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A CRITIQUE OF THE NOUETHIC COUNSELING TECHNIQUE OF  
JAY E. ADAMS

BY

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THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Religion and Culture  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the Master of Arts degree

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1985

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ABSTRACT

A CRITIQUE OF THE NOUTHETIC COUNSELING TECHNIQUE OF  
JAY E. ADAMS

by

Roger Clayton White.

Jay E. Adams, a popular writer of counseling material primarily for evangelicals is examined on the theory and practice of nouthetic counseling. Nouthetic counseling is seen primarily as a confrontational approach utilizing a literal interpretation of scripture as the basis for counselor directed change.

Adams is evaluated on his application of scripture in the counseling process. His nouthetic approach is compared and contrasted with other pastoral care counselors as well as some traditional and non-traditional theories of psychiatry. Most of the comparison takes place through conversational dialogue which highlights differences and similarities in philosophies and techniques.

A primary contention is that Adams has simply appropriated the Reality Therapy technique of William Glasser to a theological context thus nullifying his claim of originality. Final evaluations and conclusions

weigh the relative worth of nouthetic confrontation based upon the research which was conducted. Adams' technique of nouthetic confrontation is seen as having a very limited basis for application. His extensive use of scripture is deemed inappropriate to many situations and nouthetic counseling borders closely on being characterized as judgmental moralism.

## PREFACE

Over past years I have devoted a great deal of time to examining the various types, styles and theories of counseling. In 1972, I became a "born-again" Christian. An immediate, significant change transpired in my life at that time, and ongoing changes have taken place over the past thirteen years.

I taught high school for a period of seven years prior to beginning pastoral ministry in 1980. During the course of my teaching career, I found that much of my time was devoted to counseling. It was the very tragic suicide of a young student I had been counseling that helped to prompt a change of careers for me. I had been frustrated by my attempts at counseling from a strictly "secular" basis utilizing the typical approaches of psychology. I felt that in order to be more effective, I must have a greater freedom to share my faith than the high school system allowed me.

For a period of time I carried a great deal of guilt and did a lot of soul searching when it came to understanding the suicide of this student. In fact, it was the focus of one particular graduate course that finally led me to evaluate fairly what had happened.

I became acquainted with a number of books written by Jay Adams while a student in bible college. After beginning full time pastoral ministry I found the demands of the counseling work to be almost overwhelming. Adams seemed to have the kind of scriptural based approach that I espoused but, somehow his "Mr. Fix-it" approach seemed too easy. It seemed that he wanted to treat each case as a confrontation rather than with the compassion that I had learned was expected of a pastor.

My educational training in the humanities simply did not seem to gel with the simple "confront and change" approach that Adams was advocating. Besides that, his obnoxious writing style annoyed me. I decided to study him and his theory of "nouthetic confrontation" in more detail. Did he really know what he was talking about? Or was he so infatuated with himself that his books were simply written to satisfy his own ego?

During the course of my research I have learned many things. Not all those things have been about "other" people. Much of what I have learned was introspective. I have been able to formulate approaches, theories, and conclusions in my own pastorate that I had not used before. I have also learned that Jay Adams does have some good ideas.

Problems need to be dealt with in an honest and loving manner. However Adams' incessant claim that confrontation

with biblical principles and subsequent repentance is sufficient for any counseling therapy is simplistic and dangerous. His rejection of science and psychology is not spiritual, but anti-intellectual. I have discovered that counseling is not an easy task. As we support and encourage others, we can discover how heavy their burdens are. As we counsel someone, we may uncover tremendous problems and hurts. Nancy Anne Smith has said, "Real burden bearing is not a pleasant ministry. There is nothing sweet-smelling about the foul odour and repulsive sight of another's wounds."<sup>1</sup>

Having said this, I realize the privilege it is to minister to people in counseling. Someone has said that the pastor is never more like his Master than when he is compassionately listening to troubled people and ministering to them. Speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), guided by the Holy Spirit, the Christian counselor should be able to *support* and *confront* effectively.

I want to express my appreciation to my faculty advisor Dr. Delton Glebe, and my thesis readers as well as a host of others from Wilfrid Laurier University who have assisted with this project.

