling majors in the ways of the self, biblical ministry must in essence be theological rather than psychological. The emphasis must be in God, not as a greater force that will change a person through some mystical magic apart from the person's cooperation, but rather as the Person who indwells, enables and guides the believer into performing His will in His way.

Faith in God is not a passive attitude of "just let God do it." Faith is active and diligent. Faith involves doing as well as believing. But rather than the self being the force behind the doing, God is the Source in whom the believer lives and moves. The writer to the Hebrews emphasizes the necessity of faith in God: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he

is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6.)

Faith in God is not just some mental assent; nor is faith in God believing for something which the self wants. Faith in God is based upon knowledge of God, His character and His Word. The two parts of faith are trust and obey—the inner attitude and the external expression. Therefore, true faith in God leads to transformed behavior. Faith in God enables a person to become more and more like Jesus. Self-effort, on the other hand, just changes the manifestations of the self.

VICTIM OR SINNER?

Most psychological systems of counseling put the counselee in the role of victim. He is a victim of circumstances, past and present. Or, he is a victim of past determinants which now control his behavior through so-called unconscious motivations. Or, he is a victim of so-called uncontrollable unconscious drives. Or, he has been victimized by people who have not treated him in the way he deserves to be treated. Or, he has reached that "primal pool of pain" from the hurts he has received. Or, he who was originally "OK" made the decision that he is "NOT OK" because of those around him. And one can go on and on.

The Bible declares that each person is born in original sin and that the only way out is through the cross of Christ. Man has not been born perfect and good, but in the condition of sin with the proclivity to sinning. He was born into the kingdom of darkness and within that kingdom he both sins and is

sinned against. Although he is a victim of the sins of others, he finds his way out of the kingdom of darkness through recognizing that he is a sinner separated from God. Therefore, the Bible does not overemphasize the victim aspects of mankind, but rather reveals the condition of sin. It is only through admitting one's own sinful condition and confessing one's own sinful acts that a person comes into relationship with God through His provision for salvation and sanctification.

After Adam and Eve had sinned in the Garden and therefore broken their relationship with God, they immediately assumed the victim role through the act of blaming. Adam blamed Eve and God. Eve blamed the serpent. And ever since the fall, people have found it easier to blame someone else than to admit their own sin and turn away from that sin Living as a victim may temporarily relieve a person from guilt feelings because the blame is placed elsewhere. But, when a person seeks truth he will find that he has sinned as well. Then through confession and forgiveness he not only receives freedom from guilt, but he is cleansed and enabled to do what is right.

The flesh does not like to admit wrong doing. The flesh squirms under conviction. In fact, the flesh will do much to disguise true guilt even to the point of self-condemnation (which is the ultimate victim role because now the self is a victim of its own condemnation). Generalized self-condemnation covers up true guilt and prevents a person from facing his real sin, confessing, and repenting.

Psychological counseling attempts to deal with guilt through redefining standards of right and

wrong and by shifting responsibility from personal choice to such things as the "unconscious," the past, other people, circumstances, and so on, all of which encourage the victim role rather than personal responsibility. Even when psychological counseling theories include "right and wrong," the basic condition of sin and God's provisions of forgiveness and restoration are ignored.

Even when ministering biblically, one has to be careful about encouraging the victim role through empathy or through talking more about the wrongs of others than about what the person in need can do through God's means of restoration. Whenever the conversation focuses on what the other person is doing rather than upon ones own actions and reactions, the one may remain in the stance of victim rather than move into the place of doing God's will God's way within whatever circumstances he may find himself.

REMORSE OR REPENTANCE?

Fear prevents many Christians from calling sin *sin* when ministering to others. Perhaps they are afraid to be judgmental or they don't want to hurt anyone more than they may already be hurting. Besides that, the world has criticized the church for its emphasis on sin. However, Christians have a totally different frame of reference from those who have no hope. Therefore, talking about sin and leading a person to confession is not to leave him in his sin which is then worsened by guilt and remorse. No, a Christian speaks of sin and encourages confes-

sion because he believes in and teaches God's total forgiveness and restoration from sin.

