THE JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL SOUL CARE

*Advancing Scholarship for the Biblical Care of Souls
within Higher Education.*

ARTICLES

REVIEWS

RESPONSES

This journal is dedicated to the generation of men and women whose commitment to the Word of God and care of souls has laid the groundwork for a resurgence of biblical soul care. *The Journal of Biblical Soul Care* is a reflection of your dedication to the sufficient Word of God and its ability to speak into the complexities of human nature and experience. The editorial team desires to promote Christian scholarship in the wake of your effective reorganization and apologetic of biblical soul care.

—For Christ and Scripture,
The Editorial Board

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Editorial: Quick, Upstream Expansion

Greg E. Gifford[1]

It has been quite remarkable to witness the results of the *Journal of Biblical Soul Care.* This current issue is only the second publication within the *JBSC*'s existence and we already have five academic institutions being represented by the authors of this issue—colleges, universities, and seminaries![2] The editors understood that there was a void that existed within biblical counseling, but were not aware of how this journal would resonate within the field of biblical counseling. Candidly speaking, we were pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the response of the first publication. There *is* an upstream audience within biblical counseling, a niche of individuals that has previously been unassimilated, and the *JBSC* seems to have found fertile ground for receptivity and interest with these individuals.

Think of the shifts in education that have occurred within the past 20 years of biblical counseling. Prior to the early 2000's, there were three to four institution of higher education teaching biblical counseling.[3] The amount of institutions teaching have doubled and nearly tripled in their size. There are groups of educators that are doing the work of education in the field of biblical counseling, and are at the beginnings of a formal pedagogy in instruction within biblical counseling. Yet, we educators have a great distance to cover as our pedagogy is often different,

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[2] The seminaries, universities and colleges represented in this issue are Brookes Bible College, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, The Master's University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Reformed Theological Seminary.

[3] These institutions would have been Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, The Master's University, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. However, Westminster and Master's were the original trailblazer's of biblical counseling, which is directly attributed to the influence of Jay Adam's. Adams taught at Westminster Theological Seminar from 1964-77 and 1982-1990, according to David Powlison in his work, *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2010), 134-35. The turning of The Master's University toward biblical counseling came in the late 1990's with the influence of Jay Adams on John MacArthur as seen in MacArthur's writings in both *Our Sufficiency in Christ* and *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*. It was MacArthur who would then lead The Master's University to transition to a sufficiency of Scripture model for the care of people, and hired Robert Smith and Wayne Mack who were direct disciples of Jay Adams. Also note the publication of *Christian Psychology's War on God's Word* by Jim Owen as another key turning point in the biblical counseling conversation at Master's.

lacking standardization, and missing a common body of knowledge that any biblical counseling student should know.[4] Some of the rudimentary texts that would support and enhance the pedagogy of biblical counseling have yet to be written, and scholarly resources in regards to biblical counseling are just as sparse. So we can look back and celebrate the slow formation of educational institutions perpetuating a biblical care of souls, yet we look forward with a significant amount of work that lies ahead in our field!

The *JBSC* wants to continue to create a space for academic and scholarly conversations that will influence the practice of biblical counselors both now and in the future. We are educators seeking to equip educators for the work of further education. Although the successes of upstream conversations have been encouraging, we still look to the future with an understanding that the work has only just begun. It will be demonstrated in this volume that certain qualified, and competent educators have written what we believe to be contributions towards these upstream conversations. And we are particularly excited to introduce the second issue of the *JBSC* to you!

Overview of Articles

The authors of this issue are educators within the field of biblical counseling in various capacities serving across the landscape of the movement; they are interdenominational, varied in their experience, and academically diversified.[5] This blend of scholarship directly corresponds to the *JBSC*'s vision and mission to advance scholarship for the biblical care of souls within higher education. Each of these authors are writing, practicing, and teaching within the realm of higher education, and are the one's directing upstream conversations that will shape the future of biblical counseling methodology. The *JBSC* desires to function within this operational wheel-house, and to incorporate others like them to advance the biblical care of souls. As was mentioned before, this work is slow, mildly esoteric, tedious, unpopular to general readership and yet vital to the advancement of the biblical care of souls.[6]

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[4] Yet, again these tides are changing as evidenced in seminal works being developed as we speak. For instance, the work of Heath Lambert to develop *A Theology of Biblical Counseling* could not be overstated in regard to its importance. Lambert's contribution is significant, but rare as there are still great texts and resources that need to be developed within the biblical counseling curriculum.

[5] Two authors are pastors or former pastors (Akers and Wilde), two teach in full time in biblical counseling (Akers and Clutterham), two hold terminal degrees (Akers and Wilde [J.D.]), three have a PhD in biblical counseling or are in process (Brooks, Stephens, and Akers), and all are assorted in their denominational affiliation.

[6] Greg E. Gifford, "Editorial: Introduction, Purpose, and Overview," *The Journal of Biblical Soul Care*, Fall 2017 (1:1): 5-6.

You will find that this issue of the *JBSC* provides excellent contributions to our field, and demonstrates the rising talent in scholarship that is among us. Joshua Clutterham made a case for the call of Walter Kaiser to bridge the gap in exegesis and practical theology. Clutterham suggested that the field of pastoral care remained unaffected by Kaiser's syntactical-theological method of biblical exegesis, while the field of exegesis was greatly influenced by the cooperative work of biblical theology, historical theology, systematic theology, natural theology, and practical theology. Clutterham's article suggested that the work of soul care needs to take note of Kaiser's input and also reflect the importance of the above categories theologies in the expression of soul care's "practical theology."

Next, Ed Wilde offered Part 1 of his explanation of common grace with its limitations and its purposes. The title of Wilde's article is telling, "Why Common Grace is Not Enough for Christians Who Counsel." Wilde proposed a context in which common grace can be understood and embraced. For those who are familiar with the nuances of common grace in the care of souls you will find the article to be extremely pertinent. Wilde represents the fault lines of biblical soul care within his article and offers the beginnings of an argument for what common grace can and cannot accomplish. Wilde's article, and its implications, come at an important time in the development of biblical soul care.

Finally, Matt Akers proposed a paradigm for understanding conflict in multi-cultural marriages in his article. Akers suggested that to better equip the counselor, one must understand primary "external and internal dynamics that threaten multi-ethnic marriages." Akers spoke into sources of conflict, while providing an evaluation of what counselors can be aware of in their own practice. In a very real sense, Akers addressed the upstream conversations that will shape the counseling room conversations within marital counseling and he does so as an educator, pastor, and counselor.

Finally, you will find two book reviews in this issue. Mike Emlet's *Descriptions and Prescriptions* is thoroughly evaluated by Sam Stephens. Emlet sought to provide a digestible resource to help Christians think through the role of psychoactive medications. Stephens will walk the reader through the purpose of Emlet's work, demonstrate Emlet's claims, and articulate the strengths and weaknesses of Emlet's work. Likewise, Nate Brooks has done the same for Mark McMinn's *The Science of Virtue.* McMinn sought to offer Christians who counsel a positive regard toward human psychology, and believes that the marriage of psychology to human virtue necessary. Brooks engaged these claims and offers the reader a fair, yet evaluative alternative to the claims of McMinn. What is important about both of these reviews is that they are lovingly critical. Both Brooks and Stephens have demonstrated the *JBSC's* intent of engaging a resource with thoughtful criticisms and

thoughtful affirmations. Surprisingly, this important process of peer review, and critical engagement is not happening within biblical counseling at this time.

You, as the reader, will inevitably benefit from the articles and reviews within this issue. However, we also predict that you will disagree and have pushback for the authors and reviewers. We, at the *JBSC*, welcome both. The *JBSC* desires to affirm proficient scholarship and that affirmation is exhibited through copious review and rebuttal. All of our work is sharpened when it is thoughtfully critiqued, and engaged by qualified peers. Thus, we continue to maintain a section in the *JBSC* entitled, "Responses." We want you to see this section as an opportunity to affirm, question, evaluate, critique, or even challenge the claims of the given articles. This evaluative process will only strengthen the upstream conversations that we are seeking to develop.

Call for Submissions

As a reader, we are inviting those who are qualified to make contributions to the *JBSC*. In a field that is experiencing rapid growth, we look forward to ways of sharpening thoughts with the sufficient Word of God and subjecting our own conclusions to those who uphold God's word. Thus, a qualified contributor is one who possesses advanced education in the field of theology, biblical studies, or biblical counseling and holds fast to the trustworthy word (Tit. 1:9). And with the advancement of formal education in biblical counseling, these qualified educators are growing quickly. If you would like to make a contribution, we encourage you to do so. Scholarship takes vetting, contrasting, and critiquing and your contribution has the potential to accomplish all of these.

A Proposed Way Forward

Next issue it is our intention to have international participation by biblical counseling educators who are doing the work of education in biblical soul care in foreign countries. It was perhaps short-sighted on our part to neglect a global perspective in our last issue, but others were gracious in their expressions of reminding me of this global movement of biblical soul care.[7] In the next issue of the *JBSC*, we intend to engage those who are doing the work abroad. The upstream conversation for biblical soul care is not only for those who are in Western countries, but this is quickly expanding abroad. And this world wide-receptivity demonstrates both the apparent need

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[7] Special thanks goes to Wayne Vanderwier who reminded me that the apologetic tone for biblical counseling has not changed in other parts of the world. John Street furthermore reminded me of the great difficulties of using the term *biblical counseling* in Germany, where *soul care* is a term that better encapsulates the ideas of biblical counseling.

and opportunities that lie before educators in the process of teaching the biblical care of souls at a global level. May God count us faithful in this important task.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

—1 Timothy 1:17

ARTICLES

TOWARD AN EXEGETICAL *PRACTICAL* THEOLOGY

Joshua Clutterham[1]

Introduction: A Gap in the Route from Exegesis to Practical Theology

Nearly forty years ago, Walter Kaiser, in his landmark book, *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching & Teaching,* announced a crisis in the Christian ministry, the danger of the widening gap between biblical exegesis and the homilist's work in sermon preparation and preaching.[2] He wrote,

> A gap of crisis proportions exists between the steps generally outlined in most seminary or Biblical training classes in exegesis and the hard realities most pastors face every week as they prepare their sermons. Nowhere in the total curriculum of theological studies has the student been more deserted and left to his own devices than in bridging the yawning chasm between understanding the content of Scripture as it was given in the past and proclaiming it with such relevance in the present as to produce faith, life, and bona fide works.[3]

Kaiser further identified three crucial elements that compounded this crisis: (1) that although detailed treatments of the Scripture with respect to its critical text, history, grammar, and culture had been produced, and scores of significant homiletical treatments of Scripture texts had been crafted, a route had

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[2] Kaiser's announcement was detailed in his *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching & Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), and was offered amidst other crises concerning divisions within biblical studies—widening gaps between disciplinary silos: Old Testament and New Testament studies, biblical studies and theology, systematic theology and biblical theology, etc. These silos were producing increased specialization and decreased ministry engagement.

[3] Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 18.

not yet been developed to move from exegesis to homiletics,[4] (2) that without this route, homiletics was liable to continue to move away from the biblical author's intent in the text of Scripture, and (3) that because there was a discontinuity between the seminary departments of biblical studies, which instructed in exegesis and the biblical languages, and of practical theology, which taught the preaching courses, that this trajectory was becoming an established position. The plain consequence was that preachers were missing God's message, would be trained to do so, and that congregants in the pews were the sure causalities. To this crisis, he offered a solution—the syntactical-theological method of exegesis[5]—for an improved foundation for preaching and teaching (which he called "textual expository preaching"), and effectively persuaded and strengthened a generation of pastors, teachers, and instructors to proclaim God's message.

Hermeneutically, Kaiser agreed with the foundations of the grammatico-historical method, but he saw weaknesses in that method exegetically for finally arriving at proclamation to the Church.[6] Kaiser's syntactical-theological method of biblical exegesis highlighted two major tenets: (1) 'Syntactical' related to the in-depth analysis of words, phrases, and paragraphs in their literary and linguistic contexts, and (2) 'Theological' concerned the teaching of the whole of Scripture as related to the focus text.[7] Finally, he

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[4] In his own words, "Both ends of this bridge have at various times received detailed and even exhaustive treatments: (1) the historical, grammatical, cultural, and critical analysis of the text forms one end of the spectrum; and (2) the practical, devotional, homiletical, and pastoral theology (along with various techniques of delivery, organization, and persuasion) reflected in collections of sermonic outlines for all occasions forms the other. But who has mapped out the route between these two points? The number of books and articles worth mentioning which provide both faithfulness to the text of Scripture and spiritual nourishment to contemporary men and women is so sparse and hidden in such remote journals or languages as to be of very little aid for our needs today. To the best of my knowledge, no one has even produced in English or in any modern European language what we would call an exegetical theology that maps out this most difficult route of moving from the text of Scripture over into the proclamation of that text." Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 18.

[5] Although Kaiser communicates clear agreement with the goals of the grammatico-historical method of exegesis, he notes its limitations: "Grammatico-historical exegesis has failed to map the route between the actual determination of the authentic meaning and the delivery of that word to modern men and women who ask that that meaning be translated into some kind of normative application or significance for their lives." Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 88.

[6] The grammatico-historical method or hermeneutic teaches that a proper interpretation of a text is achieved when that interpretation agrees with the intention of its author and thus stresses the importance of understanding the words and syntax of that text in their grammatical sense and historical context for reading the author accurately. A method of exegesis—or exegetical method—practically develops the system of arriving at that interpretation from a certain hermeneutical foundation. *Exegesis* is sometimes used interchangeably with *Hermeneutics*—the science and art of interpretation—but the former, a broader term, focuses more on a method of analyzing a defined text to derive a critical interpretation while the latter describes a set of positions or principles for approaching the task of interpretation generally.

[7] Technically Kaiser presented three levels of his syntactical method: (1) Contextual analysis which examined larger units of text related to the focus text in four categories—the sectional context, book context, and canonical context before returning to the immediate context, (2) Syntactical analysis which examined the grammatical and historical sense of the words

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heralded that "Exegesis is never an end in itself. Its purposes are never fully realized until it begins to take into account the problems of transferring what has been learned from the text over to the waiting Church" and that it "must come to terms with the audience as well as with what the author meant by the words he used." As such, Kaiser's method culminated in a homiletical analysis which considered the data from syntactical and theological analyses in the development of the sermon plan.

Kaiser's work profoundly influenced how scholars thought about the exegetical task and how various considerations of theology (biblical theology, historical theology, systematic theology, natural theology, practical theology) related to exegesis and to each other, as displayed in the perspectives and development of the exegetical pyramid.[8] The exegetical pyramid arranged these considerations in order of foundations for the next step in the exegetical method—Scripture serving as the ultimate foundation, building from text to ministry.
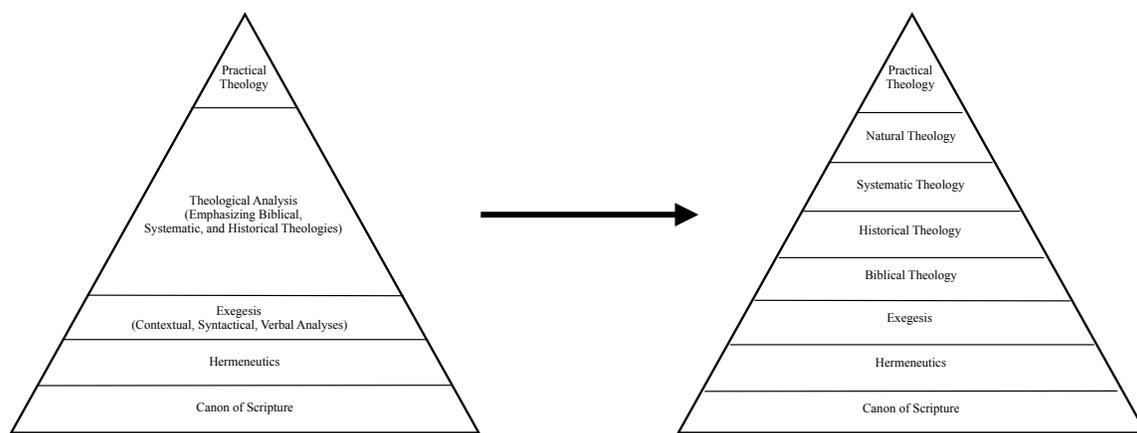
Fig. 1 Development of the Exegetical Pyramid, Kaiser to Today

The canon of Scripture, understood as inspired, inerrant, authoritative, complete, and sufficient forms the foundation of the exegetical task. The canon is then approached with Hermeneutics, a set of governing rules for interpreting the text. The process of interpretation applied to context, syntax, and words follows with the exegesis level. Following this level of foundation, a set of theological inquiry both

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chosen and their function in the sentence and paragraph, and (3) Verbal analysis which considered additional factors effecting the meaning of words and phrases (e.g., idioms, cultural terms, figures of speech, and key theological terms).

[8] Also called the *theological pyramid*, this diagram visually arranged the order of exegetical analyses into layers which both formed foundations for what would be built above, but also an expectation of checks on the interpretation derived from the application of those analyses. That is, once the concerns of language (grammatical) and context (historical) had been applied to derive an interpretation, that interpretation was augmented and checked through additional considerations of syntax (language structures), authorial personality. and theological inquiry (biblical theology, historical theology, systematic theology, natural theology). The peak of the pyramid—practical theology—then applies that verified interpretation to the ministry and proclamation of the Word.

serves to fill out the interpretation and to guard against faulty interpretation. Biblical Theology examines the exegesis thus far with consideration to the nature of Scripture as progressively revealed over some 1500 years. It stresses the unique personalities of the biblical authors and the coherent purposes of the divine author. And as such, it further illuminates the intention of the author given his broader corpus, but also guards from error of reading a perspective into the text which is inconsistent with that corpus. Historical Theology considers the long history of interpretation in the Christian Church, asking how people in the past have understood the same text of Scripture—assisting the exegete to make connections but also to guard from cultural bias and errors in ignorance. Systematic Theology organizes the teaching of the Bible (as exegetically discerned) and aids the process by allowing the interpretation of the focus text to be compared to the Bible as a whole. Natural Theology considers that God has revealed Himself to all creation in categories of glorious presentation (Ps. 19:1), eternal power, and divine nature (Rom. 1:19–20). This robust understanding yields a proper foundation for practical theology, how humanity ought to respond to God's revelation and how God works in and through this response. Scholars have rightfully remarked that the functional practice of this exegetical pyramid involves many interrelationships and feedback loops as the exegetical process and knowledge of the Scripture continues to be refined—leading some to represent the diagram not as a pyramid but as a network or circle. Still, as D.A. Carson concludes, "The line of final control is the straight line from exegesis right through Biblical Theology and Historical Theology to Systematic Theology and Pastoral Theology. The final authority is the Bible and the Bible alone."[9] And Kaiser's work served as the impetus for this helpful development, filling the gap between exegesis and practical theology.

Although Kaiser's solution brought improvements to teaching and preaching, those improvements did not translate to the full spectrum of pastoral ministry. His statement, "Nowhere in the total curriculum of theological studies has the student been more deserted and left to his own devices…," could have been directed just as easily, if not more profoundly, to training in pastoral care and counseling. Those outlets of practical theology had been suffering their own crisis for decades at the point of Kaiser's writing—a deeper crisis in fact since it concerned whether the Bible and theology were even foundational for those outlets at all.

The crisis in pastoral care and counseling indeed related to Kaiser's crisis in several ways. First, the problem in pastoral counseling expressed itself with a similar lament from seminary graduates getting started in ministry but with more agony. One such pastor expressed it this way:

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[9] D.A. Carson, "How to Read the Bible and Do Theology Well," The Gospel Coalition, September 24, 2015, accessed February 18, 2018, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-bible-and-theology-don-carson-nivzsb.

Like many other pastors, I learned little about counseling in seminary, so I began with virtually no knowledge of what to do. Soon I was in difficulty. Early in my first pastorate, following an evening service, a man lingered after everyone else had left. I chatted with him awkwardly, wondering what he wanted. He broke into tears, but could not speak. I simply did not know what to do. I was helpless. He went home that night without unburdening his heart or receiving any genuine help from his pastor. Less than one month later he died. I now suspect that his doctor had told him of his impending death and that he had come for counsel. But I had failed him.[10]

At least these seminarians took courses that had them preaching from the Bible, although lacking Kaiser's exegetical route; these same seminarians had not even a glimpse at pastoral care grounded in Scripture. A second similarity: as Kaiser introduced a correction through the publication of a landmark book, Jay Adams, the pastor who had years before lamented his failure with the man grieving his terminal diagnosis, sought to spark the same type of correction through the publication of *Competent to Counsel* in 1970. In that work Adams, whose expertise was homiletics, had first become concerned about the deficiency of Scriptural input into counseling training through his own experience but increasingly as he sought growth and discovered the complete waywardness of contemporary Christian counseling in its discontinuity with Christian theology; that is, he was noticing the same type of alarming trends as Kaiser: (1) he saw a widening gap between the Bible and theology with the practice of pastoral care and counseling, (2) he became aware that no route from exegesis to pastoral counseling had been developed,[11] and (3) that because there was a discontinuity between seminary departments of biblical studies and theology and the department of practical theology which taught the counseling courses, that this trajectory was becoming an established position—three tenets practically identical to the challenges Kaiser was seeking to address.[12]

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[10] Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), xi.

[11] The modern Biblical Counseling movement did see itself as reviving many perspectives on the ministry of the Word as promoted by the puritans, and the puritans did model a simple broad exegetical method of 1. Text, an exposition of the meaning; 2. Doctrine, a theological presentation about God and man's relation and obligations to Him, which involved attention to systematic theology; and 3. Use, an application of that meaning and theology, cf. David Barshinger, *Jonathan Edwards and the Psalms: A Redemptive-Historical Vision of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 59. This exegetical method seems to have been the seedbed behind their vigorously biblical approach to pastoral care. Still this approach was not expanded into a taught methodology and made available in the form that Kaiser sought to accomplish.

[12] A third connection point may be postulated (not proven in this article) that Jay Adams's book, which revived the circles of reformed theology to the richness of God's Word for practical theology, helped create the atmosphere and energy that catapulted Walter Kaiser to pen *Toward an Exegetical Theology* a decade later. Jay Adams's own book on preaching which was published in 1982—a year after Kaier's—offers several points seen as lacking by Kaiser in an available methodology, working from exegesis to homiletics. Adams's book was the product of 12 years of his own educational focus on preaching and his experience teaching practical theology (both counseling and preaching) courses at Westminster Theological Seminary. This timeline would place Adams formulating and teaching some of the same conclusions as Kaiser in the decade leading up to

With such similarities between the corrections of Kaiser and Adams, why wouldn't Kaiser's correction have solved Adams's crisis to equal measure? The reason for this is twofold: (1) First, while the homiletics faculty within the seminary practical theology departments saw the clear implications of the syntactical-theological method of exegesis for sermon-preparation and preaching, because the task of preaching was still understood to focus on and be dependent upon the Bible, the pastoral counseling faculty had already rejected the sufficiency of the Bible and became dependent upon secular sources for the work of soul care—and the syntactical-theological method of exegesis had little benefit for those sources. (2) Second, there was a crucial oversight in the syntactical-theological method of exegesis: There was no attention to conservative rhetorical analysis—that is, the text's compositional technique—in Kaiser's method at the syntactical level. While practical theology was indeed strengthened by the syntactical-theological method for its advantages to deriving the intended meaning of the biblical author (thus making systematic theological conclusions more sound), the method still left practical theology as *merely* an application of systematic theology and not also as a direct development of authorial rhetoric.[13] This oversight made practitioners more informed about biblical doctrine, but still left them asking the same how, why, and what-specifically questions about how to deliver that doctrine in pastoral conversations.

The ministry mouths and hands of practitioners were not anymore skillful after the method than before. Instead they continued to lean on the sometimes wise/biblical and sometimes unwise/unbiblical guidance of mentors, or where available guidance lacked, resorting to testing out new procedures as situations arose instead of being profoundly strengthened by the Bible's own rhetorical richness gleaned directly from the text in exegesis. To say it bluntly, the syntactical-theological method of exegesis focused only on pulling the meaning out of the text in exegesis and left behind the text's own inspired delivery method as something without value. The meaning continued up the pyramid becoming more theologically refined and arriving at the step of practical theology only to begin a new search for a delivery system in the new ministry context of preaching and counseling. At this point, the preacher or counselor was left to his own devices to communicate the meaning—on the one hand, an unfortunate situation for

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Kaiser's book. It is noteworthy that Adams himself was aware of a rhetorical analysis at least by that point and that he lamented that it was unfortunately overlooked by most: "Rhetorical and literary analyses (areas themselves rarely acknowledged and so usually ignored)…" Jay Adams, *Preaching with Purpose: The Urgent Task of Homiletics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 30. Adams returned to attention of rhetoric in his article, "Biblical Interpretation and Counseling, Part 2," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 17, no. 1 (Fall 1998). In that article, he did make the connection between the rhetoric of a text of Scripture with the practice of practical theology for the purposes of inviting contemplation and giving instruction memorably by putting truth in bite-size form (e.g., a proverb), or by shocking (through amplified language or hyperbole), or through illustrative descriptions.

[13] Rhetoric describes, "1 the art of speaking or writing effectively: as a. the study of principles and rules of composition formulated by critics of ancient times b. the study of writing or speaking as a means of communication or persuasion 2 a. skill in the effective use of speech b. a type or mode of language or speech *also*: insincere or grandiloquent language 3: verbal communication: discourse." *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,* 11th ed., s.v. "rhetoric."

preaching in which so much of the text's richness had been lost in the process but still recoverable given the typical amount of time to prepare a sermon, on the other hand, it was disastrous for counseling because its dynamic nature eliminated the opportunity to adequately prepare statements, responses, and questions.

Perhaps what has developed could be compared to a twin-engine plane. Practical Theology operates best when both engines are firing—a powerful combination of practical theological *meaning (content)* and practical theological *method of delivery (rhetoric)*. In the 1970s, when the founders of the modern Biblical Counseling movement first made the bold claim, amidst a crowded milieu of secular theorists and practitioners, that the Scripture sufficiently speaks into both areas of content and methodology, they gave pastors and Christians new wings to engage the influence of those seeking to capture the territory of pastoral care, counseling, and practical living. But almost from the beginning, the one engine bore all the labor. Practical theologians asked the questions about how the teaching of the Scripture in systematic theology applied to the ministry challenges facing them. In time, they learned to use this engine to the maximum and its strength compensated for the non-use of the other engine. Those interested in the ministry of the Word side of practical theology skyrocketed to significance under the banner "nouthetic counseling," a new term seeking to capture the admonishing, exhorting, warning, counseling approaches to personal ministry spoken of in the Scripture. Nouthetic Counseling first asked where problem behaviors were discussed in Scripture seeking alignment, what the God through the Scripture said about those behaviors, and how the pastoral counselor could involve himself to guide the counselee toward change. Nouthetic Counseling matured under the banner of "Biblical Counseling" and asked how the Scripture addresses motivations and the desires of the heart at the root of those behaviors, and how change of behavior could begin first by change of worship and desires (through right worship) and growth in a counseling-discipleship relationship. This article proposes that Biblical Counseling or Biblical Soul Care take up a distinctive quality ("Textual Biblical Counseling" or "Textual Biblical Soul Care"—paralleling Kaiser's suggestion in "Textual Expository Preaching") not to discard what has been gained in this modern history of progression but to also ask how the Scripture itself speaks to people who have wrong desires (and so wrong behavior) to effectively reveal to them their hearts and the way of the Lord, and how practical theologians can learn those same approaches well for practical ministry in speaking the truth in love.[14]

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[14] Although Jay Adams's work has been frequently cited connected to the proposal of this article and gave a glimpse as to its proposal (connected to his discussion about the relationship of the preacher and the pastoral counselor and because he noteworhily recognized the importance of rhetorical analysis in the exegetical process), he was not the only one to give a glimpse, and this article is not advocating what has been called "traditional biblical counseling." I see a wonderful harmony in advocating all that the modern Biblical Counseling movement has learned in these past 50 years and especially in the direction
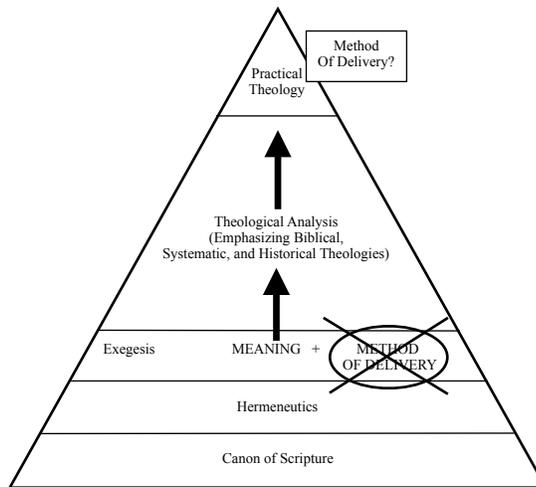
Fig. 2 Method of Delivery Left Out of the Exegetical Process

Practical theologians are not only asking the questions of what the text and its author *meant*, but also how and why he communicated that meaning in the fashion he did—because the practical theologian is keenly focused on *how to approach* difficult ministry scenarios, *what to specifically speak into* those scenarios, and *why that approach is most strategic or wise* from God's perspective. Practical theologians are not only interested in the whole counsel of God summarized in a systematic, understandable, relevant package but also in what would Jesus Christ *actually say* or *not say* and *how he would say it* if he were present in the room at this moment in front of the person in need of help and change.[15] Practical theologians are interested in this knowledge because they want so earnestly to see the sinner-sufferer find the Lord's help, but also because that demonstration of utter wisdom in words would send them to their knees in personal worship—"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" Such depth of riches and wisdom and knowledge of God are not found

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of Dr. Powlison's "Idols of the Heart and Vanity Fair," *JBC* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 35–50, and *How Does Sanctification Work?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), and the importance of relationship in counseling, with a return to a conservative rhetorical analysis of the Scripture's benefit to teach us to speak wisely by learning from Jesus' example, gaining expertise in inscripturated lines logic, being tutored in promoted approaches to communication, readily recalling specific communication that was used in similar inscripturated counseling scenarios or epistolary pattern. By way of making a connection, I am aiming at a systematic development from the Bible of the "verbal virtue of wisdom," godly "conversational skill," a robust counseling the Word. Cf. David Powlison, *Speaking Truth in Love: Counsel in Community* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2005), esp. Chapter 10, "What is 'Ministry of the Word'?" and *Seeing with New Eyes: Counseling and the Human Condition through the Lens of Scripture* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2003), esp. Part 1.

[15] Cf. Joshua Clutterham, "What is Biblical Counseling," in *Men Counseling Men: A Biblical Guide to the Major Issues Men Face*, ed. John Street (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2013), 27.

only in Scripture's information and data, but also in the expression of those things in the manner God chose for His communication.

The doctrine of the inspiration of the Scripture, a pillar of theological orthodoxy, should tell us as much. The doctrine teaches that the Holy Spirit of God carried along human authors to cooperatively write His Words (cf., 2 Tim. 3:15–17; 2 Pet. 1:20–21). And the doctrine includes attention not only to the broad message of the Scripture but to the very words. Every word choice was inspired by God. The delivery method was as much the intention of the author as the meaning. And thus an exegetical method that includes a conservative rhetorical analysis of the text at the syntactical level should be a key element of the exegetical method. Our appreciation of the Scripture's rhetoric (method of delivery) as a significant aspect of that God-breathed formulation though has been lacking. To argue from the extreme, if the rhetoric or method of delivery is not part of the inspiration design, we might wonder why God didn't give his word in bullet-point since that arguably is more efficient and thus an improvement, or in encyclopedic fashion—alphabetically arranged—since finding information in such a voluminous document can be challenging. John Frame's discussion of inspiration directs toward this consideration,

> God's speech is often propositional: God's conveying information to us. But it is far more than that. It includes all the features, functions, beauty, richness of language that we see in human communication, and more. So the concept I wish to defend is broader than the "propositional revelation" that we argued so ardently forty years ago, though propositional revelation is part of it… God's Word is not merely propositional. God's purpose is not merely to convey information to us, though he certainly does that. His purpose is to do for us all that can be done by language. He means to convey not only information, but tone, emotion, perspective. He means to convey his love to us, along with the sternness of his justice. Human language is right in this way, conveying a wide variety of content. God's language is all the richer. And to communicate it, he employs a wide variety of writers with a rich diversity of experience. And the final result is exactly what he wanted to say to us.[16]

The doctrine of inspiration teaches us not only that God is the ultimate author of the Scripture, but that the Scripture in all of its parts bears his majestic wisdom. It is a present from the Lord in which *both* its contents and packaging are material more valuable than gold and silver, more precious than jewels (Prov. 3:13–15). This present isn't designed to toss away the method of delivery once the meaning it conveys is uncovered; instead, the exegete ought also to analyze the text's rhetoric itself with additional theological inquiry and arrive at practical theology with at least a prominent delivery method in mind for effective ministry.