I am especially indebted to my wife Karen for her typing skills, encouragement, and at times provocation to

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy Anne Smith, "Winter Past: A Struggle for Emotional Health" Leadership, Fall 1980, p. 97.

finish the work. I am grateful, also to Dr. Jay Adams for providing the initial inspiration for this work.

Looking back over the past two years in which this thesis has been in production I am mindful of so many names which go unmentioned here who have subscribed to the apostle Paul's exhortation to "carry each other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2).

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ABBREVIATIONS

- B U . . . . . The Big Umbrella.
- C C . . . . . Competent to Counsel.
- C C M . . . . . The Christian Counselor's Manual.
- C L H . . . . . Christian Living in the Home.
- L C . . . . . Lectures on Counseling.
- M C C . . . . . Matters of Concern to Christian Counselors.
- M T R . . . . . More Than Redemption - A Theology of Christian Counseling.

All of the above books were written by Jay E. Adams.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

A graduate of John Hopkins University where he majored in Greek, Dr. Jay E. Adams earned a B.D. degree from the Reformed Episcopal Seminary, an S.T.M. from the Temple University of Practical Theology, and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri.

Dr. Adams pastored churches in western Pennsylvania and New Jersey before joining the faculty of the University of Missouri where he taught for three years in the Department of Public Speaking. He has served as Visiting Professor of Practical Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and the Dean of the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation at Hatboro, Pennsylvania.

Within the past decade, Jay Adams has become one of the most popular writers of counseling material for pastors and lay Christian workers. In addition, he has also become one of the most sought after speakers for Bible seminars and counseling technique lectures. His published works are numerous. They include Competent to Counsel,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970. (Hereafter cited as Adams, C C).

The Big Umbrella,<sup>3</sup> Christian Living in the Home,<sup>4</sup> Matters of Concern to Christian Counselors,<sup>5</sup> More Than Redemption-- A Theology of Christian Counseling,<sup>6</sup> Lectures on Counseling,<sup>7</sup> The Christian Counselor's Manual,<sup>8</sup> and a wide variety of other theological and pastoral materials.

Despite his apparent writing success and a large following of modern evangelical Christians, Jay Adams has often been accused of proclaiming himself a guru of contemporary Christian counseling. Remaining undaunted by such criticism however, Adams has developed a writing style that is, at best, uncomplimentary to his opponents and is, at its worst, a savage attack on traditional psychology.

#### A. IDENTIFYING DIFFERENCES

Jay Adams insists that he does not disregard science in his writing. He also says that his application of

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<sup>3</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972. (Hereafter cited as Adams, B U).

<sup>4</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972. (Hereafter cited as Adams, C L H).

<sup>5</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977. (Hereafter cited as Adams, M C C).

<sup>6</sup>Phillipsberg: Presbyterians and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979. (Hereafter cited as Adams, M T R).

<sup>7</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977. (Hereafter cited as Adams, L C).

<sup>8</sup>Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973. (Hereafter cited as Adams, C C M).

scripture is not infallible. Nevertheless, he states that science (especially in the area of psychiatry) has largely given way to humanistic philosophy and to gross speculation.<sup>9</sup>

An outspoken critic of Freudian and Rogerian teaching, Adams reflects less harshly on other prominents in the field of psychology who have risen to challenge the traditions of psychology as a science. The new movement, led by Steve Pratt, William Glasser, G. L. Harrington, William Mainord, Perry London, O. Hobart Mowrer, and others is antithetically opposed to the Freudian irresponsibility formulation.<sup>10</sup> Adams has picked up the gauntlet which was thrown to conservative Christians by Hobart Mowrer when he asked "Has evangelical religion sold it's birthright for a mess of psychological pottage?".<sup>11</sup>

While maintaining that he is not a disciple of Mowrer, Adams is quick to point out that Mowrer has hit the nail on the head by opposing the medical model from which the concept of mental illness was derived. The medical model

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<sup>9</sup> See Adams, C C, p. xxi.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 14. Adams presents the Freudian irresponsibility formulation to be the means through which man places the blame for much of his behaviour on others in his past (for example a mother or father). Mowrer in fact poses the question of whether we are willing to replace the medical model with a moral model.