A Christian who ministers biblically knows that sin must be dealt with, just as a doctor knows that cancer should not be simply redefined or ignored. Confession and repentance bring about restoration and that is what Christian ministry should be about. Jesus did not come to condemn sinners but to reconcile them to the Father. However, in this restoration, sin had to be taken care of. Jesus fully dealt with sin by dying in the place of every sinner so that each one who believes might be forgiven and cleansed from sinful habits. (1 John 1:9.)

Without the assurance of God's forgiveness and faith to repent, a person may indeed remain in sin and continue to experience guilt. After recognizing his own sinfulness a person may move into remorse rather than repentance, but remorse is the way of the flesh because it does not submit to the love of Christ or the truth of God concerning His provision for sin. Remorse includes such feelings as self-pity, being disappointed with oneself, and self-condemnation. Underneath all of those self-centered activities lies pride.

The way pride works in remorse is through a distorted self-righteousness which must pay for its own sin or which must exonerate the self through putting the blame elsewhere. The person may attempt to pay for his own sin through feeling miserable and depressed, through flagellating himself with various kinds of so-called penance, or through setting up impossible standards for himself. Remorse may lead to despair or else back into the victim response of blame, but repentance leads to life. Judas died

in remorse, but Peter was restored through repentance. The difference between repentance and remorse is the difference between faith and unbelief, between God-centeredness and self-centeredness, and between life and death.

If a Christian is too reluctant to deal with sin while ministering to another person, he may indeed help the person "gain the whole world" in terms of psychological means of improving the old self. But, Jesus asked, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.) Psychological counseling may indeed avoid the whole issue of sin for fear of leaving a person in remorse and self-condemnation. As a matter of fact, the majority of psychotherapists do not believe the biblical concept of sin anyway. Even those who attempt to combine the Bible with psychology tend to soft pedal sin and try to help a person find other reasons for problems, or at least external reasons to explain why the person sinned.

True repentance leads a person into a place of humility where he can receive from God. He receives forgiveness, fellowship, and love from the Father. He is restored to the righteousness of Christ and given the necessary inner help from the Holy Spirit to walk in that righteousness. Repentance is an agreement with God that what He has said about a matter is true. Repentance is also an admission that one cannot walk the Christian life independently by his own goodness.

When Jesus offered to help those who "labour and are heavy-laden," He was speaking to all who have become weary of trying to live a good life by their own righteousness. It is impossible to live righ-

teously without also living in relationship to God. Jesus was speaking to each person who will repent from his own ways and choose God's will.

> Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light. (Matt. 11:28-30.)

There is no pride in true repentance, but rather gratitude and love. As soon as we begin to feel proud of our own good behavior or positive attitude, we become vulnerable to sin. When we begin to feel good about ourselves, we need to turn to God and "feel good" about Him. Even when we are doing our very best to do God's will, we must remember that He is the One working in us "both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Philip. 2:13)

REFERRAL OR RESTORATION?

After Jesus rose from the dead, was seen by many, and ascended to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower believers to be His body, the church. God created the church to continue to restore people to God through preaching, teaching, encouraging, building up one another in the faith, and loving one another as Jesus loved. The church is to be an expression of the wisdom and love of God. Jesus did more than save men's souls from hell. Jesus died to bring them into a living relationship with the Father here on earth whereby they might live according to His design.

To subject Christians to the psychological ways of counseling conveys that the ideas of men must supplement the Bible. The underlying implication is that God has provided some help for living through His Word and the Holy Spirit, but not enough for people who really have serious problems. To send Christians out to the psychological way says that the revelation of God concerning why man is the way he is, how he should live, and how to help him change is insufficient. Paul's answer to such nonsense is direct:

> O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? (Gal. 3:1-3.)

If the church is not meeting human needs at the deepest and most serious levels, perhaps it has to examine itself and find out if indeed it is truly acting as the body of Christ. Perhaps a church does not have answers for human need because it has been too much in the world. A church that takes the things of the world and translates them into something identified as "Christian" would naturally send Christians with problems of living out into the world for professional psychological counseling. On the other hand, if a church has leadership fully committed to following God and making disciples through preach-

ing and teaching the Word, that church can minister to the personal needs of its members.

> Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Tim. 2:1-2.)

If a church has a congregation actively involved in ministering to one another and in witnessing to those who have not yet come into the fellowship, that church has what it takes to minister to people with problems of living. A church that is empowered by the Holy Spirit for righteous living and follows the teachings of the Word, especially the Great Commandment, will have much to give a suffering soul.

Rather than referring Christians with problems of living out into the world system of psychological counseling, the church is responsible to do all it can to restore believers to productive, God-honoring living, whereby they walk in the Spirit rather than in the flesh.

> For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (Rom. 8:5-8.)

How can people who are of the flesh, who are hostile toward God, who do not subject themselves to the law of God, and who cannot please God propose to explain the nature of man, tell how one should live, and help Christians change for the better?

Restoration of a fellow Christian does not necessarily involve telling him what he must or must not do in specific detail. Rather, restoration involves all of the teaching, exhortation, and encouragement he needs in order to find God's answers for himself and to desire to do God's will by trusting Him and obeying Him.

> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15.)

God may use a sermon or a word of personal testimony from a fellow believer to put the finger on an area of needed change. He may then use another believer to encourage and bear with him as he submits to God for transformation.

Spiritual restoration occurs when an individual sees problems of living as spiritual problems with spiritual solutions and responds to spiritual enablement. The spiritual conflict between the flesh and the spirit, between the lies of Satan and the truth of God, and between man's ways and God's ways is at the base of all problems. Therefore, God is the source of help and He gives His wisdom in the midst of conflict.

Restoration occurs when an individual takes responsibility before God and seeks and finds God's will in a situation through prayerful application of

God's Word. One who ministers needs to be walking with the Lord. If he is a diligent student he will have some answers and direction or at least know where to look for them through prayer and Bible study. However, personal ministry will be more effective and long lasting if he helps a fellow believer to find God's will himself. One may teach biblical principles and suggest Scripture to study. He may use questions in conversation to help the person in need to perceive the nature of the problem and to recognize what might need to be changed or confessed. But, because of the personal relationship God has with each of His children, every Christian needs to learn to solve problems of living according to the Lord's will and the Lord's way.

Restoration occurs when a person draws close to God through faith and love in trust and obedience. When a person actively obeys God in one area of life—even though it may be just a small thing in relationship to the entire problem— he brings God into the situation. For instance, if there is a great deal of hostility in marriage and one partner chooses to obey God by speaking with a soft voice instead of screaming, this one act may be the beginning of restoration of the relationship. Whenever a person chooses to change how he acts—from old ways to godly ways revealed in Scripture—there is restoration. Though others may teach, encourage, and pray, the person himself must be the one to draw close to God through faith and love.

The Bible calls believers who are walking with God to come alongside a brother or sister who is encountering difficulties through sinful behavior.

> Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1.)

The person who seeks to help another must not think he has anything in himself to offer or that he is any better than the one who has sinned. And, if a Christian is restored, the one whom God has used is not to take any credit.

> Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. (Gal. 6:2-3.)

The major work of restoration is actually performed by God and by the repentance of the believer. Therefore what the one receiving ministry does is more significant in bringing about change than what the ministering helper may say or do.

> But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. (Gal. 6:4-5.)

Sometimes Christians who desire to minister to other Christians have no specific wisdom whereby they can give advice or counsel. Nevertheless, they can still participate in restoration. They can listen and they can love. They can encourage a person to draw close to God in prayer and to seek His will in the Bible. And, they can lift up Jesus. They can encourage faith by their own confidence in Jesus and the knowledge that "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who

are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Their greatest help may be to focus their own hearts on the greatness of God and on His great love for the one who is in the midst of problems.

GOD'S WAY OF CHANGE

God has a plan for changing every person. His plan for change is the way of the cross. Psychological systems of counseling may lead a person along the broad way which leads to destruction, but Jesus said, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14.) The entrance into new life through faith in Jesus is the small gate. The narrow way is the walk of sanctification (becoming more like Jesus). Evangelism is concerned with leading unbelievers through the small gate. The personal ministry of mutual care is one small aspect of the total ministry of leading believers along the narrow way of sanctification.