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[16] John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010), 3, 142–43.
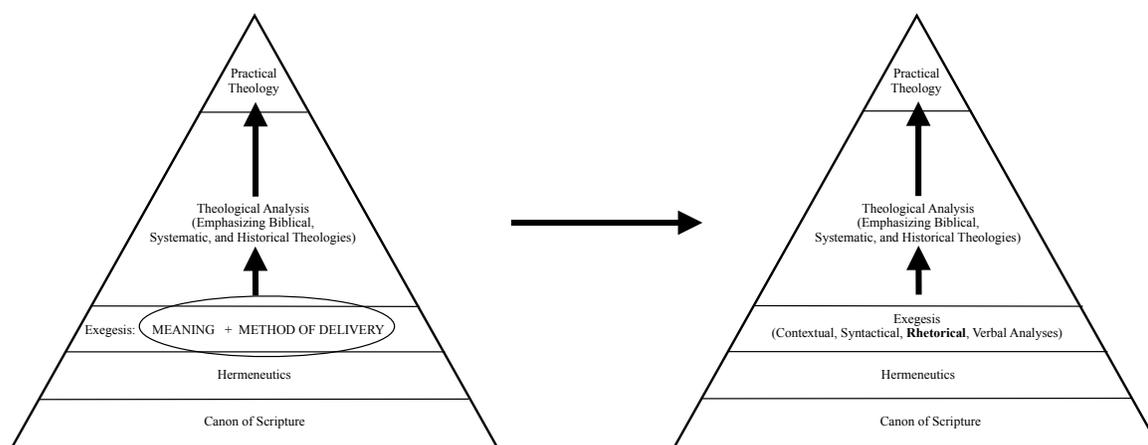
Fig. 3 Keeping Method with Meaning in the Exegetical Pyramid through Rhetorical Analysis

Whereas Kaiser's method focused on the value in the text being its meaning, his method passed on an emphasis on the text's method or rhetoric. As such, it left behind clues—instruction—for how to approach counseling scenarios, what to specifically say in those situations, and why it is most strategic or wise from God's perspective. A key improvement to Kaiser's proposed method would then be found in the inclusion of a rhetorical analysis at the syntactical level and for the fruit of that analysis to accompany the biblical, historical, systematic and practical theological inquiries—that is, a rhetorical analysis for the advantage of ministry not just meaning.

Now, this article is not contending that Kaiser did not hold to inspiration—nothing of the sort. Instead, it suggests that an oversight in this one area is not most consistent with the doctrine. To be fair to Kaiser, it must be remembered that he introduced a thorough method when there was at that time no other readily available resource of the sort, and his work has stood the test of time so that what is taught currently in the seminaries is largely identical to his proposal. Praise God for the insight he was given in 1981 and his ministry to communicate it for all the ways he has blessed the Church through his work. Kaiser's method was not wrong with respect to the exegesis of meaning (really an amazing help in this area), but incomplete. Kaiser's work solved one problem without solving a related problem. Unfortunately, solving one exegetical problem, with respect to preaching and teaching, brought an unintended consequence, with respect to pastoral care and counseling, and a distancing the ministries of the public ministry of the Word from the private ministry. (Think of the scenario in which some potholes in a road are fixed while others are not. The road improves in some places but becomes even more dangerous in others because of the divergence of levels.) This article cannot critique Kaiser's book for improving preaching and teaching when his goal was to improve preaching and teaching. But, with great respect, it may critique the tendency to leave the private ministry of the Word behind. Last, as will be shown later, Kaiser's work did address a point akin to rhetorical analysis—attempting to locate and use the

author's own outline as the basis for a sermon outline—so the seed idea was there but just applied to preaching and teaching in a minor way.[17] The following critique, and that which has been offered thus far, is not aimed to discredit Walter Kaiser or to devalue his work; rather, it aims to expose an unintended consequence of the way that the syntactical-theological method has been formulated, especially for the private ministry of the Word in practical theology.

With care to these disclaimers, three problems with the syntactical-theological method (STM) as established by Kaiser should still be summarily considered:

1. STM Aims at an Incomplete Ministry of the Word

STM develops an exegetical method that doesn't take into account the public *and* private ministry of the Word. The fact that not all ministry is preaching should alone cause us to reconsider the theological pyramid. While, there may be occasions where a person is involved in one type of ministry and not the other, there isn't a New Testament representation of ministry that doesn't reflect both (i.e., a complete ministry of the word). Such would be a foreign concept in the apostolic tradition, cf. Acts 20. Lack of a robust practical theology for pastoral counseling as a culmination of an exegetical method points to problems in that exegetical method. And this lack might be illustrated with a commentary on many otherwise biblical sermons when A. *no application* is given in the sermon, or B. *insufficient time* is given to develop application in the sermon, or C. application is only more systematic theology to *know/hear*, not to *do*.[18] This type or preaching may reveal a foundation of academic bias, expressed in the following presuppositions or occurrences: 1) a belief that all things practical cannot be academic, 2) a belief that academic and practical do not mix—they are natural competitors, 3) academicians who do not have experience in studying practical theology academically and so cannot conceive of it, 4) those who are often academic are puffed up with the pride that makes them view the practical as simplistic—though they

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[17] "In those happy instances where the Biblical materials are cast into a straight didactic form, such as the exegete finds in much of the Book of Romans, there is hardly any need for what we are here calling "principlization." There the problem is relatively simple, in that the only demand on the exegete is that he put the teachings and doctrines of Romans into the form of propositions (i.e., main points in a preaching outline) that will call the hearers to some type of response. When truth is not internalized within the hearers, but is left as just so many notions floating around outside their experience, the exegete is in effect a mere dilettante—a trifler in the art of interpretation." Kaiser, Toward an Exegetical Theology, 150–51.

[18] An interesting phenomena since the beginning of the modern Biblical Counseling movement is the progression of putting all practical application doctrine under the banner of Biblical Counseling (the private ministry of the Word) instead of the broader term, "Practical Theology," which is ministered in both public and private outlets. The reasons for conflation of practical theology and biblical counseling are that the general population of Christians (even many pastors) have not developed a foundational theology that addresses the everyday lives and sanctification pursuits of their congregants. In the absence of the availability of practical theology, the *counseling* movement had to develop *both* the practical theology (content) and the counseling methodology.

themselves often struggle with many of the basics of the Christian life and are at times revealed to be living hypocritical lives, 5) not many academicians have seen or exposed themselves to people who are truly investing academic efforts to studying the practical.

2. STM Severs Meaning from Method of Delivery

This severing may be due to an emphasis of viewing the attributes of Scripture only with respect to the meaning of the text and not its own method or rhetoric. The concern with inspiration has already been discussed but consider also the relevancy of Scripture. A view that sees parts of the Scripture as valuable (the meaning) while the rest is that which creates barriers and distractions from value (e.g., method being the shell and meaning the valuable inside). In this view, rhetoric may be studied but again only to get at the meaning, not to apply the rhetorical method itself.[19] The idea may be expressed in "mining the text for gold nuggets," or "gleaning the value embedded in the text." Consider sufficiency: the lack of assent to the doctrine of sufficiency may be directly related to this severing, arguing over its content while brushing aside a key component of its sufficient design (i.e., its delivery method). By arguing for sufficiency, we are saying that it includes information (meaning) but also the way that information is delivered (method) in the hands of the redeemer to accomplish salvation and sanctification. Our attempts to show the sufficiency of Scripture are stunted by the fact that we do not appreciate all aspects of the Scripture (its rhetoric, model, reasoning, and instruction) as part of its sufficiency.

A similar observation might be noticed in the shortening of the extensive public reading of the Scripture in the normal order of worship—or not having a place for it in the normal order of worship. Some preachers limit their reading of the text in focus as well. The public reading of Scripture seems to have been a tradition in the very early church (Eph. 3:4; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; 1 Tim. 4:13; Rev. 1:3)—people would hear meaning and method together.

The phrase *counsel the Word* reflects well the appreciation of practical theologians for the potential of not severing meaning from method. They observe that there often is already a 1-to-1 correlation between the biblical text and the context of counseling. Severing the meaning from the delivery method breaks this unity and the value in analyzing how to approach similar counseling questions/concerns or similar ministry scenarios. In the pursuit of seeking to interpret the *meaning* of a passage, interpreters seemingly forgot that the meaning came through a message, and that in the actual words and techniques of that message God is instructing us how to respond to kinds and categories of questions with actual words to use as well. Each word in its context has a morality, a directness and tone, a connotation. For

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[19] Perhaps the presentation of presuppositional apologetics would be an exception here since it argues theologically that they are arguing connected to an informed anthropology and epistemology utilized in the Scripture. Although this approach is profitable, it would still only capture a small glimpse of the rhetoric of the whole of Scripture for practical theology.

example, the difference of meaning between "sanctioned" and "approved" is negligible but the force of them is worlds apart in personal conversations—one may raise eyebrows that the other does not. For example, instructions to "rebuke" in the Scripture should be followed with words to an offender that don't emphasize levity but sincerity. In Kaiser's own words: "To put it more bluntly, exegesis must come to terms with the audience as well as with what the author meant by the words he used. Traditionally this is the very place where theological education has failed in its program."[20] Again this quotation sees the importance of the telos of Scripture but neglects that it has processed the initial method out of the Scripture by filtering its meaning—the importance of looking to words not just for meaning but method.

3. STM Prioritizes Meaning and Neglects Method

In theological analysis, it is a problem that more exegetes are not involved in the systematic study of the Scripture's own methodology for disseminating its theology practically. In the development of practical theology, Kaiser's point that "None of the theological departments has been specifically charged with assisting the student in the most delicate maneuver of transferring the results of the syntactical-theological analysis of the text into a viable didactic or sermonic format" because "everyone has assumed that this is so very obvious to anyone who has spent hours analyzing the Biblical text, that it would be a work of supererogation to even delve into the matter at all!" shows that the weighty matters of method are being neglected and that the exegetical method is making the meaning more distant from the delivery not more near. [21] As practical theologians, we need to emphasize that the Scripture is already (in many cases) in the format of counsel as it was delivered to us by the Holy Spirit and so its distance from being ministered today is not distant—that is, does not depend upon a principalizing to make it useful. The same words and phrases can often be used in almost exact contexts of the personal ministry of the Word.

What would a rhetorical analysis beginning at the syntactical level and sustained throughout the duration of the exegetical process accomplish that it wouldn't accomplish by only first considering it at the practical theology level?[22] First, the rhetorical analysis would refine a biblical theological analysis since the exegete would become that much more familiar with not only the teaching content of a certain human inspired author but how that author tends to communicate (e.g., How does Paul, or John, or Peter put it?). Second, since rhetorical analysis at points seeks to recover intangible aspects of the text (emotion, sarcasm, satire, humor, etc.) which are important for understanding both meaning and delivery method, a

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[20] Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 149.

[21] Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 149.

[22] Some may suggest that homiletics and pastoral theology be alone responsible to work out the detail of proclamation ministry—that is, at the practical theology step of the exegetical pyramid. The problem with this approach is that 1) these departments often do not have persons who are advanced in syntax themselves so as to carry it to completion, and 2) these departments have been staffed at times with those who do not hold the same theological foundations/convictions or exegetical conclusions but are respected for their credentials in psychology.

historical theological inquiry would cause us to glean the teaching of the Church on the text throughout its history. Third, inclusion of the rhetorical analysis early on would bring about a new enterprise of systematic analysis and perhaps overlooked connection of previously perceived unrelated texts—where else in the Scripture is the same rhetorical approach employed? And fourth, having been amplified by these theological analyses, they also serve as checks on interpretation: that which claims to be a biblical approach to the private ministry of the Word but fails the checks of these steps, namely, that which is not "consistent with the Bible rightly interpreted—is a poor witness. Likewise, that which claims to be instruction in biblical counseling but bears no resemblance to Jesus Christ—doesn't speak the way He speaks, or sound the way He sounds, or share His message or operate with His worldview" will exposed to have included a crucial error along the way.[23] For example, consider the dialogue between Jesus and the man who had been lame for 38 years (John 5:1–9). Knowing Jesus' rhetorical approach would aid us both as disciples seeking to follow His example, but also in our interpretation. How does Jesus ask the question: "Do you want to be healed?" (John 5:6). Does Jesus intend to communicate a critical or condemning question: Don't you want to get well? It appears that is how this man, who doesn't know Jesus, hears the question for his answer is defensive, explaining why it is that he has not been able to get into the pool of Bethesda.[24] Knowing Jesus' tendency to ask questions that get to the heart of the matter that deal with the situation in the present, as opposed to the past (and the fact that the belief of the healing cult at the pool of Bethesda is inconsistent with Jesus' ministry which is contrasting real power versus false claims to it) helps the reader to understand that the lame man misunderstood Jesus' question with a genuine offer to be healed. This man answered in the affirmative in his own tangled web of lost-ness. A rhetorical analysis would help us to *hear* Jesus' in the words of Scripture, to both grow in our interpretation skill, but also our own ministry capability in approaching others. In short, it would strengthen both the exegete's understanding of the meaning of the text *and* his foundation for ministering from it practically.

In summary, this article is making a proposal *similar* to Kaiser's work in that (1) it seeks to connect two ends of a spectrum—exegesis to practical theology, but *differs* in the particular outlet of practical theology—counseling and soul care instead of preaching and teaching. (2) It is *similar* in that both Kaiser and this article are stating that the proclamation ministry should be more affected by the text ("textual

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[23] I maintain the point expressed in "What is Biblical Counseling?", 23, that *biblical* counseling is tested by the two criteria: consistency with the systematic data of Scripture, rightly interpreted, and resemblance to Jesus Christ, and not by agreement to the teaching of any one leader, author, speaker in biblical counseling circles.

[24] The marginal note of John 5:4, likely a historically accurate representation of the thought behind the healing cult at the pool of Bethesda at the time, is not included in the earliest manuscripts and thus not part of the inspired text. Various English translations represent this factor in different ways, some removing it from the main text to include at the bottom of the page with a note.

expository preaching"), but *differs* in the emphasis this article places on the exegesis of the text for meaning *and* method (producing "textual soul care" or "textual biblical counseling").

Thesis

This article sets forth five postulates to contend for the emergence of an exegetical practical theology:

1. Rhetorical analysis at the syntactical level concerning the Scripture's own method of delivery has been largely neglected in the exegetical method taught in the seminaries.
2. Those who have embraced rhetorical analysis in the exegetical method have thought of it only as a tool to help determine meaning, not for skill in ministry outlets of practical theology.
3. Rhetorical analysis has a benefit not just for determining meaning but shaping our own method of delivery in ministry (the public and private ministry of the Word).
4. Practical theologians should champion the inclusion of a rhetorical analysis at the syntactical level of Kaiser's widely adopted syntactical-theological exegetical method, because A. It honors the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, B. It amplifies the acquisition of insight from the Word of God, C. Practical theologians have already gathered insight into this area unknowingly because of the way they tend to give particular attention to the text, and D. because growing the church in this way would prepare ministry leaders more adequately for the public and private ministry of the Word, which would grow up the Church as a whole into those who speak the truth in love—as David Powlison describes "God's new society in Christ, come to its own and coming to its own"—a vision that practical theologians long to see come to fruition.[25]
5. Advanced exegetes should respond to this attention by using their skill to bless the ministry of the Word and not just the knowledge of the Word's content. Exegetical scholars with writing ministries should help connect the fruit of their analyses to practical matters in their publications. Seminary professors should teach this extended exegetical method since they are preparing gospel ministers to work with people, ready to utilize the full breadth of Scripture's wisdom to engage a foolish world.
6. As a first step, the rhetorical analysis should begin with a conservative set of categories of rhetorical analysis which do not require debate and are ready for reception.

Conservative Categories of Rhetorical Analysis

This article proposes four conservative categories of rhetorical analysis be included an exegetical practical theology: (1) Model, (2) Logic, (3) Instruction in Communication, and (4) Counsel.

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[25] Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes*, 6.

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1. Model

This category is an analysis dealing with narrative texts in which the rhetorical approach of God, Jesus, or another godly model is examined and a conclusion concerning how the modern reader could either (1) follow that model (e.g., Nathan confronting David with the preface of a parable, 2 Sam. 12:1–15; Jesus' interaction with the rich young ruler, Matt. 19:16–22), (2) follow the model in a modified way by appealing to the Lord's rhetoric (e.g., "Exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' Heb. 3:13) or (3) rhetorically pointing to God's ways of dealing with such a scenario with appropriate respect (e.g., "The Lord rebuke you" Jude 9).

The concept that the reader is to learn from godly models is foundational to the Scripture ("As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," (Josh. 24:15); "Follow me as I follow Christ," (1 Cor. 11:1); "Whatever you have learned and received and seen in me—practice these things…" (Phil. 4:9). One's communication approach is not singled out as an exception; rather it is a prime area of application (Titus 2:8). The Scripture is modeling for the reader an approach to rhetoric with prescriptive undertones. We understand that not all words, speeches, or written correspondence of biblical characters (even the prophets and apostles) were inspired by God (e.g., these persons may have written grocery lists in their lifetime) but it is still clear when they are serving as models and the occasions when these apostles or prophets are portrayed as speaking God's words. Consider the benefit of learning from some of these models:

a. The Triune God

Scholars agree that the book of Deuteronomy is written in the form of a Suzerain-Vassal treaty or speech. The form evidences attention to rhetoric. In that form, the suzerain, the LORD, begins by reminding his vassal, the nation of Israel, of the nature of their relationship and all that the suzerain has done for the vassal *as a basis for* issuing stipulations. The implication of this approach is that those who are willing to reject the stipulations betray the party that has invested so much into the relationship. (In covenant with the LORD, it's never just business; it's always personal.) The rhetoric of covenant fills the pages of the Old Testament. The relationship is compared to a father to his child, an adoptive parent to his orphan, a husband to his spouse. If God uses this rhetoric for the way that He appeals to His people, the practical theologian should consider it as an effective model.

Or consider the way that God approaches Job when his desire to vindicated and to be shown in the right challenges God's authority. He doesn't issue a statement of explanation or summarized understanding—He doesn't issue a statement at all. Instead, He fires a host of questions at Job which draw Job to make the conclusion that God's knowledge is infinite, the extent of His purposes are beyond finding out. He begins with "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? And finishes with questions about Job's ability to tame the wildest of the Lord's creatures—Behemoth and Leviathon. It is

through these questions—not statements—that Job comes to humble himself: "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth…I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know…I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 40:4; 42:3, 6). In this case, God inspires humility and obedience not in what He has done for Job but through all the things He was doing beyond any connection to Job. Paul, likewise entertaining an argument hypothetically involving the Lord's speech, asks whether a lump of clay would have the audacity to ask its molded, "Why have you made me like this?" To this line of rebellious questioning, God's response confronts with "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?" (Rom. 9:20). The response is not a direct answer to the question; the response focuses on how the question was the wrong question. The discussion surrounding shows that God has the right, power, and authority to do as He pleases; He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, compassion on whom He has compassion, if even to show his wrath, to make know his power and the riches of his glory.

And throughout the Scripture, the paradox of God's words describing Himself continue to form the basis by which He is worshipped (Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9–10; 7:9–10) and make answers to complex questions simple, how the Lord turns evil enemies into forgiven friends:

> The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation. (Exod. 34:6–7, echoing 20:5)

These words become Moses plea to spare the rebellious generation (Numb. 14:18–19). They soar on the wings of David's praise (Ps. 145:7–9). They are Solomon's address at the dedication of the temple (1 Kgs. 8:23; 2 Chron. 6:14). They vex Jonah (Jonah 4:2) and reveal what God was doing in Nineveh. They are the meditation of Jeremiah behind bars about Judah inside Jerusalem and Babylon outside the walls (Jer. 32:18). They are Daniel's prayer for the end of exile (Dan. 9:4). They stir Nehemiah's heart to act (Neh. 1:5) and encourage his work (Neh. 9:32). And they are Mary's *magnificat* (Luke 2:46–55), and the expression of the justice of the justifier (Rom. 3:26). That is, if the chorus of God in the Bible sings about His mercy and covenant keeping, the practical theologians rhetoric should follow its example.

b. Jesus (Particularly)

Jesus was a master of rhetoric. He used it to get to the heart of the matter in every conversation. In the Gospel narrative texts we see something of each component of this proposed conservative set of rhetorical analysis. Zack Eswine writes,

The footsteps or "ways" that Jesus lived resembles the God who wants us to navigate life with the language that can handle it. For a moment we remind ourselves of the Gospels and what we see and hear in them for Jesus. Is Jesus sappy, sentimental, and naïve, when he talks about loving enemies and the chronically ill? His poetic language and parables are dressed with the earthy and down-home… God intends to reveal himself as the One Who Goes There. He intends to equip his people with a voice and language and method that has the capacity to do the same. "Getting prepared by God to find a language adequate for handling life as it is."[26]

Consider a few examples:

Jesus put a lawyer to the test in Luke 10:25–37, who himself aimed to put Jesus to the test, when He asked him two questions: (1) How do you read [the Torah]? He often asked this type of question with particular individuals, "What does the Scripture say?" "How does it read?" Their approach to Scripture after revealed much about the state of their hearts. And (2) Which of these three [the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan] proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers? Those questions and the parable they surround exposed this man as one who knew the Law but didn't apply it. He desired more to justify himself through loopholes, than to embrace the full force of the Law in compassion. Jesus' rhetoric grips the reader as it did His original hearers.

Jesus' interaction with the rich young ruler also shows us the brilliance of His rhetoric (Matt. 19:26–22; Mark 10:17–27). For the rich young ruler, the world is his oyster. He is respected, rich and young. His whole life lies before him and he has the resources to find earthly pleasure at every turn with those whom he chooses. But the rich young ruler is not worthy of the gospel because he does not believe it to be worthy of him. He wants a good deal, a blue light special on entrance into the kingdom of heaven. So what rhetoric would reveal most the matter of this man's heart? Jesus knows it in two seconds; he first tests the man's own evaluation of himself—again by directing him to the Scripture. The rich young ruler passes that self-evaluation with flying colors, big surprise. When Jesus reveals the price tag, however— that eternal life will cost him everything—he is shocked and dismayed. Possessing everything, he walks away emptied handed. He was interested in addition, not subtraction. He could not see that Jesus' offer to come follow Him, while leaving behind everything he knew, was an invitation to inherit the world. It was not Jesus' rhetoric that failed the man, for he left knowing exactly what stood in his way to eternal life and the love of the savior that bid him come.

Like the Old Testament sage, he warns his readers to "Beware!" "Look!" and "Consider!" "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them," whether it be in your

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[26] Zack Eswine, "An Unexpected Method," in *Recovering Eden: The Gospel According to Ecclesiastes* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2014), 23, 35.

giving, praying, or fasting (Matt. 6:1). The consequence is the loss of any heavenly reward. "Look at the birds…are you not of more value than they?" (Matt. 6:26) "Consider the lilies of the field…how much more will he clothe you?" (Matt. 6:28–30). When requested, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), Jesus didn't only teach them *about* prayer; He modeled prayer. "When you pray, *say*: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation" (Luke 11:2–4). "Pray like this…" he says (Matt. 6:9ff). Before serving as an outline for proper prayer, His prayer was a prayer itself—expressed in model rhetoric for speaking to God.

Finally, Jesus rhetoric models an approach to hard words and confrontation. Jesus strongly reproved the scribes and Pharisees, "Woe to you…hypocrites!" (Matt. 23), as He had done their predecessors centuries before (Ezek. 34). The latter words reflected the same righteous anger of their former expression, while still keeping as much balance as possible, "Do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do" (Matt. 23:3).[27] Jesus discourse includes a tidal wave of identifications of similarities between the scribes and Pharisees of His day with those whom the LORD had confronted throughout Israel's tragic past. In their full expression of the Lord's disdain for these men's wicked hearts, the reader learns a rhetoric for addressing like figures.

c. Godly Examples

In addition the LORD and Jesus (particularly), the rhetorical approach of other godly men and women offer the reader a rhetorical models. For example:

The prophet Nathan was in a difficult position. David, who possessed absolutely kingly authority, had sinned and orchestrated a sinister cover-up (2 Sam. 11). At the point of his visit, a whole year had almost had passed (as we surmise by the child of their immorality was born) and David had still not turned. How would the king respond to being confronted? Nathan's approach models skillful rhetoric, exposing the heart and leading toward God's ways. He offers up to David a parable, brilliantly analogous to David's own deeds. The result of this approach was that David objectively tried his own case, and issued his own sentence. He experienced the righteous anger of the LORD toward the rich man in the story, and condemned him for his lack of pity on the poor man. When all was revealed, Nathan executed his confrontation, "You are the man!" (2 Sam. 12:7) and pointed the finger at the rich man in the courtroom.

Consider the son of David in Jerusalem. When Solomon is faced with an extremely difficult court case (2 Kgs. 3:16–28), his wise rhetoric draws out the truth: "Bring me a sword…Divide the living child in

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[27] Interestingly Jay Adams brought attention to various words used by Jesus that communicate sounds (*ouai* "woe" "oh"), onomatopoetic words in the effect of his speaking. He suggested "sprinkle these freely into the mix of your daily practice sessions and notice how they improve the flavor." Adams, *Preaching with Purpose*, 95.

two, and give half to the one and half to the other." This rhetoric he taught to his sons and courtiers: "The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out" (Prov. 20:5). Eswine, considering Ecclesiastes, reflects on Solomon's use of extensive questions, poetry, proverbs, lament, cynicism, unsettling speech, personal testimony and intimate language as a carefully crafted method for effectively bringing the reader to the author's conclusion. He writes,

> This is the calling set before us in Ecclesiastes. This is the kind of discipleship offered by the sage to his student. This is the kind of apologetic that the Preacher invites those who listen to. This is the kind of evangelistic hint this pastor uses to see his hearers converted to God. In short, the voice and method of this Preacher apprentices us in a sage way of talking with others about God.[28]

Dare we consider the other prophets: Samuel, Gad, Nathan, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Jehu, Iddo, Azariah, Elijah, Elishah, Eliezer, Jahaziel, Hanini, Micaiah, Joel, Jonah, Zechariah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Asaph, Nahum, Huldah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Uriah, Hananiah, Habakkuk, Daniel (and his friends before Nebuchadnezzar), Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Noadiah, Ezra, Nehemiah…the apostles before the Sanhedrin, before kings and governors—the list could continue on. The Scripture is replete with godly models displaying rhetoric that could be used in wise application of practical theology.

2. Logic

This category is an analysis of the lines of reasoning utilized in Scripture, prioritizing those that can be seen as promoted (prescription not only description) for the modern reader. Logic deals with the relationships between ideas to deduce conclusions. In the Scripture, the biblical writers are presenting truth claims and placing them in logical relationships—relationships confirmed by the mind of God. Consider the following five factors:

First, the logic category is seen through the use of various literary devices:

- "Simile—an expressed or formal comparison between two things, "He shall be *like a tree*, Ps. 1:3;
- Metaphor—an implied or unexpressed comparison where an idea is carried over from one element to another without directly or expressly saying that A is "like" ("as") B, "go tell that *fox*," Luke 13:32;
- Pleonasm—a redundancy of expression where more words than are necessary are used in order to obtain a certain effect on the mind of the listener or reader, "the butler did *not remember, but forgot*" Gen. 40:23;

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[28] Eswine, *Recovering Eden*, 39.

- Paronomasia—the repetition of words that are similar in sound, but not necessarily in sense or meaning, "having all sufficiency in all things," expressed through the Greek words *panti pantote pasan*, 2 Cor. 9:8)
- Consider also hyperbole, hendiadys, synechdoche, metonymy, irony, litotes, euphemism…[29]

The Scripture uses these literary devices to express biblical ideas and truth claims as these devices most adequately present the logic of the mind of God. The rhetoric of the text should not be abandoned once the meaning is determined by considering the rhetoric; instead the rhetoric should continue on toward the practical theology level.

Second, the logic category reveals a formulation of the relationship of ideas which counters secular worldviews. That is, the Lord's logic does not make sense to the world (which has been surreptitiously teaching us all our lives) and thus the Lord's logic must be observed and learned; further, it must be taught effectively, and the rhetoric of Scripture displays an effective method to do so. How better to express the thoughts, value system, and goals of God than to express the logic and logical rhetoric of the Scripture, "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it" (Matt. 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; Matt. 16:25). "Many who are first will be last, and the last first" (Matt. 19:30; Mark 10:31). "No one can serve two masters…" (Matt. 6:24). "A person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus" (Gal. 2:16). "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5:5). "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves" (Luke 22:26).

Third, the logic category is seen through standard lines of argument, for example: greater to the lesser argument, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Rom. 8:32; lesser to the greater argument, "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you" (Matt. 6:30).

Fourth, the logic category can be observed in how the biblical authors often call the reader to a complex interaction with the whole of Scripture through the use of intertextual allusions and quotations.

Fifth, the logic category comes through in strategic insight for addressing those who do not operate according to the Lord's logic. For example, the Scripture speaks profoundly to tell us *not* to answer a fool according to his foolishness that we would be guilty of acting foolishly ourselves, instead we are to answer a fool according to his folly which takes into account that his words are not really the point to be addressed (Prov. 26:4-5).

3. Instruction in Communication

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[29] Cf. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 123–25.

This category is an analysis of the instruction given concerning wise communication, a description of a godly approach to communication. This category goes beyond the variety of rhetorical devices to describe the nature of our rhetoric generally and not specifically requiring a target circumstance. For example, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1). This general instruction might include how to approach particular groups of people, "Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity" (1 Tim. 5:1–2).[30] "We urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all." (1 Thess. 5:15). A pastor-elder is to "Declare these things [practical instructions for old men, old women, young men, young women, and slaves]; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you" (Titus 2:15) He does so without "being quarrelsome, but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness…" (2 Tim. 2:24–25). Paul addresses wisdom in speech with non-Christians: "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person" (Col. 4:6). The Scripture supplies ample instruction concerning wise godly communication.

4. Counsel

This category is an analysis of specific counseling scenarios engaged in correspondence, especially the New Testament epistles. The epistles are first practical theology and counseling before they are sermons, lectures, and books. Heath Lambert writes, "The Epistles *are* counseling. Reading these letters is like reading the counselor half of a counseling session verbatim. Though we do not hear the voice of the congregational counselees, we are able to listen in on the inspired counsel of the apostolic authors."[31] In contrast to the instruction in communication above, the counsel category instructs concerning and examines the rhetoric found in a robust collection of models set in particular circumstances. Into these circumstances, the inspired author offers inspired rhetoric in giving God's message—five aspects to consider:

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[30] Research and writing in the modern Biblical Counseling movement predominately explores classes of people with like problems or classes prone to certain problems. This approach has been helpfully balanced by (1) the foundation that counselors counsel people not problems, (2) the importance of using biblical language concerning characteristic labels, and descriptions of incidental behavior, (3) a greater focus on the heart—understanding that problems do not arise at the behavior level but at the worship level, and (4) an appreciation that similar outward behavior problems can be motivated by very different heart foundations. Still, there is need for further balance (A) since exponential divisions of classes lead to a perspective that people are more different from each other than similar, and (B) since the rhetoric of Scripture slices past these divisions to point toward maladies common to people. For example, 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 addresses many classes of persons and their characteristic problems, but verse 11 addresses them all in the same pronoun "*you all* were washed, *you all* were sanctified, *you all* were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God."