<sup>11</sup> O. Hobart Mowrer, The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion (Princeton: Van Nostrand Company, 1961), p. 60.

took away the sense of personal responsibility, and psychotherapy became a search into the past to find others on whom to place the blame.<sup>12</sup>

Adams insists that psychiatry has become so dogmatic that its theory cannot then be adapted to a theological context. To support this claim he refers to Lewis Joseph Sherrill who states:<sup>13</sup>

We shall find the various psychologies just as heavy with dogmas as any theological system. If dogma is statements pronounced true apart from evidence which any other competent person can verify . . . theology and psychiatry are simply pot and kettle, neither having any ground to call the other black.

Adams points to a serious difference, being that Christian theologians have been willing to acknowledge the presuppositions of their faith, whereas psychiatrists often will not do so.<sup>14</sup>

Erich Fromm is suggested by Adams as being an exception. Fromm observed that Freud went beyond the idea of healing in avowing that psychiatry is "the study of the soul of man in order to teach the art of living".<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Adams, C C, p. xvii.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis Joseph Sherrill, Guilt and Redemption. (Richmond: John Knox Press, "n.d.") p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> See Adams, C C, p. xxii.

<sup>15</sup> Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) p. 7.

Gerhard Masur also may be correct, maintains Adams, when he claims that:<sup>16</sup>

Psychoanalysis became one of the substitute religions for the disillusioned middle class. . . . Analysis is accompanied by ceremonies and rituals that resemble a religious rite. Its concepts, at best debatable, are repeated as articles of faith.

Whether Jay Adams can justifiably use the criticism of some scholars toward traditional counseling practices is debatable. As with any field of study, imperfect terminology is little grounds for refuting the entire theory.

#### B. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the thesis is to critically examine the theory and practice of nouthetic counseling. The thesis will not attempt a vindication or condemnation of Adams or his nouthetic counseling approach. Rather, I will attempt to look at both the positive and negative factors of his technique. To accomplish this aim, it will be necessary to examine the derivation of the term and the development of nouthetic counseling practice from two basic strategies. The first strategy will involve an analysis of Adams' view of use of scripture. The second

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<sup>16</sup>Gerhard Masur, Prophets of Yesterday (New York: MacMillan, 1961) p. 311.

strategy will weigh the theory in a broader context of contemporary and traditional counseling approaches.

In order to see the aim of the study accomplished, nouthetic confrontation will be examined in the light of the scriptural mandate which Adams feels exists for the development of the theory.

Central to this examination are questions as to the nature and inspiration of scripture and the use of scripture in regard to present day pastoral counseling. Authors in the area of pastoral counseling including Collins, Clinebell, Hulme, and Oates will be consulted in determining some of Adams' presuppositions.

Secondly the traditional counseling approaches of Freud and Rogers will be compared with the nouthetic model in order to determine if the fundamental purpose of nouthetic confrontation (i.e. the effecting of personality and behavioural change) can be legitimately achieved.

Thirdly is an examination of the rationale for the radical departure from traditional and non-traditional counseling. A part of this approach will involve a comparative look at the differences and similarities of the reality therapy techniques of William Glasser and O. Hobart Mowrer who are so antithetically opposed to the Freudian irresponsibility formulation. The thesis will attempt to support the claim that the nouthetic counseling technique of Jay E. Adams is little more than

the expropriation of reality therapy to a religious context.

#### C. CONCLUSIONS AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

In general, the final chapter of the study will give my evaluation of the relative worth of the practice of nouthetic confrontation. Whereas the preceding chapters will carry dialogue between Adams and others stressing differences and similarities, in their approaches, the conclusion will highlight most of my criticism and concern.

It should be strongly pointed out however, that this study will not attempt to arrive at far reaching conclusions which would totally condemn or exonerate the nouthetic counseling approach of Jay E. Adams.