17

Beyond Counseling

Jesus understood human need and He came to meet that need. Paradoxically, however, He taught that the human response to personal need should be to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness above all else. True personal needs are met within the context of His kingdom. There has been a great confusion over what people need beyond the bodily necessities of life. Some say security, others elevate significance, and others reach for self-fulfillment and self-actualization. The Bible, on the other hand, says that the greatest human need is relationship with God and one another, as stated by Jesus when asked about the greatest commandment:

> Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Matt. 22:37-39.)

LOVE FOR GOD AND OTHERS OR LOVE FOR SELF?

Because the greatest human need is relationship with God, Jesus came to express God's love and to pay the penalty for sin, which separates man from God. Jesus came to restore relationship. Therefore, after He ascended to the Father He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers so that they might experience the presence of God in their lives (John 14). Besides restored relationship with God, Jesus formed His church, which is His body (Eph. 1:22, 23). One stellar commandment to the disciples was to love one another just as Jesus had loved them. In fact, Jesus connected the relationship of the disciples to Himself with their relationship to one another: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.... This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John 15:9, 12.)

When Jesus taught about love and demonstrated the supreme love of God, He was not referring to warm fuzzy feelings. He was speaking of a deep commitment of believers to each other that would surpass even natural family relationships. Just as He put the welfare of others before Himself when He went to the cross, Jesus challenged His disciples to love one another.

Putting the welfare of another person before oneself is not a popular message today, and it was not popular in Jesus' day either. Rather than just taking care of themselves, the disciples were instructed to take care of each other, to love one another with longsuffering, and to regard the needs of each other

as important as personal needs. When people who have been saved by faith choose to live in love and commitment to God and to each other, there will be spiritual growth and the means to face the challenges of life.

The church lives in the midst of a society that preaches a different message, a message of self-gratification. Although someone may object to the idea that psychology has fostered this trend, the entire history of psychology has supported selfishness. Michael and Lise Wallach, authors of the book *Psychology's Sanction for Selfishness*, preface their historical analysis by saying:

> A surprisingly broad and influential range of psychological theory turns out to legitimize selfishness. Although this is usually far from what is intended, support is lent by academic thinkers as well as clinicians, by Freudians as well as anti-Freudians, behaviorists as well as contenders against behaviorism, and by psychologists who investigate altruism as well as by those who deny its existence. Support is lent even by psychologists who themselves deplore the adverse moral impact of psychology's teachings.[1]

We are now living in the midst of a people that exalts and celebrates the self. Because self is central, getting in touch with one's feelings is of utmost importance. Personal well-being has become the goal of life. Even the church has moved from community to individuality and from sanctification to self-realization. The Wallachs aptly state the rule of the day:

> The proper mode of living is to be oneself—to find out who one is and let no one and nothing interfere with one's self-realization.[2]

In contrast with the Christian Gospel of love in relationship and community comes the ever-increasing promotion of the "self-contained person" who is described as "one who does not require or desire others for his or her completion or life; self-contained persons either are or hope to be entire unto themselves."[3] The seemingly righteous reason for this is not to burden others, but underneath there is a selfishness that takes care of number one and excuses one from the need to care for others.

Current advice encourages expressing personal desires and seeking to gratify them without undo restraint for the sake of others. In fact, the move from community to selfishness is such that:

> One has the right to assert oneself and seek gratification, but one should avoid entangling commitments and preserve one's freedom to move on without regrets or a sense of loss.[4]

The Wallachs note this trend of selfishness:

> The role of another person is, insofar as one can manage it, to serve as a means for fulfilling one's own emotional requirements. One should not be losing oneself in that other person, subordinating oneself as a part that seeks completion and meaning through another person—or through a cause or tradition outside oneself. Such superordinate loyalties tend to be viewed as an unacceptable limitation on one's own personal freedom. Rather,

> one should cultivate a posture of detachment and make "nonbinding commitments."[5]