[31] Heath Lambert, "Using the Epistles in the Pastoral Ministry of the Word," in *Scripture and Counseling*, 369.

First, the counsel category displays how a particular set of information is given to help navigate life or to give necessary hope in that particular counseling scenario. Paul's letter includes several statements introducing the transfer of information for a specific counseling purpose: "I want you to know" or "I do not want you to be uninformed or unaware" (Rom. 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:12; Col. 2:1; 1 Thess. 4:13).

Second, the counsel category often operates according to a three-prong sanctification paradigm: put off the old man, be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man (Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 3:5–17). This paradigm can be seen as the foundation in extended counsel as well; for example, Romans 14–15 is addressing the need for the stronger Christians to receive the weaker Christians:

> *Put on*: As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him (14:1a)
> *Put off*: but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats (14:1b–3a)
> *Be renewed*: for God has welcomed him. (14:3b)

The remaining portions of these chapters fortify this basic outline, exhorting and reproving the church to put off personal preferences that cause divisions, to appreciate God's reception of the weaker brother as God Himself has already received him with additional details, overwhelming support from other portions of the Scripture, in great rhetorical skill.

Third, the counsel category displays a rhetoric that is God-centered, pointing toward the simplicity of relationship with the Lord instead of pushing for a change of circumstances. James writes, "Is anyone among you suffering? *Let him pray.* Is anyone cheerful? *Let him sing praise.*" In the midst of trial, Paul writes, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. *The Lord is at hand*" (Phil. 4:4–5). Instruction in this vein supplies a priority that simplifies the way forward (overlapping here with model). Paul further directs them in the same passage to not worry about anything, but to pray about everything, to tell God what you need and to thank Him—to which He will respond with a peace within that surpasses all understanding and that guards your heart (vv. 6–7). Jesus directs the disciples not to worry but to pursue two things—God's kingdom, and His righteousness. He elevates one great command—to love God comprehensively and neighbor as yourself (the second a necessary component of the first).

Fourth, the counsel category reveals a rhetoric that prizes the gospel, and understands people as those who are participants of its power and propagation to the world, or as those who are still ignorant of it and darkened in their understanding, or of those who are enemies of it. The writers of the epistles are

men on a mission to see the glory of the Lord fill the earth. Paul's letter to Philemon is a good example of this dynamic, itself displaying epistolary rhetoric. In the letter Paul addresses Philemon from the start as a fellow worker among gospel soldiers (Philem. 1–3). He reminds him of his prayers for him and for his own gospel witness (v. 4–7). He requests that Philemon consider sending his slave Onesimus to Paul to serve him alongside him in gospel ministry (v. 8–14). He muses that his slave's fleeing may have been God's plan to bring him to salvation and to usefulness in the gospel ministry (vv. 15–16). He offers to settle any debt Onesimus might owe from the account of debts that Philemon owes to Paul—as one who preached to him the gospel leading to his own salvation (vv. 17 – 19). He makes a final appeal for Onesimus, confident that Philemon will consent (vv. 20–21), before closing the letter with greetings from those with him and a plan to visit (vv. 22–25). In the process of Paul's argument, a further rhetorical strategy is being tactically pursued. In verse 7, Paul commends Philemon for the way he is *refreshing the hearts* of the saints. In verse 12, Paul calls Onesimus *his very heart.* This rhetorical counsel culminates in the powerful command of verse 20: "*Refresh my heart.*" As Philemon has ministered to others, Paul appeals that he would minister to him (to whom he owes so much) by sending Onesimus back to him. All of this wrangling is operating under the pretense that Paul and Philemon are in the work of the gospel together, and Paul has identified an area where the gospel ministry could be more strategically advanced by transferring Onesimus to a new position on the battle field. Whatever a Christian's vocation in life, the epistles' rhetoric speaks to them as ambassadors and disciples making disciples.

Fifth, the counsel category reveals a rhetoric that approaches Christians as learners of Christ, little children of God who need to grow up in their maturity (with respect to discernment and dealing with sin and temptation) and love for one another as a witness to the world—an elder statesman appealing on behalf of the father of the nation. His words warn of the dangers but welcome home in confidence that they will be overcome. The hymnist Will Thompson captured this rhetoric when he wrote,

> Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling—Calling for you and for me;
> Patiently Jesus is waiting and watching—Watching for you and for me!
> Come home! come home! Ye who are weary, come home!
> Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, Calling, O sinner, come home!...

"My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). The implication is that they are not what they will be and they have not yet arrived to where they are going, but they are growing and they are on the move. Martin Luther reflected this sentiment when he wrote:

This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified.[32]

Formalities are set-aside with nothing worth hiding from these discerning and loving writers. Their rhetoric pierces to the core and lays the matter plainly—calling, watching, warning, waiting, welcoming.

Foundations of Agreement

The tenets of this proposal are already affirmed by biblical scholars, practitioners, and counselors individually but have not been drawn together to a unity of argument. Consider the following five foundations of agreement.

1. *Foundational Agreement about the Importance of Authorial Intent*

Kaiser's systematic-theological method asserts the importance of the preacher and teacher's presentation matching the biblical author's message.[33] He notes the benefits of using the author's form (akin to rhetoric) as often as possible. He writes,

There is foundational agreement that attention to the biblical author's rhetoric is seen as advantageous for delivering his message in sermonic outlet. What lacks is that this principle is not limited to the public ministry of the Word. Why wouldn't the same principle be true for personal conversation and the private ministry of the Word? And furthermore, if attention to certain details give this benefit, how much more would attention to the full breath of rhetorical details! This practice, in addition to advantages in ministering with heightened rhetorical strategy and skill, would also come full circle as familiarity with an author's rhetorical patterns may bring breakthrough of interpretive walls. For example, in communication generally, an author speaking his point can have certain advantages over his printed word alone—a pause, a tone, an emphasis, let alone body language that accompanies. The point is that the more aspects of communication (locution, perlocution, and illocution) data that can be gathered, the higher the potential

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[32] Martin Luther, "An Argument – In Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull," in *Works of Martin Luther*, Vol. 3 (1521; repr., Philadelphia, PA: A.J. Broadman Company and The Castle Press, 1930), 31, Jesus, under Article 2.

[33] "…With respect to every sermon which aspires to be at once both Biblical and practical: it must be derived from an honest exegesis of the text and it must constantly be kept close to the text." Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, 19.

of successful comprehensive reception. understanding, but also of force. Just as Kaiser's contextual, syntactical, and verbal analyses are attempts to bring the reader closer to hearing the communication the way the author intended, a rhetorical analysis is a key instrument in the interpreter's toolset.

2.   Foundational Agreement about the Inspiration of Scripture

As presented earlier, the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture teaches that every word of Scripture is inspired by God—God carrying along human authors to cooperatively write His Word. The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is a pillar of theological orthodoxy. The doctrine teaches that the Holy Spirit of God carried along human authors to cooperatively write His Words (cf., 2 Tim. 3:15–17; 2 Pet. 1:20–21). There is agreement that the words are profitable *in their meaning* for doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness; however, there is lack of appreciation for how the delivery method shares in this profitability.

3.   Foundational Agreement that the Word of God can be Taught with Varying Degrees of Effectiveness

Local churches and training organizations have long committed themselves to training believers and church leaders to more effectively communicate God's Word. There is foundational agreement that the Word of God can be taught ineffectively and effectively and that teaching the Word of God effectively is more advantageous to teaching it ineffectively. And that effective teaching includes both a concern for orthodoxy and skill in teaching it. Both contribute. One avenue of making effective teaching ineffective is through a lack of skill to deliver it. There is foundational agreement on this observation for preaching and teaching; what needs more attention is its implications for the private ministry of the Word. Mike Emlet writes,

> The Bible affirms that we impact one another for better or worse. "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1). Fathers do exasperate their children (Eph. 6:4). We can refresh one another in the Lord (2 Tim. 1:16-18). We create a relational context for other people that makes it easier or harder for them to obey Christ. God recognizes this, and he cares about the suffering that people experience at the hands of others.[34]

Further, concerning preaching, Adams wrote, "Great content, set forth in the most logical *order* and with the exact *words* appropriate to it, can be grossly distorted, or even totally destroyed, by careless, lackluster,

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[34] Michael R. Emlet, *Cross Talk : Where Life and Scripture Meet* (Greensboro: NC: New Growth Press, 2009), 97.

inappropriate, or conflicting delivery. There is matter in manner."[35] Put as clearly as Adams and Emlet do, the case for the application to the private ministry of the Word becomes obvious.

4. Foundational Agreement about Bible Application

Preachers appreciate application. There is foundational agreement on the major subject of a passage being its practical telos—noticing the pastoral concern behind the text. What may be overlooked is that the very first application of Scripture before any further action is taken is to actually receive the Word as it has been written, in all its force, care, persuasiveness, and meditations. Second, there is foundational agreement that we are to be doers of the word and not hearers only, but our study and instructional approach has been tilted toward knowing, not doing. For this reason, we also often jump over the 1-to-1 correlation between what we read and what we say. A primary application area is our own communication or speech. The Scripture teaches that our communication is one of the most challenging areas to seek reform (e.g., The tongue is a "fire," "a world of unrighteousness," "a restless evil," it is "full of deadly poison," "untameable," James 3:1–12). In addition to the Holy Spirit's intention to sanctify the heart which produces words with the theological content of the Word; He aims to sanctify the heart by the Word's method of delivery—the full breath of Scripture combatting the heart of its hearers, and training the hands of those hearers in their spoken ministry to others. We should speak/reason/debate/etc. as the Scripture speaks much more than we do.

5. Foundational Agreement that Communication as a Complex Activity Demands Wisdom

There is foundational agreement that communication is difficult, and words have the potential to effect much more than the transference of information—opportunities for tremendous positive impact but also for harm. Wisdom in communication, which rhetoric concerns itself with, is needed to navigate such opportunities. Rhetorical analysis is not new to this article. The concept or theory of the speech act, that language accomplishes more than extending factual assertions, has been studied for more than a century. It has exposed the complexity and power of language, and has positively assisted the work of biblical interpretation. While there is at least some foundational agreement about the profit of rhetorical studies for interpretation (meaning), the benefits have not extended to application to the private ministry of the Word in model, logic, instruction and counsel.[36]

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[35] Adams, *Preaching with Purpose*, 153.

[36] Again, the seed of this idea has been proposed in the past by Jay Adams but was not significantly developed or widely received. He wrote, "You have to understand what the Bible is talking about. But you also need to learn how to use those devices to impress truth upon counselees to help them think and remember. Learn to invent and use crisp, startling aphorisms

The Nouthetic/Biblical Counseling movement as promoted one aspect of this foundation from the beginning by applying biblical principles of communicating in context. Adams drew attention to two specific examples of counseling in the same pattern as the biblical text—Nathan to David, and Jesus to Peter—but did not develop the idea of analyzing the rhetoric of these texts specifically: theological principles, yes; method of delivery beyond the surface description, no.[37] Biblical principles in context continue to be helpfully emphasized in biblical counseling literature.[38] It isn't that using biblical principle would be a point of disagreement. There is indeed already agreement there. This article continues that agreement by including the component in the proposed rhetorical analysis: partly through the category component of "instruction in communication" and partly through the "counsel" component. The issue is that further agreement should meet the other rhetorical categories of analysis which have been neglected in practical theology studies (as a result of being absent from the standard exegetical method). For example, in a recent work devoted to Bibliology and its relation to counseling, developed by a collaboration of leading voices in the Biblical Counseling movement, only approximately 5% of the total volume, with no dedicated chapter or section, include a comment in the vein of the use of the Scripture's own rhetoric for the practice of counseling proposed in this article.[39] This is significant because it displays that when the modern Biblical Counseling movement today has had the chance to write on Scripture or hermeneutics, it has not taken the opportunity to highlight the need to fill the gap of the syntactical-theological method and how to do it.[40] It would have been reasonable for the movement that started

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the way Jesus did. 'Don't cast your pearls before swine,' 'Whereever your treasure is, there will your heart be also,' are aphorisms applied to a given situation, but the principle beneath each can be applied to a variety of situations." Adams, "Biblical Interpretation and Counseling, Part 2," 30.

[37] Adams saw methodology and technique as primarily drawn from biblical principles rather that principle + rhetoric. Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 100. Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), 98–99.

[38] Cf. Jeremy Pierre and Deepak Reju, *The Pastor and Counseling*: The Basics of Shepherding Members in Need (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 50–52.

[39] Approximately 24 pages out of the 447 total pages (in the chapters contributed by Robert Jones, Lilly Park, Jonathan Holmes, Deepak Reju, Heath Lambert and Randy Patton) include a comment on the benefit of the Scripture's rhetoric for the practice of counseling. Bob Kellemen, and Jeff Forrey, eds., *Scripture and Counseling: God's Word for Life in a Broken World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014).

[40] In Michael Emlet's tremendous book dealing with biblical interpretation and application to counseling ministry, he often speaks to wise approaches to ministry contexts with God's Word but does not include rhetorical analysis in his exegetical method. Michael Emlet, *Cross Talk: Where Life and Scripture Meet* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2009), 102. It is clear that he favors attention to the Scripture's rhetoric but doesn't take up the point about seeking to adopt its rhetoric for our own ministry approach. "It's important to realize that the Bible not only tells a true story; it also demands a response. The authors of Scripture write with intention—their words are meant to provoke a response from the reader. In other words, the Bible is a story that provokes action! It not only informs; it also transforms our lives. It's a message that invites us to turn from unbelief and to participate in the life of the one who, through his death and resurrection, forgives our sins and gives us new life through the Spirit," 51. In *Scripture and Counseling,* Jeremy Pierre illustrates the difference between counselors, with similar content,

under the banner of "nouthetic" (a word having more to do with method of delivery than meaning) to be more developed in the use of rhetoric some fifty years later.[41]

And there are voices in the rhetorical wilderness calling out for such attention already. Consider David Powlison's reflection:

> Sometimes in conversation, Jesus cited author, book, and text from earlier Scripture (see Mark 7:6—7, 10; 10:4, 6—9, 19; 11:17). Sometimes he wove the words of earlier Scripture into the conversation without noting the source (8:18; 9:48). But his words were always biblical in their essence. God's intentions and point of view shaped everything he said. Just like a good preacher, counselor, and friend, what Jesus said was always fresh. The same truth always came out differently, because people always differ… Jesus counseled non-believers frequently and found it easy to converse about what matters. He was able to love them, to climb into their lives, to go after what ruled their hearts, to give them himself in a fresh and personal way, so that they might come to believe and find mercy, hope, and direction… Honest and wise conversations (likewise sermons) abound with many things: questions, comments, stories, metaphors, current events, personal details, opinions, asides that double back later, wit, emotion, silences, particularizing emphases, heartfelt concerns—and the Word of life, shaping it all. This is how Jesus converses (and preaches).[42]

This article seeks to make ready fuller agreement to the way of the Lord in the expression of His Word.

A. Goals of the Revision

This article intends to effect several goals. Consider the following five:

1. To Strengthen the Route between Exegesis to Counseling and Soul Care
This article intends to do what Kaiser did for preaching and teaching in the world of counseling and soul care: to close a gap point between exegesis and practical ministry by inserting rhetorical analysis into the method at the syntactical level. Instead of proposing an entirely new exegetical method, this article only

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approaching a scenario with different emphasis so that the reader can examine effectiveness, but does not connect the rhetorical approach back to Scripture's rhetoric, 106-108. Heath Lambert's fortifying work, *The Biblical Counseling Movement After Adams* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), and specifically the chapter "Advances in How Biblical Counselors Think about the Bible?" lends to the credibility of this article's claim that a rhetorical analysis for private ministry of the Word has not developed in the Biblical Counseling movement; his chapter "An Area Still in Need of Advancement" confirms that this article's proposal is not even on the radar for imminent development.

[41] Jay Adams selected the word *nouthesis* and the method *nouthetic confrontation* because of the Greek word translated variously in the English versions of the Scripture as "admonish," "warn," "teach" and "counsel." Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 44. Adams contended from the beginning that "problems are solved nouthetically by verbal means." Ibid., 45.

[42] Powlison, *Speaking Truth in Love*, 106-7.

proposes a revision to Kaiser's already well-established method so that the connection of biblical analysis meets the private ministry of the Word side of Practical Theology in a more robust way—the culmination of a deep understanding and skill with the Bible's own rhetoric for ministry to people. (Indeed, this revision should also impact the public ministry of the Word as well.) Biblical Counseling has struggled to reach cruising altitude because the task of exegesis has not sufficiently been routed to practical theology.

2. *To Enlist a Workforce in the Development of Exegetical Practical Theology*

This article intends to draw together talent from both ends of the spectrum: to gain scholars advanced in exegetical skill and practical theology practitioners (in the private ministry of the Word particularly) who embrace the full breath of the Scripture's expression to a development of a rhetorical analysis for the benefit of practical theology—to return the hearts of biblical scholars to the task of practical theology, and the hearts of practical theologians to the work of syntactical exegesis. There are a few challenges to this goal. On the one hand, there are sectors of advanced exegetes who have categorically written off the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture (or bought into a redefinition of it) so there is a lack of motivation to return to the subject. This article seeks to win them back through opportunity for fresh inquiry—Test the Scripture again, but this time as supplying meaning *and* method. Why keep cutting yourself in life and living in spiritual drought when the storm clouds of God's sufficient Word are on the horizon? This proposal is worth your pursuit! On the other hand, there are sections of practical theologians who have written off academic labor, seeing it as a competitor, and not developing language skills for reading the Word of God without translation. This article seeks to illustrate the merits of such skills for discernment and learning the Word in the full expression of its method of delivery. This cannot be achieved without a commitment to more training.

3. *To Reprove Homilists in the Appreciation of Its Elder Brother in a Common Heritage*

As Jay Adams echoed so clearly 35 years ago the moorings of generations, the ministry of the Word is a two-pronged ministry: the private ministry of the Word and the public ministry of the Word. Again, the ministry of the Word is one that is done both in public proclamation and private counsel. A ministry that is only public and not private may be a ministry but not the ministry of the Word promoted in Scripture (and vice-versa).

> The ministry of the Word is to be carried on both publicly and privately, just as it was by the apostles (Acts 20:20). In that passage, Paul says not only that he refused to hold back anything that might be beneficial to the Ephesians, but that he impressed truth on them publicly, as Calvin says, "in the congregation," and, as Calvin continues, "privately, as every man's necessity did require"… Balance must be found in the ministry of the Word. Preaching must not be neglected for

counseling, and counseling must not be neglected for preaching. In truth, both are one and the same ministry, as Paul viewed it in Acts 20:20. He saw no competition between them as some purport to see today. The reformers concurred. They saw the ministry of the Word as a two-fold task, to neglect either side of which was detrimental to their sheep and a failure to discharge their own stewardship of the Word.[43]

Consider the brotherhood of these ministry partners, the Word of God and sons their business marquee. Before ever there was a preacher, there was a mentor meeting him with the Word of God—a tour de force together, the potential for competition apart. But not in this brotherhood. The elder brother has championed the cause of his little preacher brother, submitted himself to the words delivered among the crowd, and prayed diligently for him and his ministry. Yes! Yes! Speak to me the words of life! Cut me with that healing sword! Lead me in paths of righteousness for His namesake! But a concern gifted brother: have you forgotten our brotherhood in your zeal for preaching, and the days when you were young and needed me? Now that you are in your kingdom, remember me. I have met many friends down here in the crowd. And I with them and they with me admire you. These friends delight to hear *what* you have to say, but I have found that they occupy themselves more often with *why?* and *how?* A thousand thanksgivings for answering "what?" dear brother… It has been my joy to come alongside your words and expand your ministry to cheer these *why* and *how* folk. They remind me of you in your youth when what, why, and how swam together in your mind. You would be glad to know that many fellowships with despairing *why* and *how* following *what* you said at week's beginning frequently ended with enthusiasm to hear more *what*. But I admit that I miss the days when we met *what*, *why*, and *how* together at a common meal. Dear brother, do you still ask *why* and *how* when you sit before our father, preparing to speak. I wonder what our father would think of us now, acting so independently of each other. Yes, you are you and I am me. I aim not to bring you down. I myself am inherently in the background, never inviting a crowd, and wouldn't have it any other way. I've seen too many miracles in the shadows to wonder what it's like in the limelight. I know I need you, and I think that you still need me more than you know. As brothers, do you think we could bear a better resemblance to each other, and walk together toward a common goal? After all, we are sons of the same father trying to lead *whys* and *hows* and *whats* back to him.

4. *To Call for a Systematic Study of Scripture's Rhetoric for Practical Theology*
This article intends to lead to the development of a systematic study of Scripture's rhetoric for practical theology. At this point, no sophisticated systematic theological category of methodology has developed,

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[43] Jay Adams, "Balance in the Ministry of the Word," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* 6, no. 2 (1983): 1.

beginning with the proposed conservative categories: (A) systematic study of rhetorical model, (B) systematic study of promoted rhetorical logic, (C) systematic study of instruction in communication, and (D) systematic study of counsel in biblical occasional scenarios.

5. To Unleash the Doctrine of Scripture's Sufficiency

This article intends to move the modern Biblical Counseling movement to a new phase of inquiry into the Scripture, to find a more robust sufficiency of Scripture (one that is designed to supply content and method).[44] After David reminded the reader of the Scripture in its many forms (law, precepts, testimony, commandment, fear, rules, Ps. 19:7–11), he emphasized its rhetoric: "Moreover, by them is your servant *warned…*" (Ps. 19:11)—*warned*, not just informed. He describes the Word as sweeter than honey and more valuable than gold. The words *delight* us in their expression; we are undone and left wanting more. Paul reflects on this text in his own description of the Scripture's sufficiency (2 Tim. 3:15–17) in a letter charged with attention to use of actual words and rhetorical strategy dealing with people in ministry.[45] He writes, "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: *preach* the word; be ready in season and out of season; *reprove*, *rebuke*, and *exhort*, *with complete patience and teaching* (2 Tim. 4:1–2). Problems have arisen when the Biblical Counseling movement has asserted that it is capable of sufficiently addressing a small box of problems. An esteemed preacher, gifted himself in homiletics, sneered at the idea of the Scripture confined. His words would be an appropriate clarion call for this article's proposal:

> The Word of God can take care of itself, and will do so if we preach it, and cease defending it. See you that lion. They have caged him for his preservation; shut him up behind iron bars to secure him from his foes! See how a band of armed men have gathered together to protect the lion. What a clatter they make with their swords and spears! These mighty men are intent upon defending a lion. O fools, and slow of heart! Open that door! Let the lord of the forest come forth free. Who will dare to encounter him? What does he want with your guardian care? Let the pure gospel go forth in all its lion-like majesty, and it will soon clear its own way and ease itself of its adversaries.[46]

II. Advantages, Objections, and Clarifications

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[44] Perhaps not "recklessly innovative" but at least innovative, cf. Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 44.

[45] Cf. Clutterham, "What is Biblical Counseling?" 34 for the connection between Ps. 19 and 2 Tim. 3:15–17.

[46] Charles Spurgeon, "The Lover of God's Law Filled with Peace" (sermon, The Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, England, January 2, 1888).

Now that a description of a conservative set of rhetorical categories to begin with, and the value of a rhetorical analysis has been sufficiently described, it is necessary articulate some of the advantages of the proposal with further explanation, to make a case for its implications on a passage like 2 Timothy 2:15, and to respond to objections or points of anticipated confusion.

<u>Advantages of an Exegetical Practical Theology</u>

As has been argued, this article presents the advantages for including a rhetorical analysis within the exegetical method at the syntactical level so that the author's own expression is considered in the interpretation of the passage *and* through the theological analyses for continued refinement of practical theology output. A rhetorical analysis contributing to the exegetical method has the potential in its exegetical practical theology output to train the hearer to communicate in the methods of Scripture and the Spirit-empowered speakers in Scripture, to produce at least five specific advantages:

1. An Exegetical Practical Theology Further Defines What Biblical Counseling Is
As Biblical Counseling has thrived under a commitment to the Bible's sufficiency for content and method in the practice of counseling, it should use this proposal as an opportunity to further define itself. Further definition would have a positive impact externally and internally. *Externally*, instead of biblical counselors leaving behind the term "Biblical Counseling" because some have taken an opportunity to claim the term simply because the Bible has some connection to their version of counseling (while its primary loyalties are to secular psychology and philosophy), it is more advantageous to put these claims to the test, whether these versions measure up to an exegetical practical theology—biblical in their content and method.[47] Exegetical practical theology creates another system of checks as to biblical accuracy and fidelity, and would show that these alternative approaches are not exegetically founded and bare even less resemblance to the Scripture. Internally, further definition would protect against the emergence of a guild that rivals the Bible's authority itself. In the realm of increased specialization, there is the danger of relational commitments taking priority over convictional foundations. In a hypothetical case of a guild of elite *biblical counselors* who decide who may also claim the title of a biblical counselor, and in which individuals arise to majority influence—whether through political maneuvering or by some prioritizing relationships over convictions—wherein a particular counseling system lacking clear connection with core convictions is promoted to exclusive support, it could be foreseen that this guild becomes a competitor to the Bible itself—a question of "what does biblical counseling teach?" (i.e., the biblical counseling guild), rather than

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[47] The Christian Integrationist and Christian Psychology positions have sought to move into the space of Biblical Counseling by marketing their instruction in educational institutions as "Biblical Counseling" and moving the historic Biblical Counseling approach off to a corner, calling it simplistic and labeling it as Bible-only counseling.

"what does the Bible teach?" An exegetical practical theology could aid this guild and Biblical Counseling to maintain that it only rightly bears the name *Biblical* Counseling in so long as it is *biblical.*

2. An Exegetical Practical Theology Rebalances Theology and Rhetoric in the Practice of Biblical Counseling
While rich biblical systematic theology has yielded a profound impact on the work of soul care and pastoral counseling, certain problems have also arisen. A rebalancing of theology and rhetoric would assist the practice of biblical counseling to solve at least four problems:

First, the balance corrects the problem of systematic theology answers alone for principal heart problems. As elsewhere expressed, systematic theology alone answers tend not to target the heart except from the angle of authority, often do not appear to be compassionate (i.e., doesn't incarnate *grace* and truth), and may not seem relevant quick enough and long enough in the counselee's state of mind.

Second, the balance corrects a methodology of counseling which is a data dump—an extensive list of verses and biblical data—without a biblically wise presentation of it, and a prioritization of what needs to be heard and in what order; thus, good information but not edification as fits the need of the moment.

Third, the balance corrects against theological counseling alone, instead of counseling the Word. Theology may be more the product of our own biases than we realize and hope for. And creedal theology, by its nature of being more memorable, can tend to take the precedent over use of the Bible—especially in informal counsel. The rebalancing would equip biblical counselors to draw upon the model, logic, instruction, and counsel of the Scripture more readily and to ensure a biblical message, bolstered by theology not replaced by it, is delivered.

Fourth, the balance reminds—as others have already offered the correction—that the conversation is indeed theological (as is all of life), but it still is a conversation—a dynamic dialogue between embodied souls. It reminds us that at various times God spoken in various ways, including a voice from heaven, but in His ultimate expression He spoke by becoming flesh and dwelling among us (John 1:14). Theology could have been delivered from heaven alone, but God chose to converse among humanity in two-way expression.

3. An Exegetical Practical Theology Directs toward Advanced Skill
The challenges for practical theologians and Christians in general as they seek to portray Christ to a watching world are immense. It isn't only the answer to *what* that we give, but *how* we give it that is under scrutiny, and getting it wrong in one area can tear down any progress made in the other. Jesus was constantly faced with these same challenges. Remember the onslaught of the religious leaders: "…the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say" (Luke 11:53–54). His responses to them shut

their mouths in amazement, marveling at His wisdom, shamed by their exposed wicked hearts. How this skill is needed today! Biblical counselors are limited; they are not the source of all God's help for their counselees. In directing the counselees to Christ and the resources of His Word, person, and community, they need the advantage of advanced skill in how to answer/speak—how to offer powerful, hopeful, challenging, comforting, etc. *words* that draw out the heart and direct it to obedience to the Lord and relationship with Him. These challenges necessitate a skill in delivering God's Word. As intent on homiletics as preachers are, biblical counselors should be cognizant of rhetoric. Just as many young preachers have sunk battleship sermons in their delivery of them, many novice counselors have needlessly march counselees away in the paths of rich young rulers though they truly loved them. Why? The Word they knew did not transition into the message they gave in words tactically launched, gracefully sailed, and landed at soul-winning moments. The preacher Steven Lawson tells the story, "A young man once came to Martin Lloyd-Jones and said 'what's the difference between teaching and preaching?' And Lloyd Jones said with that dry humor, 'Young man if you have to ask me the difference between teaching and preaching it's obvious you have never heard preaching because if you'd ever heard preaching you would know the difference between teaching and preaching." He continued, "A lecture which is teaching oriented can be given any time, today, next week, next month, next semester, but with preaching there's a sense of urgency about the message. It must be delivered *now* and it must be received *now*. And it both builds up and it tears down, both comforts and afflicts, it challenges, it consoles, it confronts, it points the way with urgency."[48] The question for us is not whether our challenges bear similarity to Jesus' challenges but whether Jesus counselees would remark about modern biblical counselors, "You must have never seen a counselor!" In the Scriptural model, logic, instruction, and counsel, practical theologians need to press on toward advanced skill in their rhetoric.

4. An Exegetical Practical Theology is an Onramp for Teetering Christian Integrationists and Christian Psychologists

The field of Christian Counseling is populated by Christians with genuine desires to help others. Sadly, some with good goals have been directed toward theological positions at odds with biblical anthropology, hamartiology, and bibliology or simply ditch theology altogether in favor of rationalism and humanism. Instead of being trained to deliver the life-giving words of Christ and Scripture, they are equipped to offer hope in the form of diagnosis, support in the form of on-the-clock relationship and help in the form of practical tips. Their method is secularly founded and organized but peppered with Bible to add a Christian flavor. Some who have been living in these camps have grown weary of the biblical drought and famine.

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[48] Steven Lawson, "The Mandate, Meaning, Marks, Models, and Mechanics of Expository Preaching" (lecture, Brookes Bible College, St. Louis, MO, April 27–28, 2017).

They stay because they hear professionalism, technical direction, and kindness in the community. For those ready to leave in favor of the Biblical Counseling position within the field of Christian Counseling, an exegetical practical theology provides an onramp to an approach that is fundamentally biblically in its very rhetoric. (The steak and the pepper are biblical.) Further, it deals with the specific details of Scripture from syntax to practical theology—the entire exegetical methodology—to deliver optimal wisdom and kindness in the counseling room.

5. An Exegetical Practical Theology Achieves a Counsel Nearer to the Heart of God

In its attention to rhetoric, an exegetical practical theology, highlights how the Scripture directs us keenly into a wisdom of what to say and how to say it. The why of what and how is the wisdom of the heart of God. Scripture represents what God thinks is important (at the time and place) and how He desires the answer to be given (extending from His very character). As David Powlison reflects on the most prevalent command in Scripture—"Do not be afraid"—he remarks how necessary it is for those who are suffering to hear most boldly and in sustained fashion the words of the Lord—"I am with you."[49] In practical theology, we seek to represent the heart of God on the matter, which necessitates, what we say, how we say it and even the order in which we say what we say.[50] Before Jesus retold his disciples about His going, he encouraged them with the statement, "Let not your hearts be troubled," and plans to prepare a place for them. Practical theologians appreciate the value of a word fitly spoken (Prov. 25:11), especially as that word captures the heart of God for the hearer. This greater wisdom through the rhetoric of Scripture is so needed to skillfully navigate conversations with sinner-sufferers steeped in the emotionally charged whole-life problems so common today. Being able to use the Scripture's model, logic, instruction, and counsel expressed possibly in the same words, statements, lines of reasoning, tactics as God maximizes the potential that people we minister to might just hear from God.