The literature drawn upon will reflect the works of both non-traditional and traditional counseling advocates, as well as authorities in the area of pastoral counseling. Because of the nature of this thesis it must be realized that this study will also rely heavily on the defenses and assertiveness of Adams himself.

#### D. THE THEORY

The fundamental purpose of nouthetic confrontation is to effect personality and behavioural change. In short, Adams suggests that nouthetic confrontation arises out of a condition in the counselee that God wants changed.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Adams, C C, p. 45.

Bearing remarkable similarity to reality therapy (except that nouthetic counseling is performed solely within the context of evangelical Christianity), Adams believes that all Christians are to engage in counseling as far as their ability and training legitimately allow them to do so.

Nouthetic counseling, according to Adams, should be seen as a biblical approach to counseling which makes extensive use of scripture. It is his opinion that the preaching of the Word and counseling can be an excellent means to communicate the Gospel and to help people achieve solutions for their problems. "Nouthetic counseling," says Adams, "is diametrically opposed to every form of counseling that is not based upon and defined in terms of the 'inerrant' Word of God."<sup>18</sup>

The term "nouthetic counseling" is a compound consisting of a Greek word (*nouthesis*) and an English word (*counseling*). The word "nouthetic" is a conglomeration of at least three ideas:

- 1) the concept of admonishing;
- 2) attempting to effect change in a person's life by the use of verbal means;
- 3) an acknowledgement that the verbal correction is intended to benefit the counselee.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 60.

<sup>19</sup> See J. S. Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling (Utrecht: De Tille, 1975) pp. 118-121, and Adams, C C, pp. 44-50.

No one English word quite conveys the full meaning of *nouthesis* according to Adams, who then goes to some significant extent to translate the term.<sup>20</sup> Traditional translations have vacillated among the words "admonish", "warn", and "teach". For an understanding of the word in its original meaning, Adams refers to the works of Kittel and Cremer.<sup>21</sup>

Adams refers us to Colossians 3:16 where it is stated, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom . . ." <sup>22</sup>

The association of "teaching" and "admonishing" is important. According to Hielema,<sup>23</sup> teaching (*didasko*), simply suggests the communication of data or making information known, clear, or understandable and memorable. The word *didasko* implies nothing about the listener but refers exclusively to the activity of the instructor. The word used for admonish (*nouthesis*) however, focuses on both the confronter and the one confronted. *Nouthesis* specifically presupposes the need for a change in the person confronted, who may or may not put up some resistance.

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<sup>20</sup> Adams, C C, pp. 44-50.

<sup>21</sup> Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1967) pp. 1019-1022. See also Herman Cremer, Biblio-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1895) pp. 441-442.

<sup>22</sup> Unless otherwise stated all biblical references are from the New International Version (hereafter cited NIV).

<sup>23</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 118.

According to Adams,<sup>24</sup> therefore, nouthetic confrontation necessarily suggests that there is something wrong with the person who is to be confronted nouthetically.

In order to substantiate his view that life can be changed by verbal means Adams quotes Trench as saying:<sup>25</sup>

It is training by word--by the word of encouragement, when this is sufficient, but also by that of remonstrance, of reproof, of blame, where these may be required; as set over against the training by act and by discipline which is *paideia*. . . . The distinctive feature of nouthesia is the training by mouth.

Adams therefore suggests that to the concept of *nouthesis* must be added the additional dimension of person to person verbal confrontation in which the object is to effect a characterological and behavioural change in the counselee.<sup>26</sup> Nouthetic confrontation, in its biblical usage, as Adams sees it, aims at straightening out the individual by changing his/her patterns of behaviour to conform to biblical standards.<sup>27</sup>

For biblical support we are referred to Nathan's

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<sup>24</sup> Adams, C C, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> R. C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament. (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1948) pp. 112-114 cited in Adams, C C, p. 45.