But how has psychology, and particularly psychotherapeutic theory and practice, contributed to the trend of self-centeredness? Nearly all theorists view man as one whose primary motivation is to serve himself. It began with Freud's "legacy of selfishness that he bequeathed to psychology's understanding of human motivation."[6] It continued with Harry Stack Sullivan's need for being esteemed and valued playing a primary role in motivation. Karen Horney added the establishment of the victim role in "basic anxiety" of a child in a hostile world with "a feeling of being small, insignificant, helpless, deserted, endangered, in a world that is out to abuse, cheat, attack, humiliate, betray, envy."[7] Then Abraham Maslow added the so-called hierarchy of needs apexing in the need to actualize oneself. Carl Rogers added his faith in a person's ability to discover his own best interests and his right to follow them.

Most psychological theorists believe that any altruism or community is to serve individual need and desire. Furthermore, since psychological theorists generally believe that a person is born good and it is society that harms him, they naturally conclude that the person must seek his own good if he is to continue to be good. Carl Rogers describes a psychologically healthy and growing person this way:

> Less and less does he look to others for approval or disapproval; for standards to live by; for decisions and choices. He recognizes that it rests within himself to choose; that the only question which matters is, "Am I living

> in a way which is deeply satisfying to me, and which truly expresses me?"[8]

Rogers advocates selfishness, but contends that what he teaches is actually for the good of all persons and is therefore not selfish:

> ... the criterion of the valuing process is the degree to which the object of the experience actualizes the individual himself. Does it make him a richer, more complete, more fully developed person? This may sound as though it were a selfish or unsocial criterion, but it does not prove to be so, since deep and helpful relationships with others are experienced as actualizing.[9]

The faith of Rogers and others rests in the actualized self, which as the self meets its needs and fulfills its desires society benefits. Thus, although they promote ideas contrary to biblical teachings, they do so for what they believe will be the good of society.

All in the name of mental health, theorists and therapists have led us to a place where self is supreme. The Wallachs observe:

> Asserting oneself seems quite broadly accepted as a sign of mental health; guilt seems readily viewed as a form of oppression from which we are entitled to deliver ourselves in the interests of psychological soundness. To view personal gratification as the primary basis of our functioning is taken as necessary if we are not to be crippled psychologically.[10]

In fact, in view of the theories of psychology, one who does not seek personal gratification is either crazy or he's kidding himself.

Even if a church does not promote psychological counseling, it has been influenced by the culture—so much so that many of the doctrines of secular psychological theories creep in, especially those which promote self-love, self-esteem, and self-realization. Just as the secular theorists claim that society benefits from a person who loves himself, strives to meet his own needs, and pursues his own desires; so the church is tempted to preach a gospel which stresses self-gratification—all in religious terms of course—rather than love and sacrifice.

LOVE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Jesus preached a different Gospel, the Gospel of love. Because of the greatness of God's love for humanity, He sent His Son to bear the punishment for sin so that those who believe might be set free, not free to do as they please, but free to love God and others. The Lord formed the church to be an expression of love, not an organization to promote the autonomous, self-seeking self.

The church, if it is functioning biblically, has something better to offer than the doctrines and conversations of psychological counseling. It has more to offer than much of what is referred to as "biblical counseling." The church is a place where people can actively love. Besides receiving the great love of God and receiving love from Christians, believers learn to love. They learn to love by being loved by God, they learn to love through teachings from the Bible,

and they learn to love with long-suffering as they actually put up with each other and forgive each other in love. Loving God and others is the opposite from the psychological doctrines to love yourself and fulfill your own needs and desires.

God formed the church with believers with all sorts of personalities, abilities, and weaknesses learning to love God and others through His life in them. There are opportunities to practice loving God through worship, prayer, and obedience, and there are opportunities to love one another. The amount of space given in the Epistles for instructing believers to love each other certainly indicates that one of the primary objectives of sanctification is to love as Jesus did—to love the brethren even when they are not being very lovable and also to love enemies and to do good to them.

The early Christians gathered together because of their common faith to encourage and be encouraged, to learn, to love and be loved, and to maintain and strengthen their faith. They were also thrown together by persecution so that they had to get along even when there were cultural differences and personality conflicts.