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[49] David Powlison, *God's Grace in Your Suffering* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 51–52.

[50] Consider this point for even the arena of parenting. The Scripture's rhetoric helps us discern God's priorities for how to direct our children. In parenting, where children are navigating pushes and falls, lack of desire to share and care, etc., children need to be taught to work out small relationally effected incidents with a method that mirrors biblical priorities. Consider the following order: (1) Are you okay? (Your welfare is my greatest concern.) (2) How can I help? (I am here to serve.) (3) I'm sorry for what I did. (Your harm is my regret and sorrow.) (4) Will you forgive me? (Will you treat me kindly despite my offense, and send away the obstacle that prohibits our future relationship?) (5) I love you. (I am committed to you with loyal kindness.) (6) A hug. (I love you tangibly.) (7) How can we play together again better? (A plan to resume relationship in an improved way.) We see this order as significant to demonstrate the other-oriented nature of biblical love.

Objections and Clarifications to an Exegetical Practical Theology

While this article has aimed to set forward a clear thesis, it can be imagined that a number of points of confusion or objections to the thesis could arise. The following eight clarifications anticipate some of those questions:

1. Biblical Rhetoric Only?

This article is *not* advocating that the counselor's every word is restricted to quotations from Scripture. It is also *not* advocating that the Scripture only has benefit through the specific methodology in which it was given (e.g., Psalms only sung, or Jesus' confrontation of the Pharisees only used in tense or angry situations.) Rather, the article is advocating that the Scripture's rhetoric (along with its meaning) be our trainer in the private ministry of the Word. This means that we could find several useful approaches to ministry of the Word that effectively draw attention to its meaning, but that we should *at least* use the Bible's rhetoric in the ministry of the Word and to not neglect the study of it. With respect to 1 Corinthians 14:26 which references multiple types of communication from church members, John Frame calls our attention to see that the main issue was not the format used but whether it was used edificationally.[51] Still, we find that the rhetoric of our communication may be used as a vehicle of edification, and that the Scripture can train us in wise rhetoric. Related to this question is the foundational distinction between interpretation and application. This article would maintain that there is but one interpretation for any text but many applications. Of those applications, two prominent applications are (1) that we would receive the Word as it has been delivered to us, and (2) that we would learn to approach verbal ministry with the Word as our guide.

2. "The Meaning of Scripture is the Scripture"

Dr. John MacArthur is famous for this short but powerful line: "The Meaning of Scripture is the Scripture." Does this article disagree with that statement? Let's first examine what Dr. MacArthur is driving at. MacArthur is highlighting two points: (1) The Scripture is not what it means to you personally, so that there could be a thousand different meanings for a thousand different people. The Scripture means one thing—what the writer of Scripture carried along by the Spirit of God himself intended. His meaning *is* the Scripture. (2) He is also making a point that it is essential for a preacher to give the meaning of the Scripture to his people as what the Holy Spirit will use to grow the believer to maturity. This article has affirmed Kaiser's point concerning authorial intent that MacArthur echoes. It also agrees that the meaning of the Scripture is used by the Holy Spirit in His work to produce maturity.

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[51] Frame, *Doctrine of the Word of God,* 261.

There may be a difference of emphasis in this article; not a disagreement with MacArthur's famous line. MacArthur is emphasizing the importance of getting the meaning right. This article is emphasizing getting the meaning right *and* noting the manner in which the words were delivered. MacArthur rejects the Barthian idea that the Scripture attests to God's revelation or merely contains the Word of God (i.e., that it itself is not the Word of God, but is only testifies to it). Instead, he teaches that the very words of the human writers in the composition of the Scripture were the Words of God—the exact words (verbal-plenary inspiration).[52] That view is entirely consistent with the proposal of this article—not only consistent but totally dependent upon it. This article has argued that the Scripture, its meaning *and* method through its very words, are part of its inspired and sufficient design, a point that could be confused by the MacArthur's statement unintentionally—not a point of disagreement but rather a point of emphasis.

3. Doesn't the Fact that Jesus and the Prophets and Apostles Failed to Produce Repentance in Some Individuals Indicate that Their Method of Delivery was Unimportant?

It is true that the rich young ruler walked away from Jesus (Mark 10:17–27; Matt. 19:16–22). Those who didn't receive his call to eat His flesh and drink His blood ceased to follow after Him (John 6:1–66). This article is not presenting rhetorical wisdom and skill as a magic trick to get people to do what you want. Instead, the goal is to reveal and expose the heart of the counselee in the context of the life-giving Words of God. With this goal, they never failed. Their rhetoric was a key aspect of their success to reveal and to guide with the greatest possible expression of love.

4. Does this Proposal Attempt to Manufacture the Work of the Holy Spirit?

One might consider this proposal as an attempt to manufacture the change that the Holy Spirit alone can accomplish. This article would affirm that no one can fundamentally change his character apart from the work of the Holy Spirit (Jer. 13:23). This article does not presume to take the Holy Spirit's place, but it does recommend that practical theologians learn from Him and follow after His rhetoric in the Christian ministry, finite minds valuing and following after the expression of the infinite one. The Holy Spirit will still need to be the change agent even in the case of wise rhetoric; the difference is that the minister will more skillfully bring the counselee to that meeting. While some spiritually gifted individuals may be more adept in their application skill, the Word is delivered to all. After a series of rhetorical examples (soldier, athlete, and farmer), Paul directed Timothy "to think over what I say" and for the reason that in doing so

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[52] John MacArthur, and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 75 – 78.

"the Lord will give [him] understanding in everything" (2 Tim. 2:7)—an example of the Lord meeting Timothy in the midst of considering God's Words as they were rhetorically delivered.

5. The Bible is Often Descriptive and Not Prescriptive
An important clarification for this article is that not every word of Scripture models or instructs us to follow after it. The Scripture contains records of instances of men lying (e.g., 1 Sam. 31:4–6; 2 Sam. 1:5–10) but we should not take that observed rhetorical approach as a prescription for the way we speak and do ministry. Two clarifications: (1) Even the descriptive elements are often enclosed in a wider presentation where prescription rhetorical model, logic, instruction, and counsel are supplied. For example, the instance referenced above includes data for how David received and responded to the lie which was motivated by theological foundations, (2) the proposal that biblical rhetoric could be prescriptive does not eliminate the need for discernment to judge between whether the Scripture is presenting the words as in accordance with godliness or examples of worldliness. The interpreter is always required to read the Word carefully. One such area in need of discernment is an appreciation for a reverence for the Lord in acknowledging that He has the right to use certain rhetoric that we do not. We minister as servants to the king. Although we bear His resemblance, maintain a loyalty to Him, and at times represent His authority, we are still not Him. We minister as those who have been changed but are continually in need of change coming alongside others in need of change as the Lord's ambassadors and servants. This factor impacts the way we also think about the triune God and Jesus' hard words. God, in His rebuke, exercises a unique level of authority. And His anger is always righteous anger. At times, the counselor would express hard words in such a godly fashion. And at other times (probably more often), in view of our own tendency to pride and selfish anger, the counselor should point the counselee to God's vehement words on the matter alone. Our loyalty to the Lord who speaks with hard words is to respect the position of those hard words and the need to deliver them as God intended. Furthermore, the reader must utilize discernment in recognizing certain cultural factors and considering how those cultural factors relate to his own context of ministry. It is true that Jesus went against the culture around Him in His rhetoric (e.g., using comparisons of children and dogs to express a priority of his incarnational ministry in reaching the house of Israel, Mark 7:27–30) but in His way of doing so, He said exactly what needed to be said to expose the heart and direct in the way of the Lord.

6. Isn't a Comprehensive Systematic Theological Answer Superior to One that Prioritizes Rhetoric
This article has not challenged the importance of the Scripture's meaning; rather, it has attempted to emphasize the equal importance of the Scripture's rhetoric. We need only to be careful readers of the Scripture to observe that God, Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles did not answer questions with

encyclopedic entries of complete systematic theology answers. They answered questions in the way the heart needed to hear them. You might be thinking of Psalm 119:160: "The sum of your word is truth…" Two clarifications: (1) the word translated "sum" is the common Hebrew word *rosh* (which is otherwise translated head or first). It is the first word of the Bible (Gen. 1:1 *b^ereshit*, "In the beginning…"). It would be better to understand this verse as "The beginning or first of your word is faithfulness or truth." The idea is that God's Word is entirely true, even from its very beginning—from beginning to end. (2) Remember the rhetoric of Hebrew poetry, which this verse fits that genre. Hebrew poetry often utilizes a two word couplet in a parallelism structure. This verse would be an example of synthetic parallelism—a structure where the second line extends the statement of the first:

Line 1:	The *first* of	your word is truth	
Line 2:	Every one of	your righteous rules	endures forever.

From this analysis it is clear that this verse is not teaching that only a systematic answer yields an expression of truth. Instead, every piece of God's Word, rightly interpreted (which includes the analogy of Scripture principle, a systematic theology confirmation), is truth. The practical theological practitioner must consider *how* he delivers this truth in a way that systematic theology does not concern itself with.[53] Imagine two persons who set out to run a marathon. One runs this length on an Olympic style track; 105 laps, he has completed the journey but is right back where he started. A systematic theology may help to prepare the counselor for the answer he must give but he is still required to determine *how* to answer. (Now, this article is proposing that by including a rhetorical analysis at the syntactical level, that a systematic study of *how to answer* would become part of the exegetical process. In such a case, this marathon runner would start the race in a straight line pondering what to answer and how to answer and would make tremendous progress by God's grace in the life of the counselee.) The way in which the meaning is delivered is important. Imagine ordering a sandwich at a restaurant and when your order arrives it is the full contents of ingredients on your plate but not assembled. You would object! I ordered something to be readily eaten, not a project to put together! The presentation doesn't translate into the enjoyable eating experience that you were anticipating. You've decided to complain. But to your surprise, the manager doesn't see what the problem is. "We gave you everything that would constitute a sandwich, what's the problem?" The delivery method of course.

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[53] Is there actually a single discourse from God/Jesus/Spirit-empowered witness wherein a comprehensive systematic theology is supplied? The fact that there isn't should convince us that there were goals other than to inform in the heart of God/Jesus/Spirit-empowered witnesses. We should deal with the point that the reason that we have to work so hard to construct a systematic theology is because the Bible wasn't arranged itself as a systematic theology because a systematic theology may not be the best way to inform, correct, instruct desires.

7. Wouldn't Preoccupation with Rhetoric in Counseling Lead to Counsel Devoid of Genuine Love?

Some might suggest that words are not the essence of our counseling as the private ministry of the Word is dedicated to love not just with words (1 John 3:18). The apostle John did warn against empty words that did not display love. In the context of his warning, those words created an excuse to move away from real need. The proposal of this article concerns words that *engage*—words that move toward the need. Christians should *not only* give words, but when words are appropriate, they should follow the Scripture's model, logic, instruction, and counsel. Paul writes, "Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know *how you ought to* answer each person" (Col. 4:5–6). The Christian's rhetoric is part of an overall strategy to love, and great wisdom is required.

8. Will this Proposal Move Me Toward Foolish Complexity or Toward Simple Wisdom?

This proposal seems to highlight an academic perspective of Scripture not emphasized by others typically in practical theology circles; is it actually an idea that would move away from the fruit of studying Bible and theology? Three considerations: (1) The proposal of this article is a simple one—that we consider the method of delivery of Scripture along with its meaning. We prefer this in everyday life when we would rather speak to someone on the phone or in person. And we also appreciate the clarity of recognizing not only what someone said, but how that person said it to consider an appropriate response. This proposal seeks to pull attention to that same dynamic, but with Scripture, and how we minister from it. (2) The fact that this feature of Scripture has been neglected for ministry means that the Church has significant work to do. As with other periods of church history when portions of the Word were neglected, the answer is not to continue neglecting them, but to submit ourselves to the Word and get busy studying it. (3) The fruit of our labor would actually produce simplicity, having done away with more foolishness, and having not settled for simplistic knowledge, and having acquired godly rhetorical skill in approaching difficult maters of ministry. David Powlison writes of a similar dynamic in the work of growing in the Christian life:

> Human beings do well with simple. We do poorly with complicated. We do poorly with simplistic. True wisdom has a delightful simplicity. Foolishness either over-complicates or over-simplifies. Two of my favorite modern proverbs comment on the relationship between simplistic, complex, and simple. I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity. On the near side of complexity is simplistic; on the far side of complexity is simple. The truly simple accounts for all complexities. For example, consider Jesus' words, "You either serve God or money." That is simple. What do

you live for? Whether you inherited millions, or work hard to make a decent living, or live on the edge in poverty, Jesus' words search you out. Do your money-sins cluster around conspicuous consumption? Coveting? Anxiety? Theft? Presumptuous confidence? Jesus' simple truth accounts for you, no matter what your economic status, cultural background, or personal quirks. His simple words probe every complexity.[54]

Thus the solution is not that we neglect that pesky pain in our body. The Christian community is too far separated from Scripture (and maturity in a knowledge of the Scripture) to believe that the Scripture itself, read with detail, that we would not see its rhetorical details as practical for such a huge area of life (communication, relationship, and interpersonal ministry). We must face this weakness and grow up into greater likeness to Jesus.

III. Implications and Conclusion

The implications of the emergence of an exegetical practical theology are quite extensive. The following examines eight categories of development now needed. Each requires a response from Christ's Church, a call to press on to maturity, to buckle down and do the hard work of learning a neglected aspect of Scripture. Having traveled so long on a journey as the Church, it's difficult to have come so far and to realize that something so vital was left behind at the beginning. Let's take courage to recapture what was lost:

1. *Take a Fresh Approach to Scripture Reading*
The first implication is for every Christian directly since it implies that we pay closer attention to a detail in every passage—the method it is given—and to meditate on such details. This factor should teach us something about how we speak to one another. It holds out wisdom to us and a demonstration of what love sounds like in specific words *so that* we will imitate its example and by doing flourish in relationships and attract others to our savior. If we could speak wisdom, warning, hope, and peace seamlessly to a foolish, lost, desperate, and chaotic world, they would recognize that we have been with Jesus in His Word. We would be in good company since our puritan forefathers approach Scripture in this way and bore tremendous fruit.

2. *Counsel the Word, Not Simply a Systematic Theology*
The engine of systematic theology has served us well and we will not now leave it behind; instead, the content we gained is joined by a powerful sidekick accompanying every majestic claim in the Scripture. Be

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[54] David Powlison, "How does sanctification work? Part 2," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 27, no. 2 (Winter 2013): 45–46.

watchful that a systematic theological answer is part of your counseling repertoire but not *the* only part of it. We would readily acknowledge that answers our counselees are seeking are predominately not information downloads, just as we find in the Scripture where no point of systematic theology has one address. The goal is to counsel the Word with all of its insight and breadth, not to counsel our theology, and the Word offers wisdom as to how to speak, what specifically to say, and what approach would be most wise—through its rhetoric, model, reasoning, and instruction. The Thessalonians grieving the loss of loved ones received a personal eschatology lesson, not a cosmic one. The lesson spoke hope, confidence in the Lord, and how to keep walking in obedience through grief to a concern over fear of judgment and loss at the coming of Christ.

3. *Gain Exegetical Training for Practical Theology*

A clear implication of this article is that those who are engaged in practical theology (really everyone) should grow in their command of exegesis. Some may need to acquire more interpretive skill in understanding rhetoric, the original languages of the Scripture, diagramming a passage, and hermeneutics. Others will need to ensure that they gain greater access to those who have such skill and to their developing conclusions. The minority who already have this skill should view their training as a weighty stewardship and publish conclusions and insight as widely as possible as quickly as possible.[55] These leaders should bring along other leaders gifted in practical theology but behind in exegetical skill. When counselors gather together for instruction, a priority should be placed on counselors being trained by other counselors who possess an exegetical practical theology (meaning and method). Young infantry know their best hope for training is found with the men who have made it through the same battles and carry the same weapons. They salute the general but bow to the experienced soldier. There are limitations on the degree to which systematic theologians, who are not actively engaged in the private ministry of the Word, can train counselors in counseling ministry. Examinations and certification requirements for those leading biblical counseling or soul care ministries should not neglect an evaluation of whether someone can derive practical theology exegetically (not just systematically). And finally, just as biblical counselors need to learn exegesis, exegetes need to be attracted to the study of practical theology, and perhaps the transformation of two persons working from opposite ends of the spectrum could best be accomplished through mutual sharpening. If you are on one end of the spectrum, lock arms with a willing companion on the other and let iron sharpen arm. In the institutional setting, Practical Theologians need to learn

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[55] A special thank you to Drs. William Varner and Russell Fuller who guided me to study Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic syntax for exegesis and Drs. Robert Somerville, Stuart Scott, John Street, Ernie Baker, Jim Newheiser, Heath Lambert, David Smith and Wayne Mack who introduced me to practical theology in Biblical Counseling studies from God's Word and wisdom for applying it and ministering from it in counseling. You have faithfully entrusted to me what was entrusted to you; may I be faithful to do the same!

syntax and Exegetes need to learn practical theology—a need that may be satisfied in closer collaboration between departments, or teams of faculty. (Seminary presidents or presidents of Christian colleges/universities might consider merging the location of faculty offices to help this development.) The upstream challenge presented in this article is questioning why scholars in the area of "Biblical Soul Care" or "Biblical Counseling" are spending nearly all of their biblical research attention on what the Scripture means instead of also considering how it say what it means since their ministry will ultimately require words. The answer could be that (1) understanding the meaning of a passage is in itself a significant challenge, and limitations of resources have required these scholar-practitioners to isolate what they believe is most important, the meaning of Scripture, (2) systematic theology tends to be prominent in these circles as the surest method to represent the teaching of Scripture, (3) these scholar-practitioners tend to have weaker exegetical training and facility in the original languages, and (4) because they have not been challenged with the benefits of a rhetorical analysis for exegesis. The downstream conversations sparked by this article will consider the fruit of an application of an exegetical practical theology, how the rhetorical data within the Scripture should direct the counselor's tone, pace, pauses, choice of words, the order of what our answers address first, a wisdom that moves past presenting questions to pressing ones, strategies for revealing the heart of a deceiver, godly methods and words of persuasion, etc.

4. Join a Research and Writing Project

This article envisions at least the birth of three research and writing projects: (1) a systematic study of biblical rhetoric for ministry application. As the study examines who like questions are answered rhetorically similarly or similar rhetoric addresses different questions, new categories and connections for understanding a biblical rhetorical method will emerge. (e.g., How is it that you answer not a fool according to his folly lest you be like him yourself while answering a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.) We might redraw the lines of our systematic theology for practical theology, or what may develop is a truly practical theology with its own categories of communication to the heart—a systematic study of the range of godly responses, specifics of instruction in what to speak, and precision of development and wisdom/strategy for how to engage would emerge. We ought to consider the rhetoric of the Scripture as connecting with the heart of God—it is the way God spoke in a given circumstance. A whole systematic theology of methodology may develop if the consideration of Scripture's method wasn't left behind at the exegetical level. (2) Second, the implications of this article open the door to an even more robust defense of Scripture's sufficiency, a rhetorical sufficiency. The biblical counseling movement's explanation and defense of sufficiency lacks attention to Scripture's rhetoric as part of its sufficiency design. We would be well served to take up the full advantages of the Scripture and even to use the rhetorical wisdom of the Scripture in our defense of its sufficiency. This would be advantageous since

most of the critique from secular counselors or Christian counselors is that, while assenting to the same general view of Scripture, they find it to lack a method for their work and so attend to it sparsely. The inspiration claim includes its profitability for different types of uses. As John Frame contends, it was not sufficient for God to just give us thoughts or ideas; he designed to give us actual words himself which communicate thoughts, ideas, etc."[56] Its advantage is not only that it gives us sufficient *information* to teach on the one hand, and reprove/correct/encourage/warn on the other, but that it also models, teaches, and trains us in the rhetoric needed to approach others in that manner. And (3) third, as a revised exegetical method has been proposed in this article, commentaries that adopt the method are needed to lead the way to illustrate the profoundly positive impact it can make for both biblical counselors and preacher-teachers. These commentaries would highlight the route between syntactical inquiry and practical theology in a way that includes rhetorical analysis and emphasizes an exegetical practical theological output.

5.   *Reevaluate the Critique of Jay Adams's Work*

The proposal of this article works from the arena of the exegetical method used to prepare a generation of textual expository preaching sermons. It is amazing to notice the seed of this proposal in his first formulations, and to also see that seed be neglected for decades, overlooked and underdeveloped so that it is sparsely mentioned. An implication of this proposal is that students of biblical soul care would reconsider his works (or consider them for the first time in the case that they have not read his work), and to balance such critiques of his own direct rhetoric with an appreciation of his aim. Remember that he wrote the following, which reveals his standpoint for this approach as a pastor:

> Nouthetic counseling principles affect a man's entire ministry. The pastor who is nouthetically oriented will tend to become lovingly frank with his people. Counseling principles carry over into every area of the pastoral ministry. A pastor who takes nouthetic interest in his people seeks their benefit for God's glory. Therefore, he will not mince words or spar around with people. Rather, he will be specific about personal problems and straightforwardly attempt to correct them. His people will discover that he is interested in the real issues, not secondary ones. They will count him to be a man of courage. Because he will not settle for the status quo, some people will be offended, but the majority will be helped greatly and nearly all (whether they agree with him or not) will respect him. A man with the loving involvement of which Paul spoke will have a unique ministry in his community. The conservative ministry desperately needs a nouthetic orientation."[57]

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[56] Frame, *Doctrine of the Word of God*, 143.

[57] Adams, *Competent*, 62-63.

Perhaps this approach is slightly different for counselors who are not the pastors of the counselee (and so do not have the same authority). Adams believed that all Christians should be involved in nouthetic ministry but he did not see nouthetic ministry as something functioning without the direct oversight also of a pastor (perhaps who would give this final hard word). This consideration might assist our grasp too of the tense moments in Jesus' ministry when he confronted religiously wrong leaders (Matt. 23). It is important that we recognize and deal with the fact that Jesus Christ was at times extremely angry and stern and used hard words with people. Now, we biblical counselors have been matured in many ways throughout these decades but we have not dealt with this one point of hardness of words in the counseling ministry and when they are appropriate. It may be important for us to reconsider Adams's approach and to temper our critique.

6. Influence Preaching and Preachers

Another implication of the proposal of this article is that it will change the preaching approach of many. There are many types of preaching approaches but the one that may be most celebrated today is "Expository Preaching," an approach that aims to have sermons directed by the Bible. Within the banner of expository preaching, there are still quite different approaches (1) Verse by verse teaching, an approach that seeks to comment on each verse, comparative to a commentary, and can sound more like teaching with perhaps a hortatory culmination or application. At times these sermons can emphasize certain verses or devote most of their attention to certain verses without a clear reason in the text. (2) A discussion of a systematic theology topic featured prominently in a passage. This approach identifies certain theological topics, or pertinent theological questions prominent in the text and will preach each passage to identify and answer those questions or teach those topics. The approach may quickly take you outside of the immediate passage to connect to the rest of Scripture, and thus at times this approach can seem distant from the immediate text right in front of the reader. (3) Finally, a preacher may seek to follow closely the biblical author's own outline, an approach which pays careful attention to the inspired author's own structuring of the passage to reveal the main claims/statements, to distinguish those claims/statements from supporting details, and to primarily teach those claims/statements in the sermon. This final approach within expository preaching types may be the best conduit to highlight meaning and method, and to emphasize the need to do, not only to hear. As this article has shown, the what and the how matter to God and for that reason preachers ought to devote their sermon to *exposing* the what and how. If most Christians heard the *what* and *how* of God's communication with mankind more frequently from the pulpit, they might be better suited to look for it in their personal reading and meditation on the Scripture and thus minister more effectively to one another and as witness to the world. Further, this approach may be the best representation of the comprehensive ministry of the word. As pastoral/biblical counselors

stand between two worlds as well in personal conversations, a preaching approach that lends itself to an exegetical practical theology would strengthen the private ministry of the Word and benefit the church as a whole.

7. *Shore-up Your Definition of* Biblical *Counseling*

Biblical Counseling is at a crossroads of crisis—everyone wants to claim the term but many do not want to own its core historic commitments. Its lines have been blurred enough so that it has simply become the banner term in some people's mind for all things practical and applicational. describing a vast array of subjects including Bible application, practical theology, pastoral care, instruction in Christian living, a Christian alternative to secular or quasi-secular psychology or psychotherapy, tips on marriage, tips on parenting, tips on relationships or paths for navigating conflict, evangelism, discipleship…the list seems to never end. As the discipline of Biblical Counseling matures, ministry and thought leaders must return to grapple with basic questions—what is Biblical Counseling or Biblical Soul Care?

The correction in this article clarifies some definitions or emphases—suggesting that the emphasis of biblical counseling is the *practice* of the private ministry of the Word in counseling and discipleship, which is one of two outlets of the ministry of the Word. Practical theology is the *sum of biblical wisdom textually derived applied to the ministry of the Word*—public (preaching and teaching) and private (counseling and discipleship). Biblical Soul Care is broader, combining the practice and wisdom of practical theology in the private ministry of the Word. And "the ministry of the Word" is the broadest terminology for a textually guided proclamation ministry of the Word of God in private (soul care through counseling and discipleship) and in public (homiletics, teaching and preaching) discourses.

Under a broad banner, some personalities and institutions not committed to biblical counseling's core commitments and the sufficiency of Scripture have drifted in to enjoy the credibility that those committed to the Bible and its sufficiency have labored so long to achieve. But like a life insurance salesperson who shows up to a family gathering, these personalities and institutions aren't fooling anyone, except for those who are actively seeking out the pure milk of the Word without the discernment yet to know that they are not getting it. And it's simply awkward—those committed to the core commitments of biblical counseling and the historic doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture view new converts—those who have seen afresh that there is great hope for change and encouragement to sinner-sufferers in the Scripture—as new kinsmen and have a familial affection for them. Peddlers at the party create a tension and distraction. Strengthening the connection between the practical use of rhetorical analysis of biblical texts would help to distinguish between that which is sourced in the biblical text itself on the one hand (a

more clear claim to being *biblical counseling*) and that which is only theologically/philosophically derived on the other hand, which may be more influenced by someone's presuppositions.[58]

The Biblical Counseling movement in its collegiality has produced helpful documents clarifying its commitments that help to distinguish itself. We still must equip the Church to see the underlying biblical foundation at the root of these commitments to create conviction. The revised exegetical method proposed in this article would help us practically and foundationally to lead toward those convictions and for the Church to adopt those convictions with gravity and sincerity--and in so doing, create an atmosphere of discernment of contrast for the Church.

8.   Demonstrate a More Excellent Skill in Wise and Loving Leadership

Jesus, who loved the rich young ruler, got straight to the matter of his heart, and whether he was more dedicated to his possessions or to following him. Paul spoke to the need to approach conversations with the ability to cut a straight path to the gospel (the word of truth). As biblical counselors become more exegetically adept to solve questions of a practical nature (e.g., the common obstacles leading to a misunderstanding on the doctrine of forgiveness), they will demonstrate a more excellent skill to lead others wisely and lovingly to a sure answer. They will engage in less fruitless quarrels and in more effective soul-winning Christ-exalting powerful conversations with this level of skillset. Instead of quibbles, we will direct hearts! Questions and concerns will be satisfied before they can become debates or become entrenched around positions and personalities, and people will marvel at something greater than Solomon—the wisdom of Christ in His people.

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[58] A societal space has opened for persons to pursue help in relationship with those who possess a level of wisdom about the problems people face. Persons seeking help often find relationship with these caring thinkers to be helpful. All Christians possess a wisdom in the gospel, and a mission to help others by making disciples. But not all are Christians are engaged in the context of full-time counseling, wise persons meeting with persons needing help, as their dominate occupation. In the arena of fill-time counseling occupation there are many approaches and formulas (how much gospel, how much personal wisdom, how much clinical technique, etc.). The counselor might also invite or depend upon the client having an active voice in this formula. And success may be measured through whether in the end the clients felt that they were helped by the relationship. This social experiment is widely accepted in American culture. Some Christians may choose to earn a living in this societal space. They might be very successful in offering this type of helpful relationship. They may even testify to certain portions of the Scripture as the wisdom element of this helpful relationship. Consider two key distinctives: (1) this arrangement may be a societal norm but it isn't what the Scripture describes as a ministry of the Word. (2) Jesus, in His incarnational ministry, moved to disrupt individuals instead structures of societal norm: "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead" (Matt. 8:22); "Leave her alone…for the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me" (John 12:7–8). Biblical counseling has traditionally linked itself to the private ministry of the Word, and not in the service of societal norms. Let there be a distinction. Jesus will evaluate the world and its ways—their work in the field—while biblical counselors are busy working on God's building. Jesus the righteous judge will ascertain the value of each person's work; sufficient for our concern is that we are building well.

IV. Conclusion

This article has aimed to put the Bible before our eyes again and to point out that the full breath of God in the inspiration of Scripture intended something more than embedded meaning; He gave us words—words that He wanted us to hear just as He moved along human authors to write. The mind of God is on display in the method of delivery not just in the sum of meaning. His intention is that we be taught, corrected, reproved, and trained in righteousness through his rhetorical richness of model, logic, instruction, and counsel for how He speaks, what He says, and why He does so in that way. By returning to the Word in this way, the Church would build itself up by growing up in our knowledge the truth and the love of God and our ability to speak it as the Lord and the writers of Scripture intended, and our witness to the world would bear resemblance to what Jesus began to do and to teach in his incarnational ministry and what he continued to do and teach through his witnesses so that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord would fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.

soli Deo gloria

WHY COMMON GRACE IS NOT ENOUGH FOR CHRISTIANS WHO COUNSEL

Ed Wilde[1]

Part One

Christians who undertake to counsel must make a decision about authority. When we counsel, we must make decisions about what a human being is (anthropology), what is the purpose of a human being (teleology), and how do we help people (methodology)? These are not the only issues, but they are necessary to begin our work.

These questions will necessarily raise issues about authority: How do we answer our questions about anthropology and teleology and methodology? For Christians, the answers to these questions all must come from one of two sources: Scripture and/or common grace (i.e., "every favour of whatever kind or degree, falling short of salvation, which this undeserving and sin-cursed world enjoys at the hand of God."[2]).

Biblical counselors assert that Scripture is sufficient for counseling;[3] which implies that counseling can be done without some additional bestowal of the benefits of common grace.[4] Common grace is seen as

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[2] John Murray, "Common Grace," *Westminster Theological Journal* 5, no. 1 (1942): 4.

[3] "The doctrine of sufficiency of Scripture is crucial to our movement, and is also what has made us so controversial to other who contend for different approaches to counseling. A doctrine so central and so debated has required constant defense by leaders or our movement." Heath Lambert et al., *Sufficiency: Historical Essays On the Sufficiency of Scripture* (not stated:, 2016), 8.

[4] Heath Lambert, "Introduction," in *Counseling Hard Cases*, ed. Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 14 ("The carefully developed view of the biblical counseling movement is not that the Scriptures provide Christians with all of the information we *desire* but rather with the understand we *need* to do *counseling ministry*."); John Street, "Why Biblical Counseling and Not Psychology," in *Counseling:How to Counsel Biblically*, ed. John MacArthur (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 40 ("Biblical counselors believe the counselor needs new glasses. Christian psychologists believe the counselor needs more marbles."). Now, one could contest here that biblical counselors do rely upon the ability to comprehend language and the continued functioning of their bodies and upon sunlight causing plants to grow and upon oxygen not being poisonous to human beings, et cetera; and that all such things are "common grace." For such a person, I will provide a narrower definition: "common grace" as a source of "scientific" understanding of the physical environment, including the functioning of human beings which is studied under the label "psychology."