<sup>26</sup> Adams, C C, p. 46.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

confronting David after his sin with Uriah and Bethsheba,<sup>28</sup>  
. . . and in particular to the failure of Eli to confront  
his sons.<sup>29</sup> According to Adams, Eli's failure to discipline  
his sons was a failure to confront them nouthetically. He  
failed to speak soon enough, strictly enough, and seriously  
enough.<sup>30</sup>

Adams emphasizes the point that Eli's stress upon  
"why"<sup>31</sup> may indicate one of his failures as a father. "It  
was not, maintains Adams, Eli's business to speculate  
about the causes of his sons' wicked deeds beyond the fact  
that he already knew that they were sinners but to stop  
them. Eli would have done better to have put the emphasis  
on the word "what" instead of "why".<sup>32</sup> Nouthetic counseling  
is largely committed to a discussion of the "what". All  
of the "why" that a counselee needs to know can be clearly  
demonstrated in the "what". What was done? What needs to  
be done to rectify it?<sup>33</sup> The question "why" Adams maintains,  
may lead to speculation and blame shifting. "What" leads

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<sup>28</sup> See II Samuel 12.

<sup>29</sup> See I Samuel 3:13.

<sup>30</sup> Adams, C C, p. 47.

<sup>31</sup> See I Samuel 2:23 "So he said to them, 'why' do  
you do such things? I hear from all the people about  
these wicked deeds of yours."

<sup>32</sup> See Adams, C C, p. 48.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

to solutions of problems.

Adams believes that all verbal correction is intended to benefit the counselee. He believes that this demonstrates the purpose or motive behind nouthetic activity.

Paul in I Corinthians 4:14 writes "I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children." Adams renders it this way, "I did not write these things to shame you but to confront you nouthetically as my beloved children." He then observes, "The antithesis in that sentence brings out the tender concern inherent in the term." And he goes on to say, "Even in the most serious circumstances, an unruly Christian is to be 'confronted nouthetically as a brother'." (II Thessalonians 3:15)<sup>34</sup>

#### E. THE APPLICATION

Adams believes that nouthetic confrontation is, in short, confrontation with the principles and practices of the scriptures.<sup>35</sup> Nouthesis accords fully with what Paul said in II Timothy 3:16<sup>36</sup> where the same nouthetic goals that Paul had previously stated in Colossians 1:28 seem to be in view. Adams believes that Paul is suggesting

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<sup>34</sup> Cited in Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 121.

<sup>35</sup> Adams, C.C., p. 51.

<sup>36</sup> All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

confronting every man nouthetically in order that every man might be presented perfect in Christ.

When Paul makes his impassioned plea to Timothy further in Chapter 4, Adams maintains that Timothy could only fulfil that mandate by using the scriptures nouthetically.<sup>37</sup> Nouthetic confrontation is, it is therefore, concluded by Adams, confrontation with the principles and practices of the scriptures themselves.<sup>38</sup>

#### F. THE GOAL

Adams submits that the final and overall goal of nouthetic counseling is "authoritative instruction". This he suggests is transmitted through love. In I Timothy 1:5 Paul writes "The goal of this command (*authoritative instruction*)<sup>39</sup> is love, which comes from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith."

Instead of excuse-making or blame-shifting, nouthetic counseling advocates the assumption of responsibility and blame, the admission of guilt, the confession of sin, and the seeking of forgiveness in Christ. Nouthetic

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<sup>37</sup> II Timothy 4:2. Preach the Word, be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction.

<sup>38</sup> Adams, C C, p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> The original word (*parangelia*) is more than simply instruction. Adams submits it is instruction imposed authoritatively. The authority of God is presupposed. See Adams C C, p. 54.

counseling rests therefore upon the dynamics of redemption, and reflects this fact at every point, insists Adams.<sup>40</sup>

Adams who paints the alienation, despair, dehumanization and dechristianization of man's life in contemporary society as a religious problem stands in stark contrast to contemporary writers like Pierre Burton who states:<sup>41</sup>

We need a new kind of church. The mentality of the new age is secular, not religious, and any church that survives and flourishes and reaches hearts and souls of men must be aware of this.

The task then in this study is not one of wide sweeping endorsements or denials but rather a comparative approach to strongly held divergent opinions. Because of the "conversational" nature between Adams and others I will largely be withholding my personal comments for the final analysis in the concluding chapter.

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<sup>40</sup> See Adams, C. C., p. 55-56.