The essence of the early church was community rather than individuality. Spiritual ministry gifts were given for the sake of the entire group, not for personal fulfillment. Individuals' needs were not the focus, but they were met through giving and receiving love in the community. Each person functioned within the group, devoted to God in singleness of purpose, submitting to one another, concerned for the common good, and thereby actively loving each other.

The first church in Jerusalem was a vital, active body devoted to the Word, fellowship, worship, and prayer.

> Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:41-47.)

What an ideal church! And yet, the description is accurate. One wonders how such a tremendously large number of people could be formed into such a cohesive group so quickly. Just as the Holy Spirit was active in both the message and the inception of new life through faith, He was active in forming the body of Christ.

The church should differ radically from a human organization created by human design, because the church is a spiritual entity created by God through His Holy Spirit. Furthermore, as believers receive new life at conversion they also receive the Holy

Spirit. Thus, the cohesiveness of the early church was attained through the inner work of the Holy Spirit, the external teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship of the saints. Even so, the twenty-first-century church can only be the cohesive body of Christ by the inner work of the Spirit, the faithful teaching of the Word of God, and love among the brethren.

The early Christians were devoted to this new life in community as "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Many churches lack this kind of devotion today. Even if a church is blessed with excellent teaching from the pulpit, it will not be the living organism it was created to be if the members do not devote themselves to the teaching. Devotion to the teaching does not mean: "Wasn't that wonderful teaching? I just love to hear our preacher speak!" Devotion implies such involvement in the teaching that it is practiced. When a person is devoted to the Word, he obeys that Word.

The early church knew that the apostles were speaking the words from God. Those who devoted themselves to the apostles' teachings understood the need for application of truth. Devotion implied living according to the very teachings which came from God's Holy Spirit through the apostles.

Besides being devoted to the Word, the early Christians were devoted to one another in fellowship. They understood that each member is a vital part of the body of Christ, and they wanted to spend time together. They wanted to break bread together. They wanted to pray together. The Gospel message they heard drew them together and their love for God drew them together. Spending time with other

Christians was not immediately caused by persecution, for as a group they were still in a position of "having favour with all the people." Very soon, however, persecution forced them together in such ways that they had to learn to forebear and put up with each other with longsuffering, forgiving each other as Christ had forgiven them. Love was commitment of relationship within the body of Christ rather than simply positive regard or warm feelings.

Besides relating to one another through fellowship and eating meals together, the early Christians related to God as they celebrated the Lord's Supper and prayed together. Jesus was central in their devotion. Their relationship to Him motivated them to learn more about Him, to fellowship with one another, and to worship and pray together. Within these activities and within this love relationship with Jesus they developed a proper fear of God as He confirmed His Word among them through signs and wonders.

Lives were being transformed, not by techniques from worldly wisdom or from the great reservoir of philosophy from the Greeks or from the political maneuvers of the Romans. Lives were being changed by God without the help of modern-day psychology. God continues to perform His most amazing miracles within the lives of men and women as they are translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and as the Holy Spirit works in them to conform them into the image of Christ.

Not only were people changed through receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit; their relationship to possessions changed. Without any legislation or political system, people began to realize that all they had

was truly God's, just as they themselves belonged to God. Their hold on possessions loosened so that sharing was a natural response to need within the community of Christians.

The early Christians continued learning and following the Word, fellowshipping, and worshipping God together day by day rather than just once a week for about an hour. They continued "with one accord in the temple" and broke bread "from house to house." They experienced a singleness of purpose. Rather than being double-minded in attempting to balance their Christianity with the philosophies of the world, they were of one mind. Although they may not have agreed on every point in every matter, the focus of the mind was on devotion to God. Their purpose was centered in doing what would be pleasing in God's sight. They were involved in what Paul later described as having the mind set on the Spirit rather than on the things of the flesh as they were learning to walk according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh.