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a source of God's goodness in the world (which it is), and that such goodness includes "the assured results of modern science," such as psychology.[5] Therefore, it is alleged, Christians who reject psychological findings are rejecting God's goodness.

Jay Adams rightly attacks the overly broad claims for common grace by those who claim, "All truth is God's truth.[6]" "Of course all truth is God's truth," Adams admits; but, not all that claims to be the truth of common grace is common grace: it certainly cannot include Freud, Rogers or Skinner: "You can be sure that it is not the result of common grace that two rival ways of counseling exist side by side! God cannot be charged with such contradiction. His common grace is not responsible for false teachings by Freud (man is not responsible for his sin)."[7] Yet, in another place, Adams admits that a Christian standing upon a solid scriptural foundation can "*can pick and choose and adapt from that perspective whatever nuggets that an unbeliever (in the common grace of God) has unearthed.*"[8]

Seen in that light, Adams does not really seem that different from the "Christian Psychology" perspective? Christian psychology seeks to take seriously the noetic effects of sin upon the observer,

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[5] There is a rat's nest of problems here: First, the word "psychology" refers to any number of disciplines from neurology to Jung's Gnosticism. Second, due to the breadth of subdisciplines within psychology, the word "science" is not always applicable, "although some psychologists are certainly scientists, many are not." B R. Hergenhahn and Tracy B. Henley, *An Introduction to the History of Psychology*, seventh ed. (Belmont, CA, USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014), 13. Third, "assured results" is very problematic in the sciences generally, and in psychology in particular: "So the replication failure rate for psychology at large may be 80% or more overall." John Ioannidis, "Psychology Tests are Failing the Replication Test— For Good Reason," *Guardian*, Aug. 28, 2015, accessed January 14, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/28/psychology-experiments-failing-replication-test-findings-science. Fourth, there are substantial difficulties moving from the "scientific" to the subjective states of human consciousness. See, e.g., Octavio S. Choi, "What Neuroscience Can and Cannot Answer," *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law Online* 45, no. 3 (September 2017): 278-85, accessed December 27, 2017, http://jaapl.org/content/45/3/278 Fifth, psychology as an academic discipline is atheistic or at least deistic. How good can a science of human beings be if it begins with a denial of a fundamental variable? Who would trust a science of gravity that ignored physical objects? (And yes, I realize that "Christian Psychology" and many others seek to avoid this error.)

In this article, I will use the word "psychology" to refer to the subjective conscious state of a human being: one's cognition, affections, conduct, will, and identity Thus, exercising one's memory would be an aspect of human psychology. "The definition of psychology may be best given in the words of Professor Ladd, as the description and explanation of the states of consciousness and such." William James, *Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1904), 1.

Finally, I note that the word "psychology" is sometimes used to refer to everything which is not Biblical Counseling. However, in light of all the potential confusion, I think it important to use this word in this context: the subject of counseling is what is going on in a human being.

[6] "The attempt to integrate psychology and theology springs from a belief in "the unity of truth" (Holmes, 1985)." R. L. Timpe, "Christian Psychology," ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill, *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 194.

[7] Jay Edward Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resource Library, 1986), 8–9.

[8] Jay Edward Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1973), 92–93.

together with a high view of Scripture, and actively seeks to make use of those "nuggets" of psychology to create a distinctively Christian psychological enterprise.[9] And as such it is distinctive from the "integrationist position."

If Biblical Counselors can make use of "nuggets" and Christian Psychologists have a high view of Scripture, how then do we differ? In fact, many other non-"Biblical Counselor" Christian counselors would espouse exactly the same goals. We all want to be "biblical." No one wants to incorporate something false or inimical to Christ into our counseling.[10]

We all desire to be careful to seek to take into account the noetic effects of sin upon observations. Biblical counseling for its part does not deny neuroplasticity, the effects of medication (although there will be debate upon when it is appropriate), or any number of other "nuggets" of "common grace."

If we have so much in common—then how do Biblical Counselors differ on common grace (or even the sufficiency of Scripture)?

The Crux of the Matter

The foundational issue for human psychology lies in the relationship between God and Man. While the sufficiency of scripture is a hallmark of Biblical Counseling, the more fundamental characteristic the insufficiency of man.[11]

An Illustration

The San Andreas Fault bisects California. Two great tectonic plates move in opposite directions. The plates do not smoothly pass one-another; rather the rock faces grind and jar against one-another. The energy from that conflict breaks loose in earthquakes. The grinding and the breaking have created a maze of spidery faults which run throughout California. These secondary faults lead to substantial earthquakes. Indeed, the only earthquakes I have experienced in my life have been result of these secondary faults.

To combat the threat of earthquakes, Californians are taught to prepare and respond. We have building codes and social strategies all designed to lessen the effects of earthquakes -- and for the most part, they have kept people safe and alive.

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[9] Rick Scholette, "The Christian Psychology Distinctive: Revisited," Society for Christian Psychology (blog), January 26, 2015, http://www.christianpsych.org/wp_scp/the-christian-psychology-distinctive-revisited/ (accessed January 9, 2018); Eric L. Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2007), see particularly pages 27-130 for a discussion of the use of the Bible.

[10] Even those who would use no Scripture in counseling certainly do not hope for the damnation of their counselee!

[11] For the phrase of "the insufficiency of man," I must cite to private conservation with Dr. John Street.

Now all the real faults and real earthquakes could be put to rest if only we could control the San Andreas Fault.

Take the Fall for the Fault. There is a real breach which both generated the original trouble and which constantly informs and perpetuates the trouble. The psychological and emotional troubles which human beings experience today are the direct result of the Fall and the continual breach between God and Man.[12]

Biblical Counseling holds that all benefits which may accrue from common grace can neither provide a proper understanding of the true cause of human psychological troubles, nor can common grace provide a proper remedy. Common grace was not given to deal with the transformation of the human heart which came about as the result of Adam's Fall. We hold to the sufficiency of Scripture, because only the Spirit's use of the Word of God is sufficient to tame the San Andreas Fault between God and Man.

Toward an Understanding of Common Grace

As will be explained below, common grace is a matter of God's goodness in the world after the Fall and the subsequent judgment as a result of that Fall. An understanding of common grace is necessarily bound up with our understanding of the Fall. If we will rightly understand the place of common grace as Biblical Counselors, we gain a clear view of two interrelated but distinct issues: (1) How does the Fall inform human psychology; and (2) how does common grace ameliorate the effects of the Fall (which will be examined in the second part of this essay).

Part One: Theology Determines Psychology

This section of the argument will primarily concern the manner in which the Fall affected human psychology (cognition, affection, conduct, volition and identity). The first question is whether the Fall had any effect upon human psychology. This is not inappropriate, in that secular psychologies necessarily trade upon the idea that human psychology is some isolated from God in some sense.[13]

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[12] "Scripture identifies sin as the chief (not the only) problem of man for counseling. other contributing factors include both organic problems and sins committed by others [both of which came about due to the judgment on sin and the effects of sin]. ... All counseling matters result from the wickedness of a sin-cursed and demon-infested world (James 3:14-16)." John Street, "Why Biblical Counseling and Not Psychology," in *Counseling:How to Counsel Biblically*, ed. John MacArthur (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 45-46.

[13] It is precisely here that secular psychology goes wrong in its attempt to view man, apart from God, as better than he is. Machen attacks what he calls the "empty-room" view of the presence of God in the redeemed man. This is the concept that before a man becomes a Christian he is basically all right except for the neglected empty room of his spirit. When this neglected, "spiritual" part of man is properly developed, man will become complete. Instead, Machen argues that the "human soul" and the "human spirit" are one and the same. "The real state of human nature after the fall is not that one part has been cut

As will be addressed below, the Scripture states that human psychology is under judgment; therefore, relief from that judgment is a necessary—indeed sufficient—element of any true good.

One Possibility: Human Psychology is Independent of Spiritual Concerns

The manner in which the Fall affected human psychology goes back at least to the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. Pelagius held that human psychology operated and existed with relative independence from one's relationship to God. Augustine argued that human psychology was altered by the Fall.

Augustine notes that Pelagius breaks human faculties three faculties, capacity, volition and action: God conveyed upon us capacity; of our volition and action Pelagius "asserts to be our own; and he assigns them to us so strictly as to contend that they proceed simply from ourselves." [14] God has "graced" us with the capacity to be what God calls upon us to be; while our will and conduct are within our scope. To put it differently: Adam's Fall did not fundamentally corrupt human psychology. [15] While one's position with God will affect the Last Judgment, it is not of importance in day-to-day psychological working (except for the subjective effects of believing in God in producing hope or fear).

Someone may object that Pelagius was concerned with our ability to obey God's law—not our psychological condition. This is an untenable contention. True obedience to the law of God requires

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off or can only attain a stunted growth," he writes, "but that all of it is corrupt." When a man is saved, he does not give God access to any empty room, but the whole man is transformed by the Spirit of God. Ed Hindson, "Biblical View of Man: The Basis for Nouthetic Confrontation," ed. Howard A. Eyrich and Jay E. Adams, *The Journal of Pastoral Practice* 3, no. 1 (1979): 35, fns. omitted; Jay Edward Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resource Library, 1986), 110.

[14] Augustine of Hippo, "A Treatise on the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin," in *Saint Augustin: Anti-Pelagian Writings*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Peter Holmes, vol. 5, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1887), 218–219.

[15] The parallel proposition is that one's salvation does not effect any real change—except on Judgment Day. Dallas Willard uses a brilliant image of "Bar-Code Faith." The scanner at the supermarket will read the bar code and register the item according to the bar code affixed. "If the ice cream sticker is on the dog food, the dog food is ice cream, so far as the scanner knows or cares." Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 36. Many Christians treat justification in the same way. There is no essential change in how one lives day-to-day. "[T]he payoff for having faith and being 'scanned' comes at death and after. Life now being lived has no necessary connection with being a Christian as long as the 'bar code' does its job." *Id.*, at p. 37. This is precisely the position of many Christian counselors -- whether they realize it or not.

one's conduct, cognition, affect and will.[16] Accordingly, the ability to obey the law entails a properly functioning psychology.[17]

In his letter to his "Letter to Demetrias," Pelagius writes:

> When I have to discuss the principles of right conduct and the leading of a holy life, I usually begin by showing the strength and characteristics of human nature.
>
> By explaining what it can accomplish, I encourage the soul of my hearer to the different virtues.[18]

He explains that strength as an absolute libertarian freedom of will, "You should not think that humanity was not created truly good because it is capable of evil and the impetuosity of nature is not by necessity to unchangeable good. ... The glory of the reasonable soul is located precisely in its having to care a parting of the ways, in its freedom to follow either path."[19]

If the power to do good lies within the human will, why then do any follow a corrupt path? To Pelagius then, it is not any inherent original sin which has perverted the human psyche: rather, it is the result of sociological and psychological patterns gained from the environment. "Doing good has become difficult for us only because of the long custom of sinning, which begins to infect us even in our childhood."[20]

Conversely, the manner of becoming "good" is a process of cognitive-behavioral psychology; granted Pelagius was rudimentary in his development, but he was on the "right path" (some might say): "If you therefore you want your way of life to correspond to the magnificence of your resolution. ... Apply

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[16] Matt. 5:22 & 5:28, 21:28-32, 22:36-40, 23:28; John 3:16, 14:21; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:8-17; Col. 2:8; et cetera. "True religion, in great part, consists in holy affections." Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, ed. John E. Smith and Harry S. Stout, Revised edition., vol. 2, The Works of Jonathan Edwards (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 95; et cetera.

[17] Again, I am using the word "psychology" deliberately to push back against the idea that there is some "spiritual" aspect of a human being independent of one's psychological state. Pelagius is quite right to put the full power to obey the law of God within the human being's psychological being, his capacity, volition and action. No honest atheist would hold that a Christian's belief, affection, conduct and volition toward God are somehow divorced from the Christian's psychology. The atheist may think the Christian diseased, defective, neurotic or whatnot, but would not divorce the affections, will, identity, et cetera from the Christian's belief in God. It is remarkable that a Christian would admit the body affects psychology but the Holy Spirit does not.

[18] J Patout Burns, ed., *Theological Anthropology*, ed. and trans. J Patout Burns, Sources of Early Christian Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 40.

[19] Ibid., 42.

[20] Ibid., 50; Benjamin Warfield, "Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy," in *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 295 ("It was only an ever-increasing facility in imitating vice which arose from so long a schooling in evil; and all that was needed to rescue men from it was a new explanation of what was right (in the law), or, at most, the encouragement of forgiveness for what was already done, and a holy example (in Christ) for imitation.").

yourself now so that the glowing faith of your recent conversation is always warmed by a new earnestness, so that pious practices may easily take root during your early years."[21] (In short be mindful of what you think and what you do, so that through repetition you may become what you resolve to be).

The transformation of the human life is contingent upon God granting a new nature; rather, transformation is a matter of the right therapeutic practice.

Augustine's Counter

Augustine held to a fundamentally different understanding of the Fall's effect upon the human being:

> According to him the nature of man, both physical and moral, is totally corrupted by Adam's sin, so that he cannot do otherwise than sin. This inherited corruption or original sin is a moral punishment for the sin of Adam. It is such a quality of the nature of man, that in his natural state, he can and will do evil only. He has lost the material freedom of the will, and it is especially in this respect that original sin constitutes a punishment.[22]

Have we as human beings lost our freedom to follow after God? This question lies at the heart of the debate between Biblical Counseling and other schools of psychology. The real crux of the matter lies in what happened to human beings at the Fall. Biblical Counseling takes seriously the historical Augustinian strand of Christian doctrine. We hold that the Fall distorted human psychology, and, therefore, restoration of the Godward relationship is critical to human psychology.

The effects of the Fall unquestionably extend beyond the primary attack upon human psychology. One's own sin, the sin of others against us, even the effects of sin generally (death and disease, including disease of the central nervous system) are all real things: they can be observed, studied and even fall into patterns. Biblical Counseling does not deny these secondary effects.[23]

The Fall of Adam caused comprehensive damage to the human heart: the cognition, affections, behavior, volition and identity of Man was fundamentally distorted. This "psychological" damage, when

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[21] J Patout Burns, ed., *Theological Anthropology*, ed. and trans. J Patout Burns, Sources of Early Christian Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 51.

[22] L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 244. In the *Smalcald Articles*, Luther expresses rejects the proposition that human psychology remained unaltered at the Fall. Kurt K. Hendel, "The Smalcald Articles," in *Word and Faith*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand, Kirsi I. Stjerna, and Timothy J. Wengert, vol. 2, The Annotated Luther (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 444.

[23] "Furthermore, we are both victims and perpetrators. There is no human being since the fall who is only a victim; yet is also true that every sinner is also sinned against." Michael Scott Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims On the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2011), 427.

coupled to a body which suffers from death and disease, and which exists in an environment of sinful fellow creatures and a world subjected to "futility" leads to the range of "mental health" and "psychological" troubles which are the subject of counseling.

Biblical counseling holds that the necessary issue is the breach with God. Only on the foundation of a renewed, flourishing relationship with God can a human being be psychologically "right."

The Fall

Genesis 3 records the rebellion and fall of mankind in Adam (Rom. 5:12).[24] The eating of that

... Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste

Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,

With loss of Eden ... .[25]

While libraries have been written on this event, I merely wish to point to evidence that the Fall created subjective transformation of human psychology (cognition, affection, volition, conduct & identity).[26]

Genesis 3

Immediately upon eating from the tree, "the eyes of both of them were opened" (Gen. 3:7a). They realized "that they were naked" (Gen. 3:7a). Thereupon, they made themselves a poor covering of fig leaves (Gen. 3:7b). When God comes for an afternoon visit, the pair "hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God (Gen. 3:8).[27] By Genesis 3:12, they were already exhibiting blame-shifting.

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[24] Although I am acutely aware of the disputes on this issue, I will take the sacred record of Genesis 3 as historical.

[25] John Milton, "Paradise Lost," Book I, lines 2-4

[26] In the second part of this essay, we will look to the objective, physical, environmental aspects of the Fall.

[27] "Clearly an expression of guilt-consciousness, as also, an indication, at the same time, of the fall into sin, and of the decline into a state of corruption." John Peter Lange et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Genesis* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 231. "It was part of the sad deception that the man and woman who wanted so much to be 'like God,' rather than obtaining the stature of deity, are afraid even to commune with him." K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26, vol. 1A*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 239.

The Scripture makes plain the damage to the human heart as the result of this rebellion.[28] First, the human pair were brought to a state of shame[29] and fear:

> The immediate effects of their act of disobedience were a sense of shame—"the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (ver. 7); and a dread of judgment—"Adam and his wife hid themselves," through fear, as Adam afterwards admits—"I was afraid" (vv. 8, 10). [30]

The human being became fundamentally disordered—at least with respect to God, and with respect to self. Fear of death subjected humanity to "slavery" (Heb. 2:14) and damaged love (1 John 4:17-18):

> There is always a reaction. The stolen fruit is not as pleasant as we had thought. A kind of spiritual indigestion follows the eating of it. Somehow, we cannot get away with it. If we could, of course, we would not need any psychologists. But they are doing a thriving business because, though we think we are so bold and so wonderful, something within us tells that we are cads, that we are cowards, that we are fools, that we are foul, that we are vile, that we are beasts and worse. And we cannot get rid of such a conviction. We cannot sleep because of it. We cannot silence this voice that is within us. If we could we would, but we cannot, and we are wretched, and we have complexes -- we will call them that, but we will not call them sin. We will not admit the fear, the shame, the strain, the pressure. Is that not the simple truth? We would like to explain it all away psychologically, we cannot. We are up against the facts ... .[31]

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[28] "Only since humankind has become divided from the Creator are human beings divided within themselves." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3, ed. Martin Rüter, Ilse Tödt, and John W. de Gruchy, trans. Douglas Stephen Bax, vol. 3, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 128.

[29] See, P. Woolley, "Shame," ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1085.

[30] Robert S. Candlish, *The Book of Genesis, vol. 1* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1868), 72.

[31] David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Gospel in Genesis: From Fig Leaves to Faith* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2009), 53. "Shame, therefore, fear, and falsehood, are the bitter fruits of sin. Guilt is felt; death is dreaded; guile is practiced. The consciousness of crime begets terror; for 'the wicked flee when no one pursueth.'" Robert S. Candlish, *The Book of Genesis*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1868), 74; John Calvin, *Genesis*, electronic ed., Calvin's Commentaries, 1998, Ge 3:8.

This transformation of fear and shame was inherent in the disobedience.[32] God made no new pronouncement prior to this transformation. As Driver wryly notes, "The serpent's words (v. 5) were thus fulfilled: but the knowledge gained was very different from that which they had been led to anticipate."[33]

This *knowledge* marks a critical stage in human psychology: The Fall created abnormality in human psychology—an abnormality which can only be remedied by restoring that relationship with God. The Pelagian error is to think that while body and soul affect one-another and thus human psychology, that the "spiritual," Godward aspect of human existence somehow operates independently of human psychology (except perhaps, as the thought of God creates a basis for hope or fear, et cetera).[34]

B.C.'s central insight is that the relationship between God and man is not a bare "spiritual" (whatever that might be) or moral relationship but rather that it is a comprehensive relationship and unquestionably determines the content of human psychology.

Romans 1

In Romans 1, Paul argues that the rebellion and repression of humanity has led to the corruption of human psychology.[35] In verse 18, he notes that we repress the knowledge of our rebellious state before God. This leads to a profound loss, "Being to ourselves what God ought to be to us, He is not more to us than we are to ourselves. This secret identification of ourselves with God carries with it our isolation from Him. ... If mankind be itself God, the appearance of the idol is then inevitable."[36]

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[32] "Here that shame is explained as the consequence of the guilt of sin. Before human disobedience there was no shame (2:25), but with sin the man's self-consciousness had changed. His sense of humiliation impacts his covering up before the woman as well as before God. By this Adam admits his sense of shame, which has been motivated by his guilt." K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 241.

[33] S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis, with Introduction and Notes*, Westminster Commentaries (New York; London: Edwin S. Gorham; Methuen & Co., 1904), 46.

[34] "Of the texts cited for the contrary view, only Romans 7:7–25 requires some further discussion. Pelagians have at all times appealed to this pericope to prove that the mind (νους) or the spirit (πνευμα) in humans has remained free from sin, and the latter only resides in the flesh (σαρξ); in modern times this exegesis has been adopted almost universally. But Augustine in his later period and all his followers, both in the Catholic Church and in Protestant churches, have consistently rejected this interpretation. ..." Herman Bavinck, John Bolt, and John Vriend, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 81–82. When put baldly, it is bizarre for a Christian to assert that the body—but not the Holy Spirit—has an affect upon human psychology.

[35] "Paul argues that humanity irrationally distorted God's image through idolatry and that God in turn expressed his wrath against this idolatry by handing them over to their own irrational desires." Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 1.

[36] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed., trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 86. "Religion is one of the chief ways we cover up our shame without actually dealing with the guilt. And project a god who will satisfy our suppression of the truth about ourselves. 'Idolatry is not an accident,' Jenson notes, 'as if some of us just happened to hit upon the wrong candidates for deity.' Not only in our immorality and lying but even in our proud moral striving, self-

Paul details a series of psychological injuries which result to the human beings as a result of this repression: "they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Rom. 1:21).[37] Such irrationality has plagued humanity ever since. Humanity became subjected to idolatry (Rom. 1:23). As Jonathan Edwards explains:

> *It appears*, that man's nature is greatly depraved, by an apparent proneness to an exceeding stupidity and sottishness in those things wherein his duty and main interest are chiefly concerned.
>
> I shall instance in two things; viz. men's proneness to *idolatry* and so general and great a *disregard of eternal things*, as appears in them that live under the light of the gospel. 'Tis manifest, that man's nature in its present state is attended with a great propensity to forsake the acknowledgment and worship of the true God, and to fall into the most stupid idolatry.[38]

A further step is the depravity of destructive passions (Rom. 1:24-27). Paul speaks of God "giving-up" human beings: "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves" (Rom. 1:24); "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions." Human worship (worship of the creature rather than the Creator) and human sexuality become perverted.

This leads to a further stage of degradation:

> And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. Romans 1:28

That debased mind lies at the trouble of human psychology. The word translated by the ESV as "debased" is *adokimos*, which as Keener explains, "can refer to something tested and found unfit or, by extension, to what is worthless and disqualified. This failed mind contrasts with the renewed mind that Paul will

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confident religious devotion, and sincere pretensions, we are storing up God's wrath against us." Michael Scott Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2011), 429.

[37]"But it is a sober acknowledgment of the fact that the καρδία [heart] as the inner self of man shares fully in the fallenness of the whole man, that the intellect is not a part of human nature somehow exempted from the general corruption, not something which can be appealed to as an impartial arbiter capable of standing outside the influence of the ego and returning a perfectly objective judgment." C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 118, fns. omitted. "So, having rejected God, we can use our minds only to rearrange error." James Montgomery Boice, *Romans*, paperback ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2005), 171.

[38] Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin*, ed. John E. Smith and Clyde A. Holbrook, Corrected Edition, vol. 3, The Works of Jonathan Edwards (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997), 147.

mention later, which will test or evaluate (dokimazo) matters to ascertain what is good and thus belongs to God's will" (Rom.12:2).[39] Thomas Manton explains:

> There are perverse inclinations in the heart that carry the soul another way. Men look upon everything as it cometh dyed in the colour of their own affections. Here is the great depravation of nature since the fall, that those things which should follow guide and sit at the stern; vile affections besot the judgment: Rom. 1:26, with 28, 'God gave them up to vile affections;' and presently afterwards, 'He gave them over to a reprobate mind.' Men are so injudicious, because they consult with their affections.[40]

Augustine, in *The City of God*, argues that this twisting of affections is the great division in humanity, "Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self."[41]

But this is not all: the perversion of thought, affection and will ends in a bog of destructive conduct (Rom 1:29–32, 3:9-18). In short, Romans 1 demonstrates that the Fall of Adam, the rejection of God has led to cognitive, affective, volitional and behavioral corruption.

Image of God and Identity

God created Adam and Eve in the image of God. Gen. 1:26-27. That image persists in some manner after the Fall.[42] Gen. 9:6. How precisely the image was affected is a matter of great dispute. Richard Lints in *Identity and Idolatry* manages to sidestep much of the dispute about what aspects of human life constitute the "image." He takes the issue of "image" in the sense of mirror, "human beings may be said to have a reflective identity."[43] Our identity is bound up with what we reflect, "The *imago Dei*

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[39] Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2016), 27. "They scorned *God, God* was compelled to give them up. They *reprobated* him, their own mind became *reprobate*; any test would discard it. That is the *mind* they got, the reason of which so many of these wise fools (v. 22) are proud, when their inner *grasp of mind* (ἐπίγνωσις) threw out God." R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936), 118.

[40] Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, vol. 3 (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871), 256.

[41] Augustine of Hippo, "The City of God," in *St. Augustin's City of God and Christian Doctrine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Marcus Dods, vol. 2, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1887), 282.

[42] Daniel Strange, *Their Rock Is Not Like Our Rock: A Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2015), 45, quoting: Van Til, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, p. 45.

[43] Richard Lints, *New Studies in Biblical Theology, vol. 36, Identity and Idolatry: The Image of God and Its Inversion* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 29.

captures this transitory identity—as an image is contingent upon the object for its identity, so the *imago Dei* is contingent upon God for its identity."[44]

Now this identity, for good or ill, depends upon the object which the human mirror reflects. As Greg Beale has extensively argued, the repression and exchange of Romans 1:18-25, is a theme which runs throughout the Scripture: that the exchange of worshiping the true God has led to a fundamental corruption of human identity whereby human beings become conformed to the object of their idolatrous worship.[45]

On this side of the Fall, the human heart (unless regenerate) is busy imaging something other than God. Human identity is now developed on the basis of idols—internal human desires made objects of desire and returning to control human identity. This alone shows the futility of any counseling psychology that does not take Christ as its Lord. For, by seeing Christ, we are conformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10).[46] Only in the new life, the new self, can human identity be set on a proper basis.

The Fall Comprehensively Altered Human Psychology

The point here is that at the moment of rebellion against God, human psychology became unalterably damaged and defective. Human cognition, affections, behavior, volition and identity have all been injured.[47]

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[44] Richard Lints, *New Studies in Biblical Theology*, vol. 36, *Identity and Idolatry: The Image of God and Its Inversion* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 29. "Again, it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself." John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion 1 & 2*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, vol. 1, The Library of Christian Classics (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 37, fn. omitted. "To conclude, we come to know ourselves as human beings—that is, as God's image bearer—not only by looking within but chiefly by looking outside ourselves to the divine Other who addresses us. It is only as we take our place in this theater of creation—the liturgy of God's speaking and creaturely response—that we discover a selfhood and personhood that is neither autonomous nor illusory but doxological and real." Michael Scott Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims On the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2011), 405.

[45] G K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2011), 357-80.

[46] "Sin defaced the image of God in us: Rom. 3:23, 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' We lost not only the favour of God, but the image of God; the great excellency of our nature was eclipsed and defaced. Now the plaster will not be as broad as the sore, nor our reparation by Christ correspondent to our loss by Adam, if our nature be not healed, and the image of God restored in us." Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, vol. 2 (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871), 205.

[47] "Our history tells us plainly that sin in its formal relation is, before all things, a transgression of the divine command; whilst in its material relation it is a wounding of the proper personal life, even unto death, and, in consequence thereof, a hostile turning away from God, a self-entanglement in the love of self and of the world, as flowing from the abuse of

It is the human heart that is corrupt (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Ps. 14:1; Jer. 17:9; Ezek. 36:26; Matt. 15:19); from it flow the springs of life (Prov. 4:23). It is from within the human heart that all iniquities and all sorts of incomprehension flow (Mark 7:21). The mind of humans is darkened (Job 21:14; Isa. 1:3; Jer. 4:22; John 1:5; Rom. 1:21–22; 1 Cor. 1:18–23; 2:14; Eph. 4:18; 5:8). The human soul is guilty and impure and needs atonement and repentance (Lev. 17:11; Ps. 19:7; 41:4; Prov. 19:3, 16; Matt. 16:26; 1 Pet. 1:22). The human spirit is proud, errant, and polluted and therefore has to be broken, illumined, and cleansed (Ps. 51:19; Prov. 16:18, 32; Eccles. 7:9; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; 1 Cor. 7:34; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 5:23). The human conscience is stained and needs cleansing (Titus 1:15; Heb. 9:9, 14; 10:22). The human desire, inclination, and will reach out to what is forbidden and is powerless to do good (Jer. 13:23; John 8:34, 36; Rom. 6:17; 8:7; 2 Cor. 3:5). And the body, with all its members—the eyes (Deut. 29:4; Ps. 18:27; Isa. 35:5; 42:7; 2 Pet. 2:14; 1 John 2:16), the ears (Deut. 29:4; Ps. 115:6; 135:17; Isa. 6:10; Jer. 5:21; Zech. 7:11), the feet (Ps. 38:16; Prov. 1:16; 4:27; 6:18; Isa. 59:7; Rom. 3:15), the mouth and the tongue (Job 27:4; Pss. 17:10; 12:3f.; 15:3; Jer. 9:3, 5; Rom. 3:14; James 3:5–8)—is in the service of unrighteousness. In a word: sin is not located on and around humans but within them and extends to the whole person and the whole of humankind.[48]

And:

According to Scripture, in addition to guilt and pollution, suffering also is a punishment for sin. As a result of it, humanity not only lost true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, but also dominion and glory. This became evident already immediately after the fall and is further confirmed throughout Scripture. God put enmity between the human race and the serpent and thereby in principle took from humanity the dominion over the animal world originally granted to it (Gen. 1:26; 2:19). God further pronounces upon the woman the penalty of painful childbirths and of an ever-gnawing desire for her husband despite the former. The man himself gets his share of suffering from the curse pronounced upon the earth, a curse that obligates him to work arduously for his appointed share of daily bread. With this, a history of suffering is ushered in for all humanity and all the earth. And all the suffering that strikes people here on earth—a short life; a sudden, violent death; famine; plagues; wars; defeats; childlessness; painful losses; deprivation of goods; impoverishment; crop failure; cattle mortality; and so on—all has its root in sin, indeed not always in personal sins (for there is also a sparing of the wicked [Gen. 18:26ff.] and punishment as a testing of the righteous [Job 1; Matt. 13:21;[26] John 9:1; 11:4; 2 Cor. 12:7]), yet still in sin in

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the freedom of the will to an apparent freedom which degenerates into bondage. That sin, after it becomes fixed, is especially to be regarded as selfishness." John Peter Lange et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Genesis* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 246–247.

[48] Herman Bavinck, John Bolt, and John Vriend, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 80–81; Michael Scott Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims On the Way* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2011), 431.

general. Without sin there would be no suffering (Lev. 26:14f.; Deut. 28:15f.; Ezek. 4:17; Hosea 2:8f.; Rev. 18:8; 21:4). Even the irrational creation has been subjected to futility and decay and now collectively sighs, as though in labor pains, looking forward to the revelation of the glory of the children of God, in hope of being itself set free from bondage to decay (Rom. 8:19–22).[49]

The true nature of this fault cannot be seen without the operation of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14). As shown above, due to the noetic effects of sin (Gen. 3; Rom. 1), the human heart cannot rightly understand its trouble with God (Rom. 1:28).

It is the Christian claim that God came into the world to redeem and restore humanity and creation. While the complete restoration will await the age to come, God has not abandoned humanity until that time.

In this age, God has granted salvation and common grace. In this age, God does not restore either our bodies or the objective creation. However, God does begin the work of renewing and restoring our psychology. Our old self has been crucified with Christ. Rom. 6:6. Our identity is being renewed: "[We] have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:18[50]; Rom. 8:28-29). Our mind is being renewed (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). Our thoughts and affections are to be transformed (Col. 3:1-4; Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:13, 4:7, 5:8). Our behavior is to be transformed (Col. 3:5-17). In the midst of trials of the greatest kind, we may be content (Phil. 4:11-13). The work of the Holy Spirit in this age, and irrespective of one's background, circumstance or other condition, is promised to provide the utmost of "mental health" (Gal. 5:22-24).