<sup>41</sup> Pierre Burton, The Comfortable Pew--A Critical Look at the Church in the New Age (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1965) p. 139.

## CHAPTER 2

### ADAMS AND THE USE OF SCRIPTURE

This chapter will deal with the overriding emphasis placed upon the use of scripture in nouthetic counseling. Since scripture is the structural foundation of his theory, I will discuss some of the problems that arise because of Adams' narrow perspective in light of contemporary hermeneutical thought. I will discuss Adams' "reformed" background and the role that he sees the Holy Spirit playing within the counseling process itself. Covenant theology and the role and authority of the counselor will also be briefly discussed.

Counseling is not seen by many people as a step-by-step process such as baking a cake or changing a tire or even preparing a sermon. Each counselee is unique--with problems, attitudes, values, expectations and experiences that are unlike any other, states Gary Collins. The counselor must approach each individual a little differently and will discover that the course of counseling will vary from person to person.<sup>42</sup>

Primary, to the nouthetic counseling approach

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<sup>42</sup>Gary R. Collins, Christian Counseling - A Comprehensive Guide (Texas: Word Inc., 1980) p. 29. (hereafter cited as Collins, Christian Counseling)

advocated by Jay E. Adams is the underlying reliance upon the infallibility and inerrancy of scripture.<sup>43</sup> While Adams concedes the point that his interpretations and applications of scripture are not infallible<sup>44</sup> and specifically states that he does not wish to disregard science in his theories, he believes that we have largely misrepresented scripture and it is time to re-examine and restudy.

How true is the Bible? This penetrating question has been on the mind of the church throughout history. The recent arrival of a new process theology has argued the idea that it is man's freedom to subject the Word of God to human analysis. It has further been suggested that man's wisdom and understanding are able to bring God within our sphere of human perception and it is thus within man's power to unlock the mysteries of God.<sup>45</sup> The somewhat overstated new hermeneutical rule that has been seen by some is that whatever cannot be part of man's self understanding cannot be revelation.<sup>46</sup>

Unless we continually remember that vast differences

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<sup>43</sup> Adams, C C, p. xxi. Adams specifically states that he has avowedly accepted the inerrant Bible as the standard of all faith and practice. "The scripture", he states, "is the basis and contains the criteria by which I have sought to make every judgement."

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>45</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 142.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

of opinion exist pertaining to the origin, authority and purpose of scripture we really cannot understand Adams' position. Nouthetic counseling cannot be meaningfully explained, Adams insists, unless it can be demonstrated what it "does not" mean and then what it "does" mean.

Adams insists that all concepts, terms and methods used in counseling need to be re-examined biblically. Not one thing, he emphatically states, can be accepted from the past (or the present) without biblical warrant.<sup>47</sup> True biblical counseling, therefore, cannot be an imposition of anybody's views upon scripture.<sup>48</sup> With that quick and easy dismissal of all of the controversy surrounding the inspiration of scripture, Adams then proceeds to elaborate that the complete trustworthiness of scripture in dealing with people has been demonstrated through his own personal experience and ministry.<sup>49</sup> A very serious discrepancy, however, comes to the surface by that admission.

It may well be that Adams' theories and the technique of nouthetic counseling are just as much a matter of

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<sup>47</sup> Adams, C C, p. xviii and xix.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>49</sup> Adams, C C, p. xix. Adams here refers to years spent engrossed in developing his own biblical counseling based upon a number of important scriptural principles. He states quite clearly that ". . . it is amazing to discover how much the Bible has to say about counseling and how fresh the biblical approach is."

experience and personal dogma and interpretation as those theories which he so decidedly rejects. If Adams can reject man's wisdom and understanding in examining the inspiration of scripture, the question might well be asked how he can draw such strong conclusions from his own personal experiences in espousing his own ideas.

#### A. THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

The concept of authority receives a central place in nouthetic counseling. Unlike modern counseling which minimizes or completely repudiates the idea of biblically based counseling, nouthetic counseling acknowledges that the supreme authority is in God and that this authority is mediated to man in the scriptures. Luther said:<sup>50</sup>

I will not waste a word in arguing with one who does not consider that the Scriptures are the Word of God: we ought not to dispute with a man who thus rejects first principles.