Although we are living in the twenty-first century and although we have increased in knowledge and technology, the spiritual life still must have the same root and bear the same fruit, for Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." (Hebrews 13:8.) Although we have the privilege of reading the Bible as well as listening to teachers and although we may have different cultural manners by which we engage in fellowship, those activities must be primary as we devote ourselves to loving God and neighbor. Although different groups of Christians may celebrate the Lord's Supper in a variety of ways, it must still be a celebration and recognition

that Jesus died in our place for the remission of sin, was resurrected, is our advocate with the Father, sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers, and is coming again to set up His kingdom. Those truths are not just theological doctrines; they are essential to living the Christian life. They are essential to overcoming the problems of living. Furthermore, the acts of praying and praising God are not just religious exercises. They are God's means for enabling believers to walk in His ways, in His perspective, and by His grace.

Psychological theories and techniques pale in comparison to the greatness of God's plan for each of His children. The early Christians did not need psychological counseling. Why do we? Have we fallen so far from our first love? Perhaps we only have an inkling of the intensity of the devotion by which the early Christians were motivated in learning to live by the Word, in fellowshipping with one another, in freely giving themselves and their possessions, in worshipping God and partaking of His nature, and in communicating with Him through prayer.

If indeed Peter is right in saying that God's "divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue," the church should be able to minister to those suffering from problems of living. Have we lost the vision of what Peter meant when he continued, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"? (2 Peter 1:3-4.) If Peter is right and if we have lost the vision, then we need to turn

to God in desperation and seek His ways rather than rely on the empty promises of psychological solutions to problems of living. Just as Moses cried out to God on behalf of the people, leaders in the church need to cry out to God for His direction and His cleansing so that the church might partake of the manna sent from Heaven, Jesus Christ, who is the Christian's source for all matters of life and godliness. (John 6:32-35)

Personal ministry in a church does not need to turn to psychological theories or techniques. In fact, a church should avoid adding the psychological way to the biblical way of ministering. We have shown earlier in the book that psychotherapy involves non-biblical religion and that psychological counseling has not been proven to have any more to offer than biblical ministry. All that the research has consistently indicated is that conversation can help and that psychotherapy is no better than a placebo or, as some eminent researchers admit, no better than no treatment at all. Furthermore it has not been demonstrated by research that one brand of psychotherapy is better than another. Our own position is that conversation can help. Therefore, whenever conversation can help assist a Christian who is experiencing problems of living, the conversation should be biblical.

We are not recommending biblical ministry alone where medical science is needed. Nor are we recommending it in lieu of medicine, x-rays, etc. We do recommend the biblical ministry of mutual care in addition to medical attention, but never instead of or as a substitute for medical service for problems that may have a physical cause and cure.

FROM COUNSELING TO COMMUNITY

When a church takes the dramatic step of faith away from psychological counseling, it actually moves beyond counseling. When problems of living are treated as spiritual problems with spiritual goals of restoration and spiritual maturity, each member of the body of Christ will be able to grow through adversity and naturally minister to one another on an informal basis as well as through teaching and ministering biblical truths in love.

Although we speak much about community, the church in America has promoted individualism for so long that the idea of putting the group ahead of personal need and desire seems impersonal and impractical. Even the custom of sharing meals in homes has diminished because of personal inconvenience. The influence of the psychological way reveals itself through so-called personal needs being elevated above God's will and above the common good. Individualism permeates society so that "looking out for number one" is not only acceptable, but honorable.

Kenneth Vaux warns against this trend of narcissism as being destructive to the individual as well as to the group:

> And true personhood means being for others, not for our solitary self. The cults of humanistic psychology, transactional analysis, winning friends and influencing people, composing impressive dossiers and interview demeanor—indeed, all fascinations with my own being—are depersonalizing because they intensify self-concentration.[11]

The church must take dramatic steps away from narcissistic individualism into the kind of devotion that pulsed through the living stones of the early church. Paul emphasized the fact that believers were being built together into a holy temple of God through the Spirit. We need to regain that vision of commitment and mutual support if we are to live as Jesus has called us to live.

THE TRUE VINE

> I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. (John 15:1-2.)