This restoration is commensurate with the loss caused by the Fall: if humanity's thoughts, loves, actions, will, identity has been damaged as a result of the loss of right relationship with God, then it is not surprising that restoration of that relationship in this age will transform human psychology.

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[49] Herman Bavinck, John Bolt, and John Vriend, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 176.

[50] "We can never encounter God and remain unchanged. Beholding this glory effects our transformation as we are changed into a veritable likeness of him." David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, vol. 29, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 200.

KEY SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN MULTIETHNIC MARRIAGES

Matthew R. Akers[1]

Introduction

Marriage patterns in the United States are changing. According to research, one of the most noticeable developments is that multiethnic unions are becoming more common in the United States. At greater numbers than ever before, individuals who originate from differing ethnicities and cultures are choosing to enter marriage covenants with one another.

In 2013, Joshua Tom and Brandon Martinez, researchers at Baylor University, analyzed the data from 12,000 marriages and made an interesting observation regarding current wedding trends. They concluded evangelical and mainline Protestants are as likely as their non-religious counterparts to marry someone of another ethnicity.[2] The significance of this statistic is that biblical counselors should expect to handle counseling cases in which Christian husbands and wives are ethnically dissimilar.

One of the driving forces for this change in marriage patterns is the 1967 Supreme Court Case *Loving v. Virginia.* Prior to this ruling, numerous states prohibited marriages between people of differing ethnicities. Richard Loving, an Anglo, and Mildred Jeter, an African American with Rappahannock heritage, were a Virginia couple who faced prison and expulsion from their home state because of their marriage. After considering their case, the Supreme Court decided unanimously in favor of the Lovings. Chief Justice Earl Warren opined, "The Fourteenth Amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discriminations. Under our Constitution, the freedom to

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[2] David Briggs, "The Ties that May Not Bind: Race, Religion, and Marriage," Association of Religion Data Archives, January 14, 2013, http://blogs.thearda.com/trend/featured/ the-ties-that-may-not-bind-race-religion-and-marriage/ (accessed January 8, 2018).

marry, or not to marry, a person of another race resides with the individual, and cannot be infringed by the State."[3]

As a result of this groundbreaking decision, multiethnic marriages became legal in all fifty states. The immediate consequence of *Loving v. Virginia* was an uptick in multiethnic marriages. Like a locomotive that begins its journey haltingly, yet gains momentum as it presses forward, the percentage of multiethnic marriages in the United States has risen markedly since the late 1960s. One 2012 study determined that at the time, roughly 15 percent of new marriages were between people of dissimilar ethnicities.[4] Six years later, multiethnic marriages are more plentiful than ever.

In spite of these relatively new matrimonial patterns, few resources exist that consider the challenges of multiethnic Christian couples in a systematic manner. This deficit of material is lamentable because numerous stressors unique to multiethnic marriages beset spouses, threatening to derail their unions. The failure to understand these dynamics affects couples negatively and prevents biblical counselors from realizing their optimal efficiency.

Jay Adams wrote in 1983 that pastors who provide counseling for their church members reported, "marriage and family problems outnumber all other counseling problems combined."[5] Thirty-five years later, this observation remains true. One of the evidences for this somber reality is that in the twenty-first century, the divorce rate in the United States remains painfully high.[6] Lamentably, studies indicate marriages of multiethnic couples dissolve at an even higher rate than their monoethnic counterparts.[7]

Because of this troubling statistic, counselors competently must prepare themselves to serve

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[3] "U.S. Supreme Court: Loving v. Virginia, 388 U.S. 1 (1967), Justia, http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/388/1/case.html (accessed January 8, 2018). The court heard the case on April 10, 1967, and issued a decision on June 12, 1967.

[4] Wendy Wang, "The Rise of Intermarriage: Rates, Characteristics Vary by Race and Gender," Pew Research Center's Social and Demographic Trends Project, February 16, 2012, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/02/16/the-rise-of-intermarriage/ (accessed January 8, 2018).

[5] Jay E. Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems: Biblical Solutions for Christian Counselors* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 1.

[6] Matthew J. Astle, "An Ounce of Prevention: Marital Counseling Laws as an Anti-Divorce Measure," *Family Law Quarterly* 38.3 (Fall 2004): 733; Jeffrey H. Larson and Thomas B. Holman, "Premarital Predictors of Marital Quality and Stability," *Family Relations* 43.2 (April 1994): 228.

[7] Jenifer L. Bratter and Rosalind King, "'But Will it Last?' Marital Instability Among Interracial and Same-Race Couples," *Family Relations* 57 (April 2008): 160. Bratter and King noted, "[A]lthough entering an interracial marriage tends to carry less social stigma [than in past decades of American history], these relationships are less likely to remain intact [than monoethnic unions]." M. D. Bramlett and W. D. Mosher, reporting for The National Center for Health Statistics, related that after ten years of marriage, intermarried couples had a 10 percent higher rate of divorce than couples originating from the same ethnic group. See M. D. Bramlett and W. D. Mosher, "Cohabitation, Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the United States," *Vital and Health Statistics* 23 (July 2002): 19.

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multiethnic couples who experience problems.[8] Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to identify the primary external and internal dynamics that threaten multiethnic marriages. Understanding these unique challenges will help biblical counselors to apply scriptural principles in a more precise manner.

A Note about Race

In Acts 17:16-21, Paul articulated the fundamentals of Christianity to an intrigued crowd in the city of Athens. The resulting discourse, commonly called "the Sermon on Mars Hill," contextualized the Christian message for people who hailed from pagan backgrounds. One of the points Paul developed was the common ancestry of mankind: "And from one[9] He made all of the nations of mankind to inhabit the entire face of the earth" (Acts 17:26a).[10] The statement also has ramifications for the manner in which Christians should understand the subject of race.

Paul defied the reigning Athenian opinion concerning the origin of mankind, denying that different civilizations were the products of distinct acts of creation. Rather, all people groups (πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων) stemmed from one source. The apostle's usage of the word *one* in this verse refers not to God in His role as Creator, but rather to His creation of Adam, the first man.[11] Paul's sermon appealed to the book of Genesis as well as the historicity of Adam as witnesses to the unity of mankind.

The anthropological consequence of mankind's oneness is such that it is erroneous to refer to multiple races of humans. Nevertheless, earlier generations of Western naturalists and anthropologists employed the terminology of zoology to categorize humans into different "races."[12] This approach resulted in "a general hierarchy"[13] similar to the Athenians' estimation of diverse people groups. Only relatively

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[8] Wayne F. Oates, *Premarital Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville: Broadman, 1958), 6.

[9] Instead of reading "from one" (ἐξ ἑνὸς), certain Greek manuscripts contain the phrase "from one blood" (ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος). Ultimately, the editorial committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament gave the first option a {B} rating because they held αἵματος to be one of the "typical expansion[s]" they believed were characteristic of Western Greek texts. See Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition)*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft United Bible Societies, 1994), 404-5.

[10] Unless otherwise noted, each biblical quotation is the author's translation of the text.

[11] Kenneth D. Litwak, "Israel's Prophets Meet Athens' Philosophers: Scriptural Echoes in Acts 17:22-31," *Biblica* 85.2 (2004): 207.

[12] Paul Lawrence Farber, *Mixing Races: From Scientific Racism to Modern Evolutionary Ideas*, in *John Hopkins Introductory Studies in the History of Science*, ed. Mott T. Greene and Sharon Kingsland (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 30.

[13] Ibid., 31.

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recently have geneticists and anthropologists begun to "agree with the idea that human races, in any kind of biological sense, do not really exist,"[14] a point Paul established two millennia ago.

The implication of humanity's ancestral oneness is significant. Since multiple races of people do not exist, the phrase *interracial marriage* is a misnomer. More appropriate is the term *multiethnic marriage*, since people stem from a large assortment of cultures, worldviews, and language groups rather than unrelated genetic stock. Accordingly, except in quotations, the author of this study generally has avoided using *race* and *interracial marriage*, opting instead to implement the terms *ethnicity* and *multiethnic marriage*.

Challenges of Multiethnic Couples

Couples who are multiethnically married face numerous, unique challenges that threaten their relationships. This section of the study will consider why multiethnic couples experience so many difficulties, classifying the sources of conflict into two broad categories. External challenges that derive from outside of the marriage are one source of contention, while internal challenges that result from intercultural struggles between husbands and wives are another wellspring of trouble.

External Challenges

The Legacy of Poor Race Relations

In William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* (ca. 1610-11), the famous playwright coined an expression that English speakers still are fond of quoting four centuries later. In this drama, a would-be assassin named Antonio insisted, "what's past is prologue."[15] Antonio's intention was to justify his and Sebastian's desire to slay king Alonso by insisting that all of the events of the past had brought them to the present moment. This chain of events, according to Antonio, had provided them with an opportunity to act on their murderous urges. In the twenty-first century, this expression has come to mean former events strongly shape and influence the present.[16] Long after incidents supposedly fade into the shadows of history, they continue to exert an influence on contemporary people's thoughts and actions. Nowhere is this principle truer than the sphere of ethnic relations.

A cursory familiarity with United States history reveals the nation has experienced consistent and bitter ethnic conflict since its inception in 1776. In reality, the problems began well before the dawn of the

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[14] Audrey Smedley and Brian D. Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*, 4th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 300. Scientific research has proven "there are no genetic traits that are exclusive to one race."

[15] William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Mineola, NY: Dover Thrift Editions, 1999), 27.

[16] E.g., Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich, *The Past as Prologue: The Importance of History to the Military Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

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late eighteenth century. Early in the Colonial Era, bloody skirmishes erupted as a result of increasing numbers of European settlers encroaching on Native American land. One example of the enmity that developed was the war Pocahontas's uncle, Opechancanough, waged against the Jamestown colony in 1622, and once again in 1644.[17]

Native American resistance to Anglo colonization periodically took the form of warfare until the late nineteenth century.[18] Although these military engagements no longer are a factor, discord remains. Numerous Native Americans resent their loss of culture and way of life, and the squalid conditions on most Reservations does not help the matter.

Another source of frustration is the typical conception of Native Americans that resulted from faulty information. Stereotypes such as the "noble savage," the "enlightened savage," and the "bloodthirsty savage" abound[19] in American society. Not only are these misinterpretations apparent in the general populace, but also find their way into "museum displays, text books [sic], literature, and the media."[20] Furthermore, the usage of caricaturized Native American mascots in the world of sports teams[21] often draws the ire of the peoples they depict.

Until the last few decades, the majority of Native Americans lived on Reservations[22] and in non-urban locales.[23] By 1980, over 50 percent had moved to cities,[24] and in 2010, the number had risen to 71

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[17] Gary B. Nash, "The Hidden History of Mestizo America," *Journal of American History* 82.3 (December 1995): 941-43; cf. J. Frederick Fausz, "An 'Abundance of Blood Shed on Both Sides,' England's First Indian War, 1609-1614," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 98.1 (January 1990): 3-56; Jane Carson, "The Will of John Rolfe," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 58.1 (January 1950): 62.

[18] Louis H. Roddis, "The Last Indian Uprising in the United States," *Minnesota History Bulletin* 3.5 (February 1920): 273-90. Some place the end of the skirmishes as late as the Posey War in 1925. See Jessie Embry, "A Wise Choice," *Oral History Review* 29.2 (Summer 2002): 26.

[19] Michael K. Green, "Images of Native Americans in Advertising: Some Moral Issues," *Journal of Business Ethics* 12.4 (1993): 323-24.

[20] Moira G. Simpson, "'Native Americans': An Exhibition of North American Indian Culture," *Journal of Museum Ethnography* 3 (October 1991): 133; cf. Jesus Garcia, "Native Americans in U.S. History Textbooks: From Bloody Savages to Heroic Chiefs," *Journal of American Indian Education* 17.2 (January 1978): 15-19.

[21] Justing P. Grose, "Time to Bury the Tomahawk Chop: An Attempt to Reconcile the Differing Viewpoints of Native Americans and Sports Fans," *American Indian Law Review* 35.2 (2010-2011): 695-728; Green, "Native Americans in Advertising," 324, 28.

[22] For a helpful map of Native American Reservations, see "Indian Reservations in the Continental United States," National Park Service: Department of the Interior, https://www.nps.gov/nagpra/DOCUMENTS/RESERV.PDF (accessed January 11, 2018).

[23] In 1900, only 0.4 percent of Native Americans lived in cities, and in the 1950s that number rose to 13.4 percent. See Russell Thornton, "Tribal Membership Requirements and the Demography of 'Old' and 'New' Native Americans," *Population Research and Policy Review* 16.1/2 (April 1997): 38.

[24] Rima Wilkes, "The Residential Segregation of Native Americans in U.S. Metropolitan Areas," *Sociological Focus* 36.2 (May 2003): 129.

percent.[25] The Native Americans who remain on Reservations are more isolated from other populations,[26] tending to marry other Native Americans.[27]

Individuals who reside in cities, however, often wed people from other ethnic groups.[28] Nevertheless, research suggests they "are not completely spatially assimilated with whites"[29] in urban areas, meaning they have a tendency to live in separate neighborhoods. In other words, numerous Native Americans remain largely beyond the pale of mainstream United States culture. While marriages between urban Native Americans and Anglos are relatively frequent, certain members of society do no always accept these unions.[30] The volatile past, coupled with contemporary cultural conflicts, may be sources of consternation for intermarried couples.

The introduction of slavery to the colonies led to yet another clash of people groups. Due in large part to the Virginian colonists' fondness for growing tobacco, and their perception that too few Europeans resided in the so-called New World to sustain the burgeoning enterprise, they began to import slaves in 1619 to perform the backbreaking work of plantation life.[31] This decision created a new set of challenges that continues to influence present relations.

Potential African-European marriages of the seventeenth century faced an almost insurmountable obstacle. Intimate associations between the two ethnic groups threatened the perpetuation of slavery, so the colonies fought vociferously against this threat to the status quo. Concern also arose concerning whether the children of multiethnic marriages should be slaves or free. Virginian lawmakers addressed this matter on December 14, 1662:

Whereas some doubts have arrisen [sic] whether children got by any Englishman upon a negro

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[25] "U.S. Census Marks Increase in Urban American Indians and Alaska Natives," February 28, 2013, Urban Indian Health Institute, http://www.uihi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Broadcast_Census-Number_FINAL_v2.pdf (accessed January 8, 2018).

[26] Diane C. Keithly, "Native Americans, the Feudal System, and the Protestant Work Ethic: A Unique View of the Reservation," *Race, Gender & Class* 12.2 (2005): 105.

[27] Kimberly R. Huyser, Arthur Sakamoto, and Isao Takei, "The Persistence of Racial Disadvantage: The Socioeconomic Attainments of Single-Race and Multi-Race Native Americans," *Population Research and Policy Review* 29.4 (August 2010): 544.

[28] Edward E. Telles and Christina A. Sue, "Race Mixture: Boundary Crossing in Comparative Perspective," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (2009): 135.

[29] Wilkes, "Residential Segregation," 139.

[30] An anecdotal example of the sometimes unpopular nature of these unions occurred a number of years ago when the author and his wife were traveling through South Dakota. In a restaurant, both Native Americans and Anglos mistook his Hispanic wife for a local Native American. Numerous individuals from both groups glared angrily at what they perceived to be an Anglo man wedded to a local Native American woman.

[31] Walter Wadlington, "The Loving Case: Virginia's Anti-Miscegenation Statute in Historical Perspective," *Virginia Law Review* 52.7 (November 1966): 1191.

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woman should be slave or ffree [sic], Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present grand

assembly, that all children borne [sic] in this country shalbe [sic] held bond or free only according

to the condition of the mother, And that if any christian shall committ [sic] ffornication [sic] with

a negro man or woman, hee [sic] or shee [sic] soe [sic] offending shall pay double the ffines [sic]

imposed by this former act.[32]

Historians recognize this legislative edict as the "first law prohibiting intermarriages" in the British

colonies.[33] Other colonies soon followed Virginia's lead, developing their own restrictive policies

regarding intermarriage.[34]

What began as a method to maintain an optimal number of slaves transformed into something

more insidious. In large part, colonists ultimately divided their society along racial lines. Granted, "wide

variance in . . . attitudes"[35] toward intermarriage existed in the earliest days of the British colonies. As

time passed, however, each governing body gradually developed a general distaste for any intermingling

between Anglos and African descendants. By 1725, colonial law had developed into a mechanism for

preserving Anglo racial purity that did not dissolve entirely until *Loving v. Virginia* legalized multiethnic

marriages in 1967.

Although the Civil War (1861-1865) resulted in the liberation of the slaves, relations between

African Americans and Anglos did not improve. The Reconstruction Era (1865-1877) saw initial gains for

African Americans in the realms of political representation at the state and federal level, as well as voting

rights. These advances did not continue for long, however, because during this period "both whiteness

and blackness had to be renegotiated and reconstructed, since slavery was no longer a yardstick."[36]

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[32] William Waller Hening, *Statutes at Large of Virginia*, vol. 2, http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-09.htm#bottom (accessed January 11, 2018).

[33] James Hugo Johnston, *Race Relations in Virginia & Miscegenation in the South: 1776-1860*, with a foreword by Winthrop Jordan (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1970), 166.

[34] Examples include Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. See William Hand Browne, ed., *Archives of Maryland: Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland: January 1637/8-September 1664* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1883), 533-34; *Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay: To Which are Prefixed the Characters of the Province with Historical and Explanatory Notes, and an Appendix*, vol. 1, *1692-1714* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1869), 578; William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, vol. 2, *1713-1728* (Raleigh, NC: Josephus Daniels, 1886), 212; *Laws of the State of Delaware, from the Fourteenth Day of October, One Thousand Seven Hundred, to the Eighteenth Day of August, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Seven*, vol. 1 (New Castle, DE: Samuel and John Adams, 1797), 108-9; James T. Mitchell and Henry Flanders, *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1862-1801*, vol. 4, *1725-1744* (Harrisburg, PA: C. E. Aughinbaugh Publishers, 1801): 62-63.

[35] Gary B. Mills, "Miscegenation and the Free Negro in Antebellum 'Anglo' Alabama: A Reexamination of Southern Race Relations," *Journal of American History* 68.1 (June 1981): 18.

[36] Julie Novkov, "Racial Constructions: The Legal Regulation of Miscegenation in Alabama, 1890-1934," *Law and History Review* 20.2 (Summer 2002): 227.

The disintegration of Reconstruction principles, along with the rise of Jim Crow laws in the 1890s, proved to be a dangerous mix. The early 1900s "marked a venomous turn in relations between blacks and whites."[37] These hostilities came to a head during what scholars refer to as "The Red Summer" of 1919. From June to December of that year, at least twenty race riots erupted throughout the United States.[38]

A generation later, in large part due to the tireless efforts of African Americans to draw attention to their plight, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964. The new legislation guaranteed African Americans equal opportunities, but unfortunately did not change people's hearts. The troubled race relations of the past continue to affect present interactions, and this environment is challenging for couples who do not belong to the same ethnic group. Although any multiethnic configuration in the realm of marriage can elicit criticism from others (e.g., African American and Hispanic; Asian and Anglo), African American and Anglo couples bear the brunt of this antagonism.[39]

More Recent Conflicts

For the first time in history, in the 1960s more non-European immigrants arrived in the United States than from Europe.[40] Asian and Latin American people groups dominated this new wave.[41] The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (also known as the Hart-Celler Act), which replaced the outmoded Immigration Act of 1924, drove this change by ending the era of preferential treatment of European immigrants.[42]

In the second decade of the twenty-first century, people from all points of the compass continue to make their way to the United States. During the first two quarters of 2017, the number of individuals who obtained lawful permanent resident status was 560,150. These immigrants derived from the following countries: 219,270 from Asia, 197,931 from other parts of North America (including Mexico), 59,287

[37] Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor, 2008), 305.

[38] O. A. Rogers Jr., "The Elaine Race Riots," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 19.2 (Summer 1960): 142.

[39] Anita Kathy Foeman and Teresa Nance, "From Miscegenation to Multiculturalism: Perceptions and Stages of Interracial Relationship Development," *Journal of Black Studies* 29.4 (March 1999): 541.

[40] Richard Lewis Jr. and Joanne Ford-Robertson, "Understanding the Occurrence of Interracial Marriage in the United States through Differential Assimilation," *Journal of Black Studies* 41.2 (November 2010): 408.

[41] David A. Hollinger, "Amalgamation and Hypodescent: The Questions of Ethnoracial Mixture in the History of the United States," *American Historical Review* 108.5 (December 2003): 1373.

[42] For a digital copy of this text, see Public Law 89-236—October 3, 1965: An Act to Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for Other Purposes," U.S. Government Publishing Office, https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-79/pdf/STATUTE-79-Pg911.pdf (accessed January 13, 2018)

from Africa, 41,204 from Europe, 39,185 from South America, 2,484 from Oceania, and 789 from parts unknown. The foremost countries from which naturalized people hailed were Mexico, India, the Philippines, China, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba.[43] At the current rate of immigration, by the year 2050, "36 million children in the United States will be descendants of immigrants who arrived after 2005."[44]

The sheer diversity the newest wave of immigration represents has troubled not only American citizens in general, but also some Christians as well. The nation's obsession with ethnicity also influences the manner in which many perceive newcomers: "Americans tend to categorize immigrants by their racial or ethnic heritage. This is especially true given America's experience with slavery and the civil rights moment—ethnic/racial distinctions have been historically more important in the United States."[45] In other words, the degree to which immigrants mirror the established ethnic, cultural, and linguistic paradigms of the United States often dictates how readily Americans embrace them.[46]

According to research, Anglo evangelical Protestants "stand out as the only religious community in which a majority (53%) believe that immigrants threaten traditional American customs and values."[47] African American Protestants also tend to view immigration ambivalently.[48] One likely reason for this attitude among African Americans is the perception that immigrants "are able to jump ahead of [African Americans] in a hierarchy"[49] and take advantage of opportunities that are more difficult for them to obtain. Overall, 10 percent of Americans would not want immigrants living next door to them.[50] Because

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[43] This information, along with a wealth of other immigration statistics, is available at the following location: "Legal Immigration and Adjustment of Status Report Fiscal Year 2017, Quarter 2," Department of Homeland Security, https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/special-reports/legal-immigration#File_end (accessed January 13, 2018).

[44] Sandra Hughes-Hassel and Ernie J. Cox, "Inside Board Books: Representation of People of Color," *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 80.3 (July 2010): 213.

[45] Phillip Connor, *Immigrant Faith: Patterns of Immigrant Religion in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 21.

[46] Antony W. Alumkal, "American Evangelicalism in the Post-Civil Rights Era: A Racial Formation Theory Analysis," *Sociology of Religion* 65.3 (Autumn 2004): 204-5; Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 73.

[47] Betsy Cooper, Daniel Cox, Rachel Lienesch, and Robert P. Jones, "How Americans View Immigrants, and What They Want from Immigration Reform: Findings from the 2015 American Values Atlas," Public Religion Research Institute, May 29, 2016, https://www.prri.org/research/poll-immigration-reform-views-on-immigrants/ (accessed December 13, 2018).

[48] Benjamin R. Knoll, "'And Who is My Neighbor?' Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48.2 (June 2009): 322.

[49] Lee and Bean, "American's Changing Color Lines," 237.

[50] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 37. Connor noted this percentage is even higher in Europe: "For example, in Finland, Great Britain, and Germany, nearly two in ten people don't want an immigrant neighbor, while the ratio is about four in ten for those living in France. Canadians are the most willing to have immigrants as neighbors as fewer than one in ten of them would not want an immigrant neighbor."

of the above factors, multiethnic couples that consist of a natural born citizen and a foreign spouse almost certainly will experience some level of external pressure related to their multiethnic marriage.

Conflict between Different Minority Groups

Within the confines of this study it would be impossible to consider the interethnic struggles of every minority group that calls the United States home. For this reason, the author has selected two representative cases to explore. One current area of concern is the interrelationship of African Americans and Hispanics. Some centuries old material hints at prolonged strained relations.[51] Furthermore, current research indicates that the "gulf between Mexican Americans and African Americans is similar to that between whites and African Americans."[52] The implication of this observation is that significant barriers exist between Hispanics[53] and African Americans.[54]

Because the majority of scholars have focused almost exclusively on Anglo and African American relations, they largely have ignored, or have been unaware of, the opinions that some members of each group have of one another. For example, representing the view that certain Hispanics hold, author Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. said concerning Houston, Texas in the 1970s, "Racial prejudices between Mexican and African Americans . . . was very much a reality in the barrio. . . . [Hispanic] students were afraid of going to schools that were predominantly black because 'black kids are always bossing us around, picking fights.' Adults also expressed these sentiments. . . ."[55] This anecdotal account is not an isolated

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[51] For example, Gary Nash wrote concerning centuries old depictions of multiethnic marriages in Latin America, "[S]ome of the casta paintings registered domestic discord, and they are especially revealing in associating marital turbulence with the mixing of African and [Mexican] Indian bloodstreams." In other words, the implication was that Africans and the indigenous ancestors of modern day Mexicans did not get along. See Nash, "The Hidden History of Mestizo America," 953.

[52] Joshua R. Goldstein and Kristen Harknett, "Parenting across Racial and Class Lines: Assortative Mating Patterns of New Parents who are Married, Cohabiting, Dating or No Longer Romantically Involved," *Social Forces* 85.1 (September 2006): 122.

[53] Given the considerable number of Mexicans in the United States (63 percent of Hispanics in the United States are of Mexican origin according to the 2010 United States Census), their marriage rates with African Americans are a good indicator of the rate at which other Hispanics in the United States marry African Americans.

[54] Research shows that "intermarriage has traditionally represented one of the most accurate indicators of assimilation. For minority-group individuals, the choice of a spouse from the majority group suggests that structural and interpersonal barriers inhibiting interaction between minority and majority groups have been reduced significantly." The same is true for members of two minority groups (such as African Americans and Hispanics) who intermarry. See Rogelio Saenz, Sean-Shong Hwang, Benigno E. Aguirre, and Robert N. Anderson, "Persistence and Change in Asian Identity among Children of Intermarried Couples," *Sociological Perspectives* 38.2 (Summer 1995): 176.

[55] Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, vol. 3 in *University of Houston Series in Mexican American Studies*, ed. Tatcho Mindiola (Houston: University of Houston, 2007), 105-6.

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occurrence. A percentage of Hispanics who reside in the United States believe African Americans bear them ill will.

To bolster their claim, Hispanics cite stories such as the case of David Rivas Morales, who, on June 20, 2017, was murdered by a group of African Americans. Morales had been riding in a vehicle that struck a two-year-old African American boy in an apartment complex parking lot, causing non-life-threatening injuries to the child. When the assailants began to attack the driver, Morales tried to help, and was beaten to the point of death.[56] Reports placed the number of aggressors between twelve to twenty people.[57] Ultimately, ex-Golden Gloves boxer Kurtis Colvin received ten years of probation for his role in the death, and an unnamed juvenile who was sixteen years old at the time of the attack received eight years of probation for punching Morales.[58]

Some African American also express misgivings about what they see as a Hispanic infiltration of their neighborhoods. On August 2, 2007, the following account appeared in *The Economist*:

> We're being overrun," says Ted Hayes of Choose Black America, which has led anti-immigration marches in south-central Los Angeles. "The *compañeros* have taken all the housing. If you don't speak Spanish they turn you down for jobs. Our children are jumped upon in the schools. They are trying to drive us out," Not, Mr. Hayes emphasises [sic], that he has anything against illegal immigrants personally, or against Mexicans who are in America legally. Indeed, he says, in that useful old phrase, he is friendly with many of them.[59]

It is striking that accounts from such distant cities indicate a portion of the Hispanic and African American populations view each other in a similar, negative light.

The Pew Research Center released the results of a groundbreaking survey in early 2008 that reinforced conflicts between African Americans and Hispanics are not optimal. First, while only 18 percent of African Americans stated that relations between the two peoples were "not too well" or "not well at all," almost one-third of Hispanics (30 percent) thought relations were "not too well" or "not well at

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[56] Alfonso Serrano, "Cops Seek Witnesses to Car Mob Killing," CBS News, June 20, 2007, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cops-seek-witnesses-to-car-mob-killing/ (accessed January 13, 2018).

[57] Polly Ross Hughes, "Police Change Accounts in Austin Beating Probe," Houston Chronicle, June 22, 2007, http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Police-change-accounts-in-Austin-beating-probe-1805633.php (accessed January 13, 2018).

[58] "Ex-Boxer Gets Probation for 2007 Death," ABC 13 Eyewitness News, November 3, 2008, http://abc13.com/archive/6485924/ (accessed January 13, 2018).

[59] "Where Black and Brown Collide," The Economist, August 2, 2007, http://www.economist.com/node/9587776 (accessed January 13, 2018).

all." Additionally, almost 50 percent of African Americans answered that immigrants were responsible for reducing the number of job opportunities available to African Americans.[60]

A 2007 Gallup poll showed 29 percent of African Americans saw relations between them and Hispanics as somewhat to very bad, while 38 percent of Hispanics viewed interrelations negatively.[61] In 2013, a similar Gallup poll revealed that the relationship between African Americans and Hispanics was the most problematic of any people groups in the United States, surpassing the interrelations of African Americans and Anglos.[62]

In an article in which he explained the context of the 2013 Gallup survey, Jeffrey Jones noted to readers that polling occurred around the time a jury acquitted George Zimmerman (a man with Hispanic and Anglo ancestry) of the death of African American teenager Trayvon Martin.[63] While this event may have had some impact on people's perception of African American and Hispanic relations at the time, it is worth noting that two years later in 2015, statistics remain unchanged.[64] These dynamics led Earl Ofari Hutchinson, an African American author and social commentator, to state in 2007, "Animosity between Latinos and blacks is the worst-kept secret in race relations in America."[65]

Another area of concern is the interrelation of Asians who reside in the United States to other ethnic groups. Historically, because American Anglos typically thought in terms of White and non-White peoples,[66] fourteen states prohibited marriages between Anglos and Asians.[67] As a result of the United States' conflict with Japan in World War II, Japanese people, as well as other Asians, endured widespread

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[60] "Do Blacks and Hispanics Get Along? Yes, But Not Always, and Not about Everything," Pew Research Center, January 31, 2008 http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/ 2008/01/31/do-blacks-and-hispanics-get-along/ (accessed January 13, 2018).

[61] Joseph Carroll, "Whites, Blacks, Hispanics Assess Race Relations in the U.S.," Gallup, August 6, 2007, http://news.gallup.com/poll/28312/Whites-Blacks-Hispanics-Assess-Race-Relations-US.aspx (accessed January 13, 2018).

[62] Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Rate Racial and Ethnic Relations in U.S. Positively, View Black-Hispanic Relations Least Positively," Gallup, July 17, 2013, http://news.gallup.com/poll/163535/americans-rate-racial-ethnic-relations-positively.aspx (accessed January 13, 2018).

[63] Ibid.

[64] See the chart included in the following article: Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans' Views of Black-White Relations Deteriorate," Gallup, August 6, 2015 http://news.gallup.com/poll/ 184484/ americans-views-black-white-relationsdeteriorate.aspx (accessed January 13, 2018).

[65] Earl Ofari Hutchinson, "The Black-Latino Blame Game," November 25, 2007, http://www.latimes.com/la-op-hutchinson25nov25-story.html Los Angeles Times (accessed January 13, 2018).

[66] Lewis and Ford-Robertson, "Occurrence of Interracial Marriage," 412.