Adams says:<sup>51</sup>

Counselors usually do not argue about the authority of the Scriptures, but simply tell their counselees that the Bible is the basis upon which counseling is conducted.

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<sup>50</sup> Cited by A. M. Renwiek, Evangelical Quarterly, Vol. 9 (April, 1947) p. 114.

<sup>51</sup> Adams, C C, p. 72.

Nouthetic counseling, as has become apparent, objects to every form of counseling that says that scripture is not binding upon man. Adams sets forth:<sup>52</sup>

The scriptures must be the basis for all that is said and done in counseling. The scriptures must strongly influence the content of all counseling. They must be the source of every goal, the authority for every purpose, and they must contain the principles behind every procedure. If the scriptures do not permeate counseling and if the Christ of the scriptures does not emerge at the centre of the counseling sessions, then you cannot expect the Spirit to do His sanctifying work.

Adams further maintains that both counselors and counselees cannot think and act and plan for themselves apart from the authority of the Bible. But was the Bible really written as a textbook on counseling? Collins suggests that scripture deals with loneliness, discouragement, marriage problems, grief, parent/child relations, anger, fear and a host of other counseling situations. As the Word of God, it has great and lasting relevance to the counselor's work and the needs of his or her counselees, but it does not claim to be and neither was it meant to be God's sole method of revelation about people helping.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Adams, B U, p. 26.

<sup>53</sup> See Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 29.

Collins further submits:<sup>54</sup>

In medicine, teaching and other "people centered" helping fields, mankind has been permitted to learn much about God's creation through science and academic study. Why, then should psychology be singled out as the one field that has nothing to contribute to the work of the counselor?

"The Bible was not written to deal with the intricacies of ship building, but surely it tells all that we need to know about inter-personal relation", retorts Adams.

"Counseling definitely pertains to the intricacies of those matters."<sup>55</sup> A living out of the scriptures, understood within the framework of biblical theology and the covenant affects an unbelievable change. Man's values and the way he views life change, Adams insists, as well as his whole motivational system.

#### B. ADAMS IS REFORMED

Adams' position on scripture is reformed. At this point it seems helpful to see the ways in which his position corresponds to that of some other reformed writers. Adams keeps saying that the Bible is the Word of God.<sup>56</sup> This means, suggests Adams that we know nothing of the Christ

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 18.

<sup>56</sup> See Adams, C C M, p. 93ff.

except as the scripture confronts us with Him.<sup>57</sup> We may not range, he implies, as in Barth's theology, the Christ against the scriptures but rather only the Christ that the scriptures reveal.

Adams would entirely endorse the assurance of Trimp:<sup>58</sup>

The scriptures lead the way to Christ and give life to each who lets himself be led. The veracity of the Messiah is guaranteed by the scriptures. But, whoever does not allow himself to be led to Him by this witness shall be accursed and condemned by those same scriptures on account of his blindness and deafness in the age of the anointed God (John 5:45-47). In this manner Christ himself speaks of the witness of scripture. It is quite another thing to say that John 5:39 gives material to a theory which reduces witness about Christ to the level of a human attempt to appraise the truth or a human reference to the truth. Witness is not a word that aims to keep secure a distance from Christ, but, on the contrary, a word used to make the distance between unbelief and Christ disappear! . . . On the basis of all this data we deny that the word witness is the characteristic expression for the nature of the relationship of the scriptures's divinity and humanity. It does not enlighten to us the modus of God's revelation.

Adams believes that, in our knowledge of Christ we are bound to the knowledge of the scriptures as the "divine" inspired scriptures.<sup>59</sup> The scriptures, states Adams, are "God-Breathed". What this means is explained

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<sup>57</sup> See Adams, Pulpit Speech (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1971) p. 63f.

<sup>58</sup> Cornelius Trimp, The Witness of the Scriptures (Jerusalem and Athens) ed. E. R. Gaehon, pp. 183-184.