The vine is the living organism of the church which finds its source in Jesus. The Father removes branches that do not bear fruit and prunes those that do. While many churches seem to be dying on the vine, we need to take heart and look to God for some drastic pruning. We believe that the leaves and branches of the psychological way need to be removed from the church if it is to operate as the body of Christ.

However, simply removing the psychological way, on which many have become dependent, is not enough. The church must operate according to the guidelines specified by Jesus, as recorded in John 15. Here Jesus developed three themes which are essential to the kind of church which fulfills His plan. The first theme concentrates on the relationship of the believer to Jesus. The second theme dis-

cusses the relationship of believers to one another in the context of being first of all related to Jesus. The third theme is the believers' relationship to the world because of their relationship to Jesus.

As Jesus developed the theme of relationship with Himself, He used the symbolism of the vine and its branches to stress the absolute dependence of the believer on Jesus if he is to do anything of lasting value in God's eyes.

> Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:4-5).

Jesus Himself is the source of life for a believer. Therefore, relationship with Him must be nurtured above all other activities or relationships. Because of the vital significance of abiding in Jesus in attitudes, thoughts, words, and actions, the spiritual life of the believer must extend into all areas of life, so that no part is outside of relationship with Him. Everything in the world attempts to counteract this essential connection of the believer to Jesus. Every temptation will attempt to undermine faith, hope, and love, because once a believer begins to act independently from Jesus he weakens his will to do God's will.

Jesus knows that Christians need to be bonded together as one body to withstand temptation because of the influence of the world and because of the evil forces of the kingdom of darkness under the rulership of Satan. Christians need each other, not

just for what the other can provide, but also because of each person's need to exercise the love of Christ. Jesus did not command us to love one another so that our own needs for love may be met, but rather so that we would have opportunities to love in relationship, in both giving and receiving.

Jesus did not set forth forms of organization. He simply commanded the disciples to love each other just as He had loved them. He commanded them to love in such an active, fully committed way that there would be eternal results.

> This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.... Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. (John 15:12, 16, 17.)

Jesus could command love, because He had first loved them. He continues to command believers to love one another as He abides in them. The body of believers provides both the encouragement to live in relationship with Jesus and the opportunity to obey His commandment to love one another. Jesus did not design a spectator sport or even spiritual performances. He designed a living vital body in which every member is a minister, in which every member receives teaching, exhortation, encouragement, and love, and in which every member also ministers God's love in grace and truth in whatever capacity and circumstance God has provided.

The church exists in a hostile world. However, if the church is not composed of members who trust and obey Jesus' commands, that church may not stand in enmity with the world, but merely reflect it. In the same subtle ways in which the philosophies, theories, and practices of psychology have entered the church and become "Christianized," a host of other influences of the world and of the devil have taken on a Christian coating. If we are friends with the world (its philosophies, psychological systems, religions, and practices) then we have to ask ourselves about Jesus' words:

> If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. (John 15:18-19.)

The church has been called to reflect Jesus, not the world. Believers have been separated to God, and even though they are in the world, they are not to be of the world. Thus, every ministry of the body of Christ must be biblical and must not attempt to incorporate worldly philosophies, theories, or techniques.

Only the church which operates according to Jesus' description of the vine will become a place of birth and growth to maturity, a place for restoration and discipleship, and a place of shelter and guidance for the troubled soul. Only a church which is vitally connected to Jesus can be a place of security and encouragement for the fearful and weak, a place of fellowship and commitment, and a place to express

the love of God in relationship with one another and devotion to Him. In such a church people would not be isolated in their problems, but would be both accountable to other believers and assisted by them.

A church that does not seek God as its source but relies on the philosophical and psychological ideas and techniques of men will gradually become as secular as the world. It may exist for years and yet have no real life in it. Such a church may indeed have a form of godliness but deny the power of God.

As the body of Christ we need to pray for cleansing. We need to pray for pruning. We need to seek His face with diligence. We need to put off the old (all that is of the world, the flesh, and the devil). We need to put on the new (all that is in Christ Jesus). Jesus is the vine. We are the branches. He has given us the true manna from heaven which is Himself. Let us feed upon the true manna rather than eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Let us drink from the springs of living water instead of from the broken cisterns of psychological systems.

Notes

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