[67] Peggy Pascoe, "Miscegenation Law, Court Cases, and Ideologies of 'Race' in Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 83.1 (June 1996): 49.

suspicions in the United States. This unease culminated in President Roosevelt's order on February 19, 1942, to place over 110,000 Japanese Americans in detention camps[68]

Because Asian Americans often are considered "model minorities" or "honorary whites,"[69] at times other minority groups consider them to be "inauthentic people of color"[70] who do not do not experience the full brunt of discrimination. Proponents of this view insist Anglos use the relative success of Asian Americans as a sort of "racial wedge" to downplay the country's ethnic issues.[71] This so-called "Asian privilege" has the ability to create tensions between Asians and African Americans.[72]

Asian Americans also have found themselves in the middle of ethnic conflicts of which they have no part. For example, one elderly Chinese American man related to the author that in the wake of Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968, the subsequent riots that beset Memphis resulted in significant damage to his downtown store. Rather than reacting to the loss with bitterness, the aged man explained that he had decided it was more important to pray for an end to the bitter ethnic strife that affected the United States.

In the twenty-first century, countless ethnic groups call the United States home, and each of them relate to one other in a number of overlapping ways—sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. The brief investigation in this section of the article is sufficient to propose that twenty-first century interethnic challenges are not merely Black-White issues. Multiethnic couples who derive from two minority groups may face difficulties just like their Anglo-Minority counterparts.

Acceptance

One of the greatest potential impediments multiethnic couples might encounter is denunciation by parents or other family members who are troubled by the relationship. While some relatives may express outright prejudicial inclinations because of differences in skin color, cultural practices, or national origin, others sincerely may believe they have their relatives' best interest at heart. Additionally, Christian family members who misunderstand scriptural teachings regarding multiethnic marriage spuriously may

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[68] Moon H. Jo and Daniel D. Mast, "Changing Images of Asian Americans," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 6.3 (Spring 1993): 425; cf. Daizaburo Yui, "From Exclusion to Integration: Asian Americans' Experiences in World War II," *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 24.2 (December 1992): 55-67.

[69] Jennifer Lee and Frank D. Bean, "Reinventing the Color Line: Immigration and America's New Racial/Ethnic Divide," *Social Forces* 86.2 (December 2007): 567.

[70] Elaine H. Kim, "'At Least You're Not Black': Asian Americans in U.S. Race Relations," *Social Justice* 25 (Fall 1998): 4.

[71] Kat Chow, "'Model Minority' Myth Again Used as a Racial Wedge between Asians and Blacks," NPR, April 19, 2017 http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/04/19/ 524571669/ model-minority-myth-again-used-as-a-racial-wedge-between-asians-and-blacks (accessed September 21, 2017).

[72] Kelly Chung Dawson, "Why Black-Asian Tensions Persist," China Daily, January 10, 2014, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2014-01/10/content_17228648.htm (accessed January 13, 2018).

object to the union on biblical grounds.[73]

Past and present difficulties in the realm of North American race relations also may influence family members' objections. For example, one American Anglo who excitedly reported to his parents his intentions to propose to a Nigerian woman was flabbergasted when he heard the following response: "We're not racists . . . but with all the problems there are in a marriage between two people, you have no business adding another dimension."[74] This tentativeness is not the exclusive purview of Anglo fathers and mothers. Minority parents who have experienced racial injustice may perceive their child's choice of a spouse as ethnic betrayal, or a case of "dominant-group men exploiting subordinate group women."[75]

While some parents ultimately grow accustomed to their children's intermarriage, even learning to love and accept their offspring's spouse, others never acclimate to the multiethnic aspect of the relationship. Renee Romano noted, "[S]trained relations with their families"[76] might persist for several years, or, in extreme cases, permanently. Endorsement or denunciation at the familial level is important. Studies show "social acceptance of the couple is, to some extent, dependent on how easily the couple is accepted into primary relationships."[77]

Judy Scales-Trent, an African-American woman whom strangers often mistake for an Anglo because of her relatively light skin and European features, observed that for some, "my very existence unsettles expectations of 'race.'"[78] The same statement holds true for multiethnic couples. Because intermarriage bridges a so-called racial gap (that in reality is a "social construct with no natural or biological quality"),[79] society has at times viewed ethnic intermingling as a threat to the status quo and/or racial purity.[80]

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[73] Fay Botham, *Almighty God Created the Races: Christianity, Interracial Marriage, and American Law* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 110. For a biblical defense of multiethnic marriage, see Matthew R. Akers, *Equally Yoked: A Premarital Counseling Primer for Multiethnic Christian Couples* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 7-72.

[74] Dugan Romano, *Intercultural Marriage: Promises and Pitfalls*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Intercultural Press, 2008), 91.

[75] Paul R. Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 364.

[76] Renee C. Romano, *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 70.

[77] Lewis and Ford-Robertson, "Occurrence of Interracial Marriage," 410.

[78] Judy Scales-Trent, *Notes of a White Black Woman: Race, Color, Community* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 7.

[79] Rafael Pérez-Torres, "Miscegenation Now!" *American Literary History* 17.2 (Summer 2005): 373.

[80] Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock," in *Interracialism: Black-White Intermarriage in American History, Literature, and Law*, ed. Werner Sollors (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 499.

As a whole, American culture has grown more supportive of intermarriage.[81] Individuals, however, do not always adhere to current societal practices of acceptability. As a result, multiethnic couples should expect a variety of reactions from people in their day-to-day encounters. These responses often are directly proportionate to the degree of dissimilarity between spouses' physical appearances.[82]

Research indicates Anglo-American society usually is more accepting of relationships in which Anglo men wed non-Anglo women, than instances in which Anglo women wed non-Anglo men.[83] The reverse is true in non-Anglo cultures. They might perceive marital unions in which women from their particular ethnic group outmarry as a rejection of cultural standards of attractiveness in favor of whiteness (i.e., betrayal).[84] Non-Anglo men also might find outmarrying as a threat to their own marital prospects. One Salvadoran man expressed to the author, "Why do so many gringos (i.e., Anglo Americans) like you marry Salvadoran women? If this trend continues, there will be no women left for us to marry."

Strangers serve as another potential source of consternation. People in stores and restaurants often stare at intermarried couples out of sheer curiosity, unaware their inquisitiveness causes discomfort. Husbands and wives will have to endure the knowledge that a whispered conversation nearby may relate to their multiethnic status. Occasionally, unfriendly gazes or comments from people who disapprove of intermarriage may sour an outing.

Summary of External Challenges

Prolific writer and New Testament scholar Craig Keener realized as a young man that ethnic problems in the United States are not fully resolved: "I had long assumed that the civil rights movement had mostly resolved the *real* racism, except for a few crazy white supremacists."[85] Keener's interactions with people who were ethnically different from him caused him to realize that his earlier suppositions were inaccurate. While many accomplishments resulted from the Civil Rights Act of 1964, legislation did

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[81] Kevin R. Johnson, "A Mixed Race Society: The End of Racism?" in *Mixed Race American and the Law: A Reader*, ed. Kevin R. Johnson (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 469.

[82] Spickard, *Mixed Blood*, 363-64; Nash, "The Hidden History of Mestizo America," 948. Nash explained that as early as World War I, in the United States diverse ethnic groups such as Punjabis and Mexicans experienced little discrimination because their skin color often possessed a similar tone. Husbands and wives whose skin tone is markedly different from one another do not possess this type of camouflage.

[83] Judith Wilson, "Optical Illusions: Images of Miscegenation in Nineteenth-and Tweintieth-Century American Art," *American Art* 5.3 (Summer 1991): 101; cf. Margaret D. Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans: Interracial Marriage between White Women and Native American Men, 1875-1935," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 23.3 (2002): 31.

[84] Romano, *Race Mixing*, 219-21.

[85] Craig Keener and Médine Moussounga Keener, *Impossible Love: The True Story of an African Civil War, Miracles and Hope against All Odds* (Minneapolis: Chosen Books, 2016), 67.

not change people's hearts or erase the painful memories of horrendous injustices that have occurred on United States soil.[86]

The wounds of the past have failed to heal properly, and in many ways they have festered with time. Multiethnic couples who choose to marry will find that the past continues to exert an influence on how others see them, as well as how they interrelate to one another. These stresses can put great pressure on multiethnic marriages.

<u>Internal Challenges</u>

Not all challenges that beset multiethnic couples originate from external sources. Individuals who derive from dissimilar people groups usually exhibit marked differences in certain aspects of their outlook on life as well as their cultural practices. This section considers some of the weightier internal challenges that affect multiethnic couples.

Worldview

Much like missionaries who labor cross-culturally experience some degree of culture shock, multiethnic couples will encounter significant cultural differences within the marriage covenant. Regardless of how long husbands and wives have been acquainted with each other prior to their wedding, subsequent interactions inevitably will reveal innumerable cultural practices of which they were unaware. Committed Christians possess a spiritual kinship and a theological system of belief that is common to them, but the ways in which representatives of unrelated cultures approach certain matters may be worlds apart.

Missiologists, anthropologists, and theologians refer to this phenomenon as worldview. Apologist James Sire provided an excellent definition of this important concept:

> A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.[87]

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[86] One should note that race-related difficulties are not exclusive to the United States. See, for example, Richard Graham, ed. *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Mitchell Rolls, "The Changing Politics of Miscegenation," *Aboriginal History* 29 (2005): 64; Telles and Sue, "Race Mixture: Boundary Crossing in Comparative Perspective," 133; Keener and Keener, *Impossible Love*, 81.

[87] James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 17.

Multiethnic couples cannot prepare themselves for every conceivable cultural difference that awaits them within the bonds of matrimony, but they can enter their marriage with the knowledge that worldview disparities will arise. Believers who marry people who originate from dissimilar contexts almost certainly will contend with issues such as identity, values, concept of time, and male and female roles.

Identity

Christians find their identity "in Christ"[88] as they crucify their old sinful way of life and "put on the new man" (Eph. 4:24; cf. Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20). In the context of this treatise, however, the term *identity* refers to the manner in which members of a culture interrelate to one another. Each population exerts a strong influence on its members' associations from birth onward. Because participants consequently pay little conscious attention to the manner in which they interact with each other,[89] this aspect of worldview functions as "the silent language of culture."[90]

Depending on their cultural background, people may belong to individualistic societies, community-based societies, or fall somewhere between these extreme positions. Western civilization is an excellent example of a culture in which "excessive individualism" exists.[91] In addition to displaying a strong sense of autonomy that rejects any perceived personal intrusions, adherents run the risk of exhibiting narcissistic tendencies. They often quantify their sense of worth in terms of their personal achievements.[92] Consequently, commodities such as one's occupation and net worth become intertwined with one's identity.

Community-based societies (Latin America being a prime example), on the other hand, "view themselves as part of a group, which usually is their family, tribe or community. People in these cultures [are] . . . part of a greater whole."[93] Ethnic groups who subscribe to this worldview value family and social connections greatly,[94] with the practical result that people tend not to make significant decisions apart from the collective influence of their society.

Marriages in which husbands and wives originate from opposite ends of the identity spectrum

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[88] E.g., Rom. 3:24; 6:3, 11 , 23; 8:1, 2; 8:39; 12:5; 15:17; 16:7; 1 Cor. 1:30; 4:15.

[89] Gerald A. Klingbeil, "Between 'I' and 'We,' The Anthropology of the Hebrew Bible and its Importance for a 21st-Century Ecclesiology," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 19.3 (2009): 322.

[90] Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 27.

[91] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 32.

[92] Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 123.

[93] Patty Lane, *A Beginner's Guide to Crossing Cultures: Making Friends in a Multi-Cultural World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 87.

[94] David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements* (Richmond, VA: Office of Overseas Operations, Southern Baptist Convention, n.d.), 37.

must overcome considerable and persistent challenges. Spouses who operate individualistically may become irritated by what they perceive as unnecessary intrusions and meddling by their partners' immediate family. Conversely, spouses who originate from community-based societies may agonize over their companions' apparent disregard of their families' good-natured interactions. In either case, multiethnic couples must learn to come to terms with each other's respective cultures[95] according to scriptural mandates.

An honest examination of both spouses' belief sets likely will reveal areas that are in accordance with Scripture. Other practices (e.g., worldview, values, gender roles, communication) will not be compatible with biblical teachings. Husbands and wives from disparate worldview systems will have to manufacture a hybrid system of identity that does not violate the precepts of God's Word.

Values

As the name of this category suggests, the concept of values as it pertains to ethnic groups[96] refers to that which a society cherishes or considers a core tenet of its ideological makeup.[97] Admittedly, this element of culture is somewhat elusive because every member of a specific people group does not necessarily assess all commodities equally.[98] This segment of the study need not examine all possible permutations of a particular culture's value, however, because its primary purpose is to make biblical counselors and multiethnic couples aware of potential value differences.

The two fundamental types of capital are material and nonmaterial assets.[99] Each culture regards one of these resources as more important than the other. For example, citizens of the United States normally focus heavily on the conversion of time into income.

Because residents of Mexico do not devote the same amount of energy to this goal as their northern neighbors, Mexican satirists sometimes ridicule the intensity with which Americans pursue this objective. One immensely popular comedic television show of the 1970s and 1980s, *Chapulin Colorado*, featured an American superhero whose name was Super Sam. This riches-obsessed champion wore a

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[95] Jill M. Bystydzienski, *Intercultural Couples: Crossing Boundaries, Negotiating Difference* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 79.

[96] One should note in a business context the phrase *cultural values* commonly refers to the economic affinities that a people group exhibits. For this application of the concept, see Andy S. Choi, Franco Papandrea, and Jeff Bennett, "Assessing Cultural Values: Developing an Attitudinal Scale," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 31.4 (2007): 312.

[97] Bruce J. Malina, *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology: Practical Models for Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986), 115.

[98] Sheila E. Henry, "Family Structure, Social Class, and Cultural Values," *Comparative Family Studies* 8.3 (Autumn 1977): 293-94.

[99] Eugene Nida, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*, in *The William Carey Library Series on Applied Cultural Anthropology*, ed. William A. Smalley (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1954), 42.

Superman costume that sported a dollar sign as a chest insignia, but his hat and goatee mimicked Uncle Sam's iconic appearance. Super Sam's catchphrase was the clichéd expression, "Time is money!" The program's titular character, Chapulin Colorado, always bested his American counterpart because Mexicans believed their approach to life was superior to the materialistic philosophy of the United States.[100]

The concept of freedom is a suitable illustration of an intangible value sundry people groups visualize differently. Everett Rogers and Thomas Steinfatt highlighted this principle by relating the story of an individual who lived in a communistic country: "An old woman in Saigon told one of the authors that she felt that she could not tolerate the lack of freedom in the United States. In Vietnam she was free to sell her vegetables on the sidewalk without being hassled by police or city authorities."[101] While an American doubtlessly would lament the elderly Vietnamese woman's lack of political freedom, she bemoaned the inability of Americans to participate in sidewalk business ventures at will.

Perceptions of directness contrast greatly as well. While certain cultures value blunt honesty, others seek to appease their hearers at the cost of truthfulness. For example, a man might agree to meet a friend at a designated hour without intending to keep the appointment. For him, his well-intentioned lie is preferable to frankness.

Without question, values are one of the most difficult subjects to reconcile in a cross-cultural context.[102] To exacerbate matters, ethnically diverse spouses may not be able to anticipate areas in which challenges will arise until the dissimilarities emerge in everyday situations or conversations. Intermarried couples will need to remember love is patient as they sort out their distinct cultural values in a way that glorifies God and contributes positively to their status as one flesh (1 Cor. 13:4; Mark 10:8).

Concept of Time

People's concepts of time vary appreciably depending on the worldviews they inherit from their parents and society.[103] Cultural anthropologist Paul Hiebert remarked that in a missiological context

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[100] "El Chapulin Colorado vs Super Sam," https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=l7Du8_SlH8Y (accessed January 17, 2018). Roberto Gómez Bolaños and Ramón Valdés, the actors who portrayed Chapulin Colorado and Super Sam respectively, are two of the most recognizable comedians in Mexico. Over three decades after their program originally aired, the television show remains popular throughout Latin America and portions of the United States in which Spanish speakers reside.

[101] Everett M. Rogers and Thomas M. Steinfatt, *Intercultural Communication* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1999), 84.

[102] Bruce Bradshaw, *Change Across Cultures: A Narrative Approach to Social Transformation*, with a foreword by Paul G. Hiebert (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 232.

[103] Carolyn M. Brown and Richard Segal, "Ethnic Differences in Temporal Orientation and its Implications for Hypertension Management," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 37.4 (December 1996): 350-51.

"cultural differences can lead to humorous situations."[104] In the bonds of matrimony, however, conflicting perceptions of time can be a source of irritation. Multiethnic couples may find themselves grappling with two issues pertaining to time: time-orientation versus event-orientation, and opposing notions of punctuality.

Time-oriented cultures, to which Anglo societies chiefly belong, structure their lives according to their clocks.[105] Additionally, they place high premiums on qualities such as organization and preparation. Adherents to this way of thinking spend much time planning for the future,[106] sometimes to the detriment of focusing on the present.

The event-oriented mindset, to which much of the Third World adheres, focuses on the present as well as "the relationships between people and events."[107] In other words, the fact that an event occurs is more important than the time in which it occurs. Because devotees often think little about planning for the future, they may be unprepared when tomorrow arrives.

Because time-orientation and event-orientation are largely incompatible,[108] representatives of either position frequently will exasperate adherents of the opposite philosophy. For example, at the author's wedding, his Anglo family and his bride's Salvadoran family converged for the ceremony in Houston. When the wedding did not begin at the scheduled hour because few attendees had arrived, some of the author's relatives despaired because of the delayed proceedings. This anxious reaction was a curiosity to the bride's family. As far as they were concerned, these activities fit the characteristic pattern of a Latin American wedding ceremony. An hour later, with a full auditorium, the service began and the tensions of the time-oriented and the event-oriented societies momentarily dissolved as two cultures became intertwined in marriage.

One's perception of promptness also is a subjective function of worldview. Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers provided helpful insight regarding varying approaches to this matter:

Americans and Germans … have a very short time-fuse and experience anxiety when there is a delay of five or more minutes. The concept of being late varies significantly from one culture to the next and from one individual to the next. … Most North Americans will begin to experience

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[104] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 63.

[105] J. Herbert Kane, *Life and Work on the Mission Field* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 101.

[106] James Breckenridge and Lillian Breckenridge, *What Color is Your God? Multicultural Education in America: Examining Christ and Culture in Light of the Changing Face of Culture* (Wheaton, IL: BridgePoint Books, 1995), 140.

[107] Paul G. Hiebert and Eloise Hiebert Meneses, *Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant, and Urban Societies* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 131.

[108] For an excellent resource that highlights the differences between time-orientation and event-orientation, see Charles H. Kraft, *Worldview for Christian Witness* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 233.

tension when others are fifteen minutes late; most Latin Americans will have tension when others are more than one hour late, whereas Yapese [a Micronesian people group] will not experience tension until the expected party is about three hours late.[109]

Since punctuality (or the lack thereof) touches upon nearly every aspect of one's day-to-day routine, multiethnic couples who do not share a corresponding pattern of timeliness will discover this contrast early in their relationship.

In their courtship phase, couples' timekeeping routines already begin to emerge. Boyfriends and girlfriends, however, usually overlook behavior that is eccentric from their standpoint more readily than do husbands and wives.[110] When the demands and adjustments of abiding together on a permanent basis begin to materialize, and spouses persistently insist their matters conform to their personal concept of time, clashes inevitably will occur. Husbands and wives will have to learn how to address the conflict in a Christ-like manner that pays particular attention to the attitudinal tone they express toward one another.[111]

Male and Female Roles

Before surveying this topic, a qualification about male and female roles is necessary. In Western culture, the matter has garnered much interest and generated countless volumes that examine the subject from every conceivable angle. Often, these discussions unfairly accuse Christianity of demeaning women by regarding them as inferior to men.[112] For evangelical Christians who believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of the Bible, this depiction is unacceptable (e.g., Joel 2:29; Gal. 3:28).[113] Rather, "Scripture is

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[109] Lingenfelter and Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, 38.

[110] Howard A. Eyrich, *Three to Get Ready: Premarital Counseling Manual*, 3rd rev. ed., with a foreword by D. James Kennedy (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2005), 84. Eyrich rightly noted that engaged couples tend to think in terms of romantic feelings rather than the concrete realities of married life.

[111] Jay E. Adams, *Christian Living in the Home* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1972), 39.

[112] Estelle B. Freedman, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002), 274-75; cf. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza "Public Discourse, Religion, and Wo/men's Struggles for Justice," *DePaul Law Review* 51 (Summer 2002): 1077-1101; Rosemary Radford Ruether, "The Theological Vision of Letty Russell," in *Liberating Eschatology: Essays in Honor of Letty M. Russell*, ed. Margaret A. Farley and Serene Jones (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 22; Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 28-29.

[113] For an excellent rejoinder to this unwarranted portrayal, see Dorothy Patterson, "The High Calling of Wife and Mother in a Biblical Perspective," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), 364-77.

the final judge of all cultural forms,"[114] including the subject of male and female roles within the context of marriage.

Nevertheless, certain roles are ambiguous as far as Scripture is concerned, varying greatly depending on one's cultural heritage. In some societies, only women prepare food, while in other locales both men and women share the burden interchangeably.[115] In certain contexts, society considers agricultural endeavors like gardening and agriculture to be the work of females, whereas in other regions males exclusively engage in these activities.[116] The question of whether women should work outside of the home is perhaps one of the most culturally divisive issues, and distinct people groups provide dissimilar answers.

Multiethnic couples who find themselves in disagreement over gender roles will need to perform two tasks. First, they must examine Scripture in order to determine whether either of the spouses have beliefs that are incompatible with God's Word. Second, if this investigation reveals any unbiblical attitudes regarding the responsibilities of husbands and wives, spouses must amend their views in order to reflect scriptural teachings. In the event that couples discover areas of divergence that are culturally (rather than biblically) derived, they will need to agree on a resolution that is: 1) consistent with scriptural standards, 2) satisfactory to both the husband and wife, and 3) conducive to producing the marital harmony Christian spouses should enjoy.

Communication

In its most basic sense, "communication is the transmission of information from a 'sender' to a 'receiver.' It may occur between humans, animals, and even machines."[117] In the context of this paper, the primary focus is upon the manner in which people exchange their thoughts and ideas with one another in a multiethnic relationship. Other types of discourse fall without the bounds of this examination. Interpersonal communication consists of two components that help to express one's thoughts and emotional state: verbal interchange and nonverbal signals.

Spoken language naturally is an indispensable feature of the communicative process, but it is not the only component at work within a given oral transaction. For example, diverse ethnic groups possess

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[114] Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 181.

[115] Bystydzienski, *Intercultural Couples*, 98.

[116] Stephen A. Grunlan and Marvin K. Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 130.

[117] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 142; cf. Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 122-25.

differing standards of acceptability in regard to the tone of voice suitable to a particular type of conversation.[118] Consequently, when husbands and wives originate from dissimilar backgrounds, their standards of appropriateness may or may not correspond to their spouses' notion of proper and improper etiquette.

Gail Benjamin conducted an experimental study comparing the perception of tone by Japanese and American subjects. Participants listened to prerecorded Japanese audio exchanges that did not include a visual representation of the orator. Not surprisingly, the findings indicated Japanese speakers accurately recognized the significance of tonal quality more readily than their American counterparts.[119] This high prediction rate was the result of the Japanese language's heavy emphasis on timbre, as well as the Japanese participants' familiarity with these unwritten rules. The study's predictable results draw attention to the role cultural competency plays in the accurate interpretation of clues accompanying verbal communication.

Two other facets of oral communication that may prove to be sources of bewilderment in multiethnic marriage situations are ironical statements and idiomatic expressions. Verbal irony refers to utterances meaning "the opposite of [their] literal form[s]."[120] Studies show that as much as 8 percent of interactions between friends contain ironical observations, which even in this familiar setting may cause confusion because of their ambiguous nature.[121] One should expect a similar reaction within the bonds of marriage, especially when conflicting worldviews are at play.

Idiomatic expressions are unique figures of speech in that "their meanings cannot be predicted from the literal meaning of their parts and the choice of component lexical items is largely a matter of convention."[122] Because idioms are an outgrowth of culture and worldview,[123] they make little sense to outsiders. Spanish speakers are fond of the phrase, "las palabras se las lleva el viento." The expression's literal translation, "words are taken away by the wind," does not convey the actual spirit of the saying. Only an individual versed in Spanish and English realizes the adage actually means, "Actions speak louder than words."

Tone, irony, and idioms are but a few of the instruments of verbal communication with which multiethnic couples often contend. Knowing of their problematic nature beforehand will help

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[118] Melanie Sperling, Deborah Appleman, Keith Gilyard, and Sarah Freedman, "Voice in the Context of Literacy Studies," *Reading Research Quarterly* 46.1 (January-March): 74.

[119] Gail R. Benjamin, "Tone of Voice in Japanese Conversation," *Language in Society* 6.1 (April 1977): 11.

[120] Rebecca Clift, "Irony in Conversation," *Language in Society* 28.4 (December 1999): 524.

[121] Penny M. Pexman, "It's Fascinating Research: The Cognition of Verbal Irony," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 17.4 (August 2008): 286.

[122] William O'Grady, "The Syntax of Idioms," *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 16.2 (May 1998): 280.

[123] Wolf Leslau, "Harari Idioms," *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici* 19 (1963): 150.

intermarried husbands and wives recognize miscommunication when it occurs and respond in a biblical manner instead of taking offense hastily. "A gentle answer turns away wrath" (Prov. 15:1a), and Christian spouses who put this principle into practice in their marriages will disarm possible altercations before they escalate.

Nonverbal communication denotes "the process whereby a message is sent and received through any one of the senses without the use of language."[124] Eugene Nida explained that numerous speakers do not realize the influence their gesticulations have upon the messages they wish to relate:

> Their failure to understand what they really are communicating usually results from a misconception as to the true nature of communication. They presume that their words are the message, while in reality their words are only part of the message, in fact, a relatively small part. For along with the words, they are always transmitting another message, by tone of voice, gestures, stance, eye contact, and distance.[125]

In other words, nonverbal signals strongly influence the recipient's comprehension of the speech act. Communicators who desire to convey a particular thought unknowingly may impart another idea altogether if their gestures do not accord with the hearer's perception of these signs.

In a multiethnic context, one also must be aware that a harmless hand movement in one culture may be a vulgar insult to another people group. One example of this phenomenon is the use of one's hands to relay messages.[126] Stephen Grunlan and Marvin Meyers explained, "The hand motion with fingers extended down from the palm and moved in rhythm toward the speaker signifies 'goodby' [sic] to someone from the United States but means 'come here' to most Latin Americans."[127] One fascinating—and potentially mortifying—point the authors did not disclose, however, is that the gesture Americans use to call someone (the hand motion with fingers extended up from the palm) is inappropriate in a Latin American environment. Rather than serving as a suitable manner by which to request someone's attention, Hispanics use the gesticulation to call their dogs.

If intermarried husbands and wives are not aware every culture possesses unique nonverbal communication, they may inadvertently demean each other if they innocently make rude gestures that possesses no such stigma in their native society. Employed haphazardly, such signals are capable of causing great offense. A frank, but courteous conversation about culturally unacceptable nonverbal signals, along

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[124] Grunlan and Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology*, 96.

[125] Eugene A. Nida, "The Other Message," *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 3.3 (July 1979): 110.

[126] Another example of nonverbal communication is facial expressions. See Rogers and Steinfatt, *Intercultural Communication*, 163.

[127] Grunlan and Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology*, 97.

with a measure of forbearance when the occasional faux pas occurs, will prevent this considerable challenge from becoming a source of contention.

Day-to-Day Issues

Food

Sustenance is a universal requirement of humankind, but that which people consider palatable varies greatly from culture to culture. In the author's international travels, his gracious hosts have offered the author local delicacies such as toasted ants (Guatemala), guinea pig (Ecuador), boiled cow intestines (Peru), and chicken embryo (The Philippines). Undoubtedly, many Americans would find at least some of these items repulsive. Representatives of the above countries likewise would turn their noses at some examples of typical American cuisine. Because of the subjectivity of food preferences, one people group's banquet is another's scraps,[128] or in certain circumstances, a beloved pet.[129]

In addition to the exotic dishes a particular culture enjoys, multiethnic spouses may find other aspects of their mates' mealtime habits unfamiliar as they begin to establish a collaborative dining routine. Dugan Romano listed three other potential areas of discord: 1) the time of the main meal (breakfast, lunch, or supper); 2) the location of the meal (a table or a mat on the floor); and 3) the instrument one uses to place food in one's mouth (fingers, silverware, or chopsticks).[130] Individuals with limited cross-cultural experience are unlikely to anticipate all of these divergences without the assistance of a knowledgeable biblical counselor to guide them proactively through this assortment of items.

Two practical observations are worth noting. First, since New Testament dietary instructions are almost nonexistent (cf. Acts 10:1-35), for the most part food preferences are culturally dictated and, hence, morally ambiguous.[131] Second, neither spouse should expect mealtime in a multiethnic house to reflect only one of the participant's cultures. Consequently, thoughtful, mutual compromise will help to develop a menu and a schedule with which both spouses are comfortable.

Finances

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[128] For a list of ethnic delicacies that some people groups find abhorrent, see Marla Alupoaicei, *Your Intercultural Marriage: A Guide to a Healthy, Happy Relationship* (Chicago: Moody, 2009), 139-40. Some of the strangest foods (from a Western perspective) Alupoaicei itemized include owl soup, calf's head, fermented shark meat, monkey toes, and sheep brains.

[129] Fred E. Jandt, *Intercultural Communication: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 177.

[130] Romano, *Intercultural Marriage*, 41.

[131] Two exceptions would be the consumption of blood and strangled animals, prohibitions the apostles placed on Jews and Gentiles alike (Acts 15:19-20; cf. 1 Cor. 10:31-32).

The manner in which couples manage their finances is a crucial feature of monocultural marriages,[132] and multiethnic unions are no different. Multiple studies suggest that "the number-one area of conflict in a marriage . . . is money. How money is to be earned and spent, and by whom, and who manages it, are questions which every couple needs to ask."[133] Spouses who possess a similar cultural heritage bicker over finances because their ideologies do not always correspond. One should expect multiethnic couples to experience even greater trials when their worldviews do not align with one another.

In cultures in which participants plan for the future, a larger percentage of capital will find its way into savings and retirement accounts. Civilizations in which the present takes precedence over days to come will focus more on contemporary considerations. To presume all members of a particular ethnic group think analogously about a given subject is a gross simplification. To some extent, however, a population's predominant worldview influences decisions regarding the acquisition, investment, and expenditure of money.[134]

For example, one's financial commitment to family members other than spouses and children tends to vary according to ethnicity. In some cases, this obligation manifests itself in the form of sending a portion of one's earnings to relatives who reside outside of the United States.[135] Such remittances may be difficult for fledgling marriage partners to afford, and one spouse may question the practice of distributing their resources altogether.

Another financial responsibility that varies from culture to culture relates to the amount of in-house caregiving couples provide their elderly parents:

A 2001 survey on multicultural boomers by AARP [The American Association of Retired Persons] found that Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics are more likely to have three generations under

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[132] Carrie Yodanis and Sean Lauer, "Managing Money in Marriage: Multilevel and Cross-National Effects of the Breadwinner Role," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69.5 (December 2007): 1307-8.

[133] G. Shelling and J. Fraser-Smith, *In Love but Worlds Apart: Insights, Questions, and Tips for the Intercultural Couple* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008), 89. Unfortunately, disagreements over money are a leading cause of divorce.

[134] Maria Julia, "The Need for Cultural Considerations in Examining Puerto Rican Financial Retirement Planning," *International Review of Modern Sociology* 28.2 (Autumn 1998): 18-19.

[135] Cf. Phyllis J. Johnson and Kathrin Stoll, "Remittance Patterns of Southern Sudanese Refugee Men: Enacting the Global Breadwinner Role," *Family Relations* 57.4 (October 2008): 431-43; Devesh Kapur and John McHale, "Migration's New Payoff," *Foreign Policy* 139 (November-December 2003): 48-57; Debbie Nathan, "Sending Love and Money: A Photo Essay on Mexican Migration," *New Labor Forum* 18.2 (Spring 2009): 52-59; Moshe Semyonov, "Labor Migration, Remittances, and Household Income: A Comparison between Filipino and Filipina Overseas Workers," *International Migration Review* 39.1 (Spring 2005): 45-68; Hung Cam Thai, "Money and Masculinity Among Low Wage Vietnamese Immigrants in Transnational Families," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 32.2 (Autumn 2006): 247-71.

one roof or extended family living in the home than Whites. Furthermore, Asians (42%) were more likely to care for an older relative than Hispanics (34%), Blacks (28%) or Whites (19%).[136]

One ramification of these statistics is that people who marry across ethnic lines are prone to deviate on the issue of how much caregiving is appropriate.

Furthermore, spouses may feel trapped between the expectations of aging parents and the desires of their marriage partners. In this case, couples will need to recall scriptural principles regarding the preeminence of the marital relationship (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6). They cannot allow varying cultural norms to drive a wedge between them. Instead, they must apply biblical passages regarding finances and caring for the elderly (e.g., Luke 14:28; Mark 7:9-13; 1 Tim. 5:8) to their situation so they can be certain the Bible directs their path.

Childrearing

Parenthood brings great changes to the lives of married couples. Intermarried spouses who have begun to grow accustomed to each other's idiosyncrasies should expect to revisit these distinctives as they prepare to bring a new life into the world. Issues to consider include the child's cultural identity (i.e., monocultural or bicultural),[137] language acquisition (i.e., monolingual or bilingual when parents speak multiple dialects),[138] and even the infant's official racial designation as recorded on the birth certificate. Couples should discuss these items thoroughly as they begin to think about raising a family.

In some cases, intermarried spouses also will need to ready their parents for the arrival of a multiethnic child. Marla Alupoaicei offered the following practical questions for consideration: "Are the grandparents and other family members prepared to accept a biracial, bicultural, and bilingual child? Do they understand that the child may not look like their side of the family?"[139] On a positive note, parents who have had difficulties accepting their child's multiethnic marriage often reconsider their reservations at the birth of their grandchild.[140]

Intermarried parents also must decide what type of training is necessary to help their offspring manage any insults others may direct toward them because of their multiethnic heritage. Terms such as *oreo* and *zebra* that were common insults a generation ago[141] usually are not a part of an antagonist's

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[136] Sheel Pandya, "Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Older Adults in Long-Term Care Service Use," American Association of Retired Persons, http://www.aarp.org/ home-garden/livable-communities/info-2005/fs119_ltc.html (accessed January 23, 2018).

[137] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 242.

[138] Alupoaicei, *Your Intercultural Marriage*, 170.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Lewis and Ford-Robertson, "Occurrence of Interracial Marriage," 410.

[141] Foeman and Nance, "From Miscegenation to Multiculturalism," 548.

vocabulary today, but each generation has its own derogatory remarks. Multiethnic parents cannot shield their offspring from ridicule, but they can emphasize the advantages of belonging to dual heritages. Furthermore, they also can underscore the manner in which God employed multiethnic Christians such as Timothy to reach multiple people groups with the gospel.

Cultural Implementation

Missionaries who move to exotic environments struggle to adjust to unfamiliar languages, customs, and worldviews. Similarly, multiethnic couples will have to acclimate to mates whose cultural underpinnings are altogether strange from their perspective. The technical term for the frustration that accompanies this realization of dissimilarity is *culture shock*.

Louis Luzbetak aptly described culture shock as "the constant jolting and the consequent stress and fatigue associated with living in a society that has different ways and values from those that have become second nature to the outsider."[142] Mercifully, missionaries who undergo this type of tension find momentarily relief in the refuge of their homes. In the case of multiethnic marriage, however, no such haven exists because the home is the primary place in which culture shock occurs.

Many anthropologists and worldview experts doubt an outsider ever can become fully habituated to another set of cultural proclivities,[143] but familiarization and accommodation is possible for spouses who intermarry. Patty Lane reminded readers that the acculturation process certainly "impacts our application of God's truth, but does not change the absolute nature of God's truth."[144] In other words, believers must learn to jettison any cultural practices that contradict Scripture. Neutral behaviors and mindsets, however, are negotiable.

If multiethnic spouses are to have joyous, Christ-honoring marriages, they must not allow differences to become causes of strife. They must learn to live with each other in an understanding way despite any cultural peculiarities (cf. 1 Pet. 3:7a). While "adjusting one's lifestyle and thought patterns to fit a new culture is a . . . stressful experience,"[145] especially in the context of matrimony, participants who view the enterprise properly will not become exasperated. Couples can learn to appreciate—and even enjoy—the uniqueness that each mate has to offer.

G. Shelling and J. Fraser-Smith, the authors of a work that addressed the topic of multiethnic marriage, likened the assimilation that inevitably transpires within marriage to a masterpiece on which

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[142] Louis Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: An Applied Anthropology for the Religious Worker* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1970), 204.

[143] Lingenfelter and Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, 121.

[144] Lane, *A Beginner's Guide to Crossing Cultures*, 137.

[145] Myron Loss, *Culture Shock: Dealing with Stress in Cross-Cultural Living*, 3rd ed. (Winona Lake, IN: Light and Life Press, 1983), 47.

two artists collaborate:

> Each partner brings a different set of tools to the task of creating an art piece. Does that mean that neither can learn to appreciate or use those of the other? Of course not. Each partner learns to understand how the tastes and preferences of the other function, what good they can bring to the project, and how they can enrich the whole picture.[146]

The consequence of this optimistic outlook is what missiologists refer to as "150 percent persons,"[147] that is, people who learn to operate in other cultures with a degree of ease.

As multiethnic couples cleave to one another and weave a new life together, they will learn not only to tolerate differences, but also to enjoy each other's food, customs, and unique contributions to the marriage covenant.[148] Apart from God and adherence to His biblical principles, this type of intimacy may be unobtainable for intermarried Christians. However, when couples remember that as believers they are one in Christ Jesus regardless of ethnic heritage, they will realize no cultural challenge is insurmountable if they follow the scriptural model of marriage.

Summary of Internal Challenges

At first glance, external challenges to multiethnic marriages may appear to be the most prodigious stressors that couples encounter. Nevertheless, this section of the article has demonstrated potential internal factors are both abundant and capable of engendering catastrophic damage if couples do not handle them well. Biblical counselors would do well to familiarize themselves with these issues so that they know which areas they should explore with counselees as they gather data regarding multiethnic couples' marital discord.

Of course, the above difficulties are not the only factors multiethnic couples endure. Some matters they experience are the same concerns as those of their monoethnic counterparts (e.g., self-centeredness, priorities, patience). However, given the propensity for multicultural conflict, couples who marry across ethnic lines are likely to grapple with one or more of the internal challenges that this section considers.

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[146] Shelling and Fraser-Smieth, *In Love But Worlds Apart*, 53.

[147] Lingenfelter and Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, 124.

[148] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 76.

Conclusion

Scripture is a sufficient and perfect resource for addressing any counseling problems that affect multiethnic marriages (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21). In His infinite wisdom, the Holy Spirit directed the human authors of the Bible to write their texts for the benefit of readers (2 Cor. 4:15). For this reason, Scripture is replete with marriage propositions that addresses any conceivable issue couples experience.

Counselors must be careful not to apply haphazardly the lessons of Scripture. Not every verse applies to any particular situation. Rather, only counselors who apply Scripture accurately provide the balm by which counselees can learn what they must do to please Christ and to address their problems in a manner befitting of God's children.

If counselors are to point their charges in the right direction, they must: 1) know Scripture well; 2) rightly handle Scripture in a manner that does not violate its meaning (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15); 3) possess an accurate understanding of counselees' marital problems; and 4) apply the proper biblical axioms to counselees' marriages in a concrete manner. The focus of this article has been to examine significant external and internal stressors that jeopardize the stability of multiethnic marriages. Biblical counselors who familiarize themselves with these challenges will receive the benefit of better recognizing the multicultural issues at hand when they emerge in the counseling room. This knowledge in turn will help the counselor to identify appropriate biblical principles by which to help multiethnic Christian couples love one another and honor Christ with their marriages.

REVIEWS

A REVIEW OF MARK MCMINN'S *SCIENCE OF VIRTUE: WHY POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY MATTERS TO THE CHURCH*

By Nate Brooks[1]

Mark McMinn's recent book, The Science of Virtue, is based around two core assumptions. First, is that positive psychology needs the church. Positive psychology is the relatively recent discipline (McMinn dates its origins to an APA talk in 1998) that seeks to study what goes right with people. As evidenced by the progression of the book, positive psychology studies wisdom, forgiveness, gratitude, humility and other virtues. For all his enthusiasm about positive psychology, McMinn is concerned that without an understanding of Christian virtue, positive psychology drifts towards a sterile, reductionist understanding.

McMinn admits his second core assumption will be polarizing: the church needs positive psychology. Positive psychology provides a ground for science and faith to dialogue because "the subject matter—virtue—is something valued by both parties in the conversation" (9). Just as the church is able to inform positive psychology's understanding of true virtue, positive psychology fills in specifics where the Bible is lacking. Speaking of forgiveness, McMinn opines,

> Most Christians agree that forgiveness is important. Jesus taught that we should forgive others in various ways, even right in the middle of the Lord's Prayer. … But how do we forgive? … The practical strategies for accomplishing forgiveness tend not to show up in the Bible, though it is clear we are called to figure it out. I have good news about this because positive psychologists have done tremendous work in figuring out the mechanism for forgiveness (9).

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Consequently, a sermon that "goes beyond the Christian mandate to forgive and demonstrates how it is actually done" will most likely be preached by a pastor who is trained in positive psychology (9).

The idea that the Bible does not sufficiently explain how to forgive comes as quite a surprise. Forgiveness is an essential character quality of Yahweh (Ex. 34:7) and cannot be understood apart from His actions in forgiving fallen men and women. Ephesians 4:32 makes clear the manner in which Christians are to forgive—"Just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." Rather than lacking a specific "mechanism," the Scriptures detail forgiveness far more clearly than any psychological analysis could by rooting genuine forgiveness in the template of God's forgiveness of man.

McMinn extends the lack of specificity beyond forgiveness to other key aspects of following Christ. "A full-bodied understanding of virtue calls us toward teleology, toward sanctification, toward understanding we are on a pathway toward becoming more fully the people we were created to be. Imagine how this might look in counseling. … In a Christian counseling context these virtues would undoubtedly be shaped by the church and would include the topics discussed in this book—forgiveness and hope and gratitude, wisdom and humility and grace. Understanding the science associated with each of these topics might, in turn, help counselors consider the mechanisms of change in their client's lives" (166). Are we really to believe that the Scriptures are devoid of explaining the method of growing in the fruit of the Spirit? Galatians 3:3 asks a pertinent question: Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? How could God be good if he were to command his people to grow in grace without describing for them how to do so? Such a deity does not resemble the God of the Bible, but Pharaoh commanding the Israelites to supply bricks without straw.

While the second of McMinn's assumptions is the more polarizing of the two, the first assumption bears scrutiny as well. How does one establish what is virtuous? And is the science of virtue really science?

Speaking of virtue requires a baseline for evaluation. McMinn moves in a good direction when he says that virtue without Christianity is "sterile." However, even this assumes agreement on what constitutes virtue. In the missionary classic The Peace Child, Don Richardson describes the backwards "virtues" of the Sawi tribesmen who found in Judas a model worthy of emulation. Indeed, Romans 1 concludes that by his autonomous reasoning, mankind descends to being "inventors of evil." Speaking of virtue requires special revelation as all virtue is reflective of God's character and work. When positive psychology studies wisdom, what exactly is it studying? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Any study that fails to discriminate between worldly

wisdom and revealed wisdom will be incapable of coming to accurate conclusions regarding wisdom.

Similarly troubling is the view of science taken by positive psychology. Psychology has historically been considered the domain of philosophy, not science, and positive psychology is a perfect example of why this is the case. While observational psychology can provide helpful information regarding patterns of human thought and behavior, as soon as it moves to interpret the data it has moved into the realm of philosophy. McMinn notes that forgiveness lowers blood pressure, reduces back pain, and increases an individuals' vertical jump (48). This is fine and acceptable. There are times where this will not be the case (see Jesus on the cross), but these physiological results are helpful to know. However, it is illegitimate to argue from this scientific data that science proves we should forgive. What happens when observational psychology indicates that heteronormativity is dangerous? Interpretation of data must remain in realm of philosophy (i.e., theology). Karl Barth helpfully reminds us that science is only able to address the outer man, for it cannot measure man's essence. The inner man is the reserve of special revelation (Church Dogmatics, 43. Pg 20-21).

McMinn is clear what drives his desire to wed positive psychology with the church. "Science is the language of the day, and if we in the church want to remain relevant, we need to keep up with the dialect … " (125). While he is clear that science does not hold all the answers, this impulse to save the church from irrelevance makes explicit McMinn's driving presuppositions. Without psychology, the church will become irrelevant.

How?

Church history is full of a long string of theologians warning that the church is going to become irrelevant. Descartes tried to save Christianity from irrelevancy by starting with reason. The Modernists sought to save it from scientific progress. McLaren fought to save the church from postmodernism. Every attempt to save the church by propping up its influence with some outside element has always ended in disaster. McMinn's definition of counseling bears out this arc: "That's what counseling is: sitting with people in the complicated places of life, with such a calm and gracious presence that it makes people want to lean in and get a closer look" (143). Is this how Jesus counseled?

Church history also bears out the fact that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. The church rarely speaks the prevailing dialects well, but of what matter is this when the prevailing dialects are built upon wrong foundations? Though some may call it simplistic, the faithful application of God's Word to the problems individuals face will never be moved to the dustbin of history. There are hard words in such counsel, words like sin and repentance and

suffering and sovereignty. Faithful biblical counsel may not always be "calm" and "positive," but we can know that it will never be irrelevant.

A REVIEW OF MIKE EMLET'S *DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESCRIPTIONS: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS AND MEDICATIONS*

By Sam Stephens[2]

Psychiatric diagnoses and psychoactive medications have become somewhat common in American life. Like it or not, Christians find themselves steeped in this cultural milieu. Often those within the church who are invested in evangelism, discipleship, and one-another ministry interact with hurting people who have been prescribed psychoactive medications or may have been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder. Those of us called to the biblical mandate of soul care can become intimidated by the medical jargon or overwhelmed by difficult to pronounce medications brought to us by those whom we seek to counsel in the name of Jesus Christ.

As Christians seeking to minister God's Word, how should we view psychiatry? Are psychiatric diagnoses helpful? What about psychoactive medications? These are just a few questions that are broached by Michael Emlet in his new book, *Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnosis and Medications.* Emlet holds an M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and practiced as a family physician for over a decade. He also earned his M.Div. from Westminster Theological Seminary before coming to the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation (CCEF) where he currently serves as a faculty member. The author's background in both medicine and theology has made him well-suited to answer the questions asked by "helpers in the church" who need assistance in navigating these choppy and often controversial waters (3).

The purpose of this concise volume, only 100 pages in length, is to help the reader move to a more balanced "view of psychiatric diagnoses and medications" (2). A majority of Emlet's audience, it is assumed, lies in one of two camps. Either the reader is "too cold" toward psychiatric diagnoses and medications meaning they are generally wary and skeptical of their use, or the reader is "too

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warm" toward these tools in that they generally see no harm in utilizing these gifts of common grace (79). Throughout the book, Emlet argues for what he calls the "Goldilocks Principle" as the best solution to escape the polemic that this topic tends toward. This "third way," it is suggested, provides the proverbial balance between two extremes (50).

Considering this book's contribution to CCEF's "helping the helper series," there are notable strengths to *Descriptions and Prescriptions*. First to note, this book is manageable and readable. It is neatly divided into two main sections, one dealing with psychiatric diagnoses and the other with psychoactive medications. In the way that it has been structured, one can see how Emlet intends that his book be "useful and bear fruit in real life ministry situations" as well as that it be easily accessible to readers who may be unfamiliar with the topic at hand. The author also points to the fact that there are several footnotes used in this book. According to Emlet, these are to provide further nuances for a topic that is this important and complex (3). Most of Emlet's primary audience, those identified as "helpers in the church," do not likely read academic literature that often contains extensive and multi-referenced footnotes, and gratefully they will not find those in this book. For the most part, Emlet cites single-sources, which are easily accessible.

In the second half of the book, which focuses on psychoactive medications, Emlet rightly notes that this topic is relevant because we live in a day when medication seems to be the first approach regarding most aspects of treatment, especially within psychiatry (53). For the typical pastor or church member who is interested in embarking in soul care ministry, the topic of psychoactive medication, not to mention the inner workings of the brain, can be daunting to say the least. With his background as a physician, Emlet does an excellent job breaking through ambiguous medical jargon in order to clearly communicate to his audience. In what is one of the most helpful sections of the book (chapter 11), the author not only familiarizes the reader with the various classifications for psychoactive medications, he also manages to include relevant historical background for each class of drug, a list of the most common drugs within each category, and an overview of how neurotransmitters work within the brain (59-60). This is a tall order for any author, but Emlet's writing is clear, concise, and well-organized in its presentation while maintaining an appreciation for the reader's comprehension and intelligence. As a doctoral candidate who has read much regarding the history of psychopharmacology, I can appreciate how difficult it can be to wade through pages of medicalized language and I am thankful for a resource that can succinctly, but accurately, provide an overview of what psychoactive medications are, what they purport to accomplish, and how they often depicted.

With the understanding that *Descriptions and Prescriptions* is not intended to be a comprehensive guide on the part of the author (4) and also acknowledging that a topic as

controversial and pervasive as this cannot be exhaustively explored in one volume, there are several overt weaknesses that challenge the "balanced view" that Emlet proposes to his reader. As a reminder, Emlet's objective in this volume is to argue that psychiatric diagnoses and medications should not be approached in a way that is either too favorable or unfavorable, but one in which a balance between these two extremes can be reached. While this seems like the preferred way for anyone seeking to "bear one another's burdens" in a Christ-honoring way, Emlet never explicitly informs the reader as to what this "balance" really means. While he claims that the balanced approach is the best, he makes several statements through this book which reveal a bias geared toward one extreme over the other. For example, at the very beginning of the book, Emlet states, "Psychiatric diagnostic classification and psychoactive medications provide a way to understand and help those who are burdened in particular ways" (2). This assumption suggests that there is an inherent *value* in utilizing these tools.

Another assumption made by Emlet is that Christians *need* a balanced approach that is both biblically and scientifically informed (42). Throughout the book, he repeatedly calls the reader to help those who are suffering by avoiding the "too warm" or "too cold" extremes. Emlet states, "To the extent that using psychiatric terminology helps with that goal, we must be open to that help" (9). Emlet does go on to say that psychiatric terminology can hinder the goal of providing help, but offers no specifics. Words like "need" and "must" denote language of necessity and urgency. In both instances, Emlet leans more towards a congenial outlook on psychiatric assistance. Furthermore, Emlet does not expound upon what a "biblically (and scientifically!) informed approach" actually looks like (8). While he frequently provides characterizations of those who are be considered "too warm" or "too cold," many of these are generalized and do not provide detailed accounts of how Scripture and social science work together in a harmonized way to achieve help for those who are hurting.

For example, Emlet does not differentiate the process of clinical diagnosis between that of a general physician and a psychiatrist. While both look for symptoms and signs, the diagnostic evaluation and procedure is not the same. General physicians dealing with biological and viral illness can link symptoms (e.g. "runny nose, sore throat") with corresponding empirically measurable signs (e.g., "mild fever [100.8 F] . . . red throat but no exudate [pus]"). Psychiatrists, despite popular notions, do not often make a scientifically verifiable link between self-reported symptoms and signs.[3] A feeling of sadness and despondency often cannot be entirely traced to a

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[3] There are several published works written by those within the psychiatric that are self-critical and speak to inconsistencies within the field. See Michael Alan Taylor. *Hippocrates Cried: The Decline of American Psychiatry*. Oxford:

scientifically verifiable cause; however, all that the author provides for proof that clinical psychiatry operates in the "same way" as the clinical work of a general doctor is his statement that "symptoms and signs of disordered mental states may be more challenging to assess and verify" (11). With many in the general public knowing no difference between general medicine and psychiatry, it is irresponsible and at worst misleading for Emlet to characterize the diagnostic process as qualitatively similar.[4]

Emlet's comment that the framers of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) "do not have a more viable evidence-based alternative" to their categorization system is a remarkable statement to have made for two reasons (16). The first reason is that he previously made it a point, at length, to relate the diagnostic process of general medicine and the psychiatry. Secondly, Emlet does not offer his reader references to works that offer more information on the subjective and biased approach to the compiling of the DSM in specific and psychiatric disorders in general.[5] It seems that the author fails to demonstrate how a lack of empirical evidence behind the DSM, which is the world's most comprehensive psychiatric diagnostic textbook, should not threaten the "warm" approach to psychiatry.

Emlet is clear about the questionable history of psychiatry when he details the "battle of two ideologies" within the field (13). Psychiatry, unlike that of general medicine, has made a shift from a psychotherapeutic and psychodynamic emphasis on disease etiology and pathology to a biologically-driven emphasis. Emlet's use of the DSM as a backdrop to this shift in psychiatric diagnosis is informative and demonstrates his knowledge of the field. In fact, the author does not shy away from what he identifies at the "problems and pitfalls" of psychiatric diagnosis, dedicating four chapters to these issues in the first part of his book.[6] In addition to this, he also notes that psychiatry is primarily undergirded by assumptions and philosophies which support a naturalistic and biologically-driven anthropology (20-21, 31).

In one of the strongest chapters in the first part of the book, one that underscores the implications of utilizing psychiatric diagnoses for the ministry to hurting people (chapter 8), Emlet provides a solid reminder to his readers not to let any medical diagnosis distract from the true

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Oxford University Press, 2013, and Daniel J. Carlat. *Unhinged: The Trouble with Psychiatry—A Doctor's Revelations about a Profession in Crisis*, 2010.

[4] Emlet does note the lack of "laboratory tests" (12).

[5] Allen Frances, chair of the DSM-IV taskforce, exposed the subjective and un-scientific procedures of selecting psychiatric diagnoses. See, Allen Frances. *Saving Normal: An Insiders Revolt Against Out-of-Control Psychiatric Diagnosis, DSM-5, Big Pharma, and the Medicalization of the Ordinary Life*. New York: HarperCollins, 2013.

[6] Gary Greenberg. *The Book of Woe: The DSM and the Unmaking of Psychiatry*. New York: Blue Rider Press, 2013.

purpose of ministry and that is placing all focus and worship onto a holy and righteous God instead of upon ourselves. While he notes how various psychiatric diagnoses often become part of the person's very identity, he continues to insist that knowledge and even "medical expertise" in psychiatric diagnoses is not only helpful but needed without offering an explanation as to why (36). As a reader who is aware of the pseudo-science and philosophical bias surrounding the field of psychiatry, it is difficult to understand how Emlet can make a statement like the one above and yet simultaneously argue that these diagnoses should be submitted to biblical categories. If we need the biblical categories in order to "make sense of what we observe in others," then why even utilize psychiatry in the first place? (42).[7]

Lest the reader think that Emlet is cooling down one's view of the validity of psychiatry, he offers another chapter (chapter 9) in which he touts the values of psychiatric diagnosis at the macro level for the Christian ministry. Right out of the gate, Emlet makes a problematic statement that puts into question his commitment to a "balanced" approach. He states, "They [psychiatric diagnoses] improve reliability in diagnosis among different mental health providers, are foundational in psychiatric research, guide insurance reimbursement, and serve as the basis for educational services, all of which are valuable" (43). This statement on behalf of the author reveals several personal assumptions that are provided to depict psychiatric diagnosis in a way that is overtly helpful, useful, and ultimately necessary in the care of a person. Let's take a moment to break this down.

First, Emlet makes note that the psychiatric diagnostic system improves "reliability" among mental health workers. While these systems were designed primarily to codify and categorize lists of signs and symptoms in order to manage the varying, and often conflicting, clinical practice, it must be asked how and why internal standardization within the mental health field is necessary for the Christian in the task of soul care in the church. Several accounts of the history and current practice of psychiatry make clear that the very decision making process regarding the organization and classification of mental disorders is subjective at best. In addition to this, the philosophical commitments of a majority within the psychiatric community are *not* aligned with a biblical worldview. Secondly, psychiatric research is not questioned at all regarding its efficacy or validity.

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[7] Psychology and Psychiatry were not historically considered "sciences," but instead were more related to the field of philosophy. The history of psychiatry demonstrates an intrinsic atheism. See Paul C. Vitz. *Psychology of Religion: The Cult of Self Worshi*p. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1994; Richard Ganz. *Psychobabble: The Failure of Modern Psychology and the Biblical Alternative.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1993; Robert Whitaker. *Mad In America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill.* New York: Basic Books, 2002, and Roy Porter. *Madness: A Brief History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Interestingly, Emlet himself notes that this research is based upon the diagnostic consensus reached within the mental health field; however, the reader must understand that any research, psychiatric or not, is not composed of "brute facts" alone.[8] Scientists bring their own presuppositions to the table including a drive to compete for grants to finance their research. Nevertheless, the author, through references to invested organizations such as the National Institute of Health, draws connections between genetic causation and various mental illnesses (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and anxiety) without providing any support for his claim or citing any source which would contradict the genetic-link argument (47). Including sources from both perspectives would help to reach his goal at providing a "balanced" view of psychiatry. Thirdly, Emlet notes that insurance reimbursements are guided by the diagnostic criterion agreed upon by those within the mental health community. Why would this be a point of usefulness unless the author believes it is necessary, at times, to refer counselees to doctors in order to fill a prescription?

Of course, any discussion about psychoactive medications must include the topic of the chemical imbalance theory (also known as the monoamine hypothesis), which has stood as the cornerstone of modern psychopharmacology for the last seventy years.[9] Emlet does admit that no one is able to actually measure neurotransmitters, as opposed to the thyroid hormone for instance, and thus psychiatric diagnosis and treatment "cannot draw the same conclusions" that can be drawn in general medicine (60). This statement is proven, factual, and should draw concern for those who consider themselves "warm" towards the use of psychiatry in the practice of soul care; however, while admitting that our "knowledge is incomplete" regarding the relationship between psychoactive medications and brain function, the author insists that psychoactive drugs should not be avoided (62, 74, 78).

First, he assures us that these substances have been approved by gate-keepers such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA; 63) and that secular research seems to demonstrate that these medications do provide help in some people some of the time (68). However, these assurances do not seem to stand up to what can be considered more alarming facts and implications behind

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[8] Cornelius Van Til's presuppositional philosophy argued that even in science, brute, or stand-alone, fact did not exist. All people whether they are scientists or not hold to worldviews and presuppositions that taint their conclusions. See Gary North, ed. *Foundations of Christian Scholarship: Essays in the Van Til Perspective.* Ross House Books, 1976.

[9] Robert Whitaker. *Anatomy of an Epidemic: Magic Bullets, Psychiatric Drugs, and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness in America.* New York: Broadway Books, 2010; Joanna Moncrief. *The Myth of the Chemical Cure: A Critique of Psychiatric Drug Treatment*, rev. ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, and Irving Kirsch. *The Emperor's New Drugs: Exploding the Antidepressant Myth.* New York: Basic Books, 2010.

psychoactive drugs, most of which Emlet refers to. No one questions that psychoactive medications actively alter brain chemistry, but to what extent and to what long-term harm current research is just now beginning to uncover. Also, no one can prove that these drugs correct chemical imbalances that, in turn, correct psychiatric symptoms such as depression or anxiety. In addition to these two disquieting realities, within psychopharmacology there is much that is presumed as to the efficacy of drug action and there have been many books and reports published which shine a light on the unethical, immoral, and inconsistent history of the psychoactive drug industry.[10] However, the average reader is not made aware that such dangers lurk beneath such medications. One would think that the author would attempt to inform his readers of this perspective of psychoactive medications so that his reader can make a fully-orbed and educated decision.

If these points are not enough, there is another key issue that Emlet simply does not explore and it is the question as to whether psychoactive medication is truly *necessary* in the Christian ministry of soul care. Emlet's aim is to get his reader to think about "helping a struggling person to evaluate his emotions and thoughts and to bring them into link with the reality," which according to Scripture is a laudable goal (70). While noting that symptom relief should not be the ultimate goal of biblical counseling (84), there are several places in the last half of the book where Emlet touts the necessity of using psychoactive drugs in order to continue, or in some instances begin, Christian ministry (85-86). In order to make this argument work, the author emphasizes psychoactive medication as lawfully and comprehensively addressing bodily issues while noting that the spiritual connection between one's heart and actions is merely one "appropriate avenue for ministry" among others (85).[11] The implication behind this approach is that people *need* Jesus *and*, when the situation calls for is, psychoactive medications in order to become holy as Jesus is holy (94).

What Emlet asks of his readers is what he practices and believes. While the "scientific witness" regarding both psychiatric diagnosis and medications is at best clearly mixed and at worst faulty in its worldview and presuppositions, the author assumes the legitimacy and complexity of

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[10] Peter Gotzsche. *Deadly Medicines and Organized Crime: How Big Pharma has Corrupted Healthcare*. London: Radcliffe Publishing, 2013; Ewen Speed, Joanna Moncrief, and Mark Rapley, eds. *De-Medicalizing Misery II: Society, Politics and the Mental Health Industry*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

[11] It should be noted that throughout the book, Emlet stresses the role of the body as an essential part of a holistic approach to soul care. This is, of course, wholly appropriate since all people are enfleshed souls who are impacted by the physical and spiritual (87). The author provides several chapters in the second half of the book which remind those interested in soul care of the physical implications and realities of living in a fallen world (76).

mental illness while suggesting that a "moderate posture" towards these issues is a wiser approach to soul care (95).[12] What is even more disconcerting regarding a book that is supposed to present a biblical perspective on these issues related to soul care is that the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit is not mentioned or expounded upon. As the healer, comforter, and teacher, Christians dealing with the matters of the soul and body should make the Holy Spirit a central figure within any soul care paradigm; unfortunately, so often He is relegated to either an appendix or not mentioned.

In summary, the newest CCEF publication, *Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnoses and Medications*, authored by Michael Emlet brings an important and relevant conversation to the forefront within the field of biblical counseling. In this concise volume, Emlet writes to pastors, staff members, counselors, and laymen in an effort to equip them to better minister to hurting people who have encountered psychiatric care in some fashion. By not shying away from this topic, Emlet does a great service to anyone who desires to participate in soul care ministry by highlighting the fact that both psychiatric diagnoses and medications cannot be ignored by the church any longer. While Emlet intends to persuade his readers to consider psychiatric intervention from a "third way" approach (100), in many instances the author's implicit assumptions and, at times, overt statements are counterintuitive to that end. Emlet often does not reflect the balance that he is attempting to achieve in that he offers no citations or references to works which provide critiques of the efficacy of psychopharmacology along with the legitimacy of psychiatric diagnoses from either a biblical or secular perspective (24). Thus, average readers of this book, many of whom have likely never been exposed to such critiques, are not given the opportunity to make an educated decision on whether the psychiatric chair is "just right" or not.

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[12] There have been many voices within psychiatry for several decades who have questioned the legitimacy of the "mental illness" concept. Interestingly, while there is no objective, scientifically-based definition or even agreement on what mental illness is, many within the Christian church still hold tight to the concept. See Thomas Szasz. *The Myth of Mental Illness: Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct.* New York: Dell Publishing, 1961; Joyce Milton. *The Road to Malpsychia: Humanistic Psychology and our Discontents.* San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002, and Peter Breggin. *Toxic Psychiatry. Why Therapy, Empathy, and Love Must Replace the Drugs, Electroshock, and Biochemical Theories of the "New Psychiatry."* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

RESPONSES