<sup>59</sup> Adams, C C, p. 51.

by Shepherd in these words:<sup>60\*</sup>

Whereas contemporary discussion frequently stresses the *vox humana*, Paul's concern, if anything, is to minimize it. Lest we be tempted to divorce message from form, Zechariah 7:7, 12; Ezekiel 1:3; and Jeremiah 1:4,9 remind us that the words are God's words, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth."

Zuidema has put it this way:<sup>61</sup>

To speak about scripture as God's Word, without at the same time speaking about the God of the Word and about the God of scripture, would be without purpose. Scripture is the revelation of God and it is God in His revelation.

Adams' stance on scripture is not just a matter of emphasis. The reformation represented a return to the teachings of the apostles and prophets with reformers vigorously opposing tradition as a source of revelation. They had no patience with the magisterium of the church. The reformers were concerned with the Bible alone, minus tradition. The reformation left no room whatever, for the church as the final teaching authority. The universal priesthood of all believers brought interpretation

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<sup>60</sup>Norman Shepherd, "Bible, Church and Proclamation" International Reformed Bulletin, 16th year No. 54. (Summer 1973) p. 57.

<sup>61</sup>S. V. Zuidema, "Holy Scripture and its Key" International Reformed Bulletin, 11th year, No. 32-33 (January - April, 1968) p. 52..

of scripture back to the individual under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Churches, creeds, and men were all subject to the scripture and nothing else.<sup>62</sup> In that vein of thought then, Adams makes it all perfectly clear that the authority of scripture and its use and purpose are determined by divine inspiration and not by human inventiveness.<sup>63</sup>

Church history reveals that tradition had been the key to biblical interpretation during the medieval period. The literal meaning of the Bible had therefore faded into insignificance. With the advent of scholasticism toward the beginning of the second Christian millennium, about A.D.1000, an almost exclusive dependence was made upon an allegorical method of interpretation. It was during this time period that the truth of scripture was further changed by use of dialectical methods of Greek philosophy. Growing out of the instinctive hunger of men for conscious fellowship with God, which could not be found in the rigid forms of established religions, came Medieval mysticism.

As for interpretation during this period of time, emphasis was placed upon the devotional study of the scriptures as might be expected, with allegory, freely employed as its method. The reformation movement was

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<sup>62</sup>Merrill C. Tenney, H. L. Drumwright Jr., (ed) Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Corp., 1975) Vol. III, p. 288ff.

<sup>63</sup>See Adams, C C, p. 24.

primarily a rebellion against the traditionalism of the past, a movement which sought the enthronement of the scriptures in the thought and the life of Christianity. "Reformed thought" has continued throughout modern times.<sup>64</sup> It is from this perspective that Adams so boldly asserts that "The word of God is alive because the author is alive. Because He lives, scripture lives."<sup>65</sup>

### C. ADAMS' PERSPECTIVE ON HERMENEUTICS

The Bible, as Adams sees it, is an organism. It grew over a long period of time. It developed by a process of divine inspiration and revelation. God progressively revealed Himself in a way,<sup>66</sup>

. . . in which every piece finds its own distinctive place, in which each succeeding age, in perfect harmony with, and progressing naturally from, the previous one, reveals reasonable progression in the ongoing of the divine plan of the age. Each age has its own peculiar hue and intensity, blending with (but not overlapping) the colours each lend to the heavenly canvass. Through it all runs the unifying theme of the covenant of grace.

The knowledge of both counselors and counselees,

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<sup>64</sup> Merrill C. Tenney, H. L. Drumwright, Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, p. 303.

<sup>65</sup> Adams, C C, p. 24.

<sup>66</sup> Adams, C C, p. 41cf., Adams, Pulpit Speech, pp. 10-11.

Adams maintains, must reflect this organic, theological character of the scriptures. People must see it or be made aware of it - that the Bible stands together and that its purpose is life-giving as the apostle says: "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name."<sup>67</sup>

A simple explanation of exegesis (the term applied to the practise of interpretation) is easily understood when broken into five basic principles which call for the correct procedure of interpretation through answering two basic questions.

First of all what does the author say? And secondly, what does he mean by what he says? Etymology of words, syntax, context, historical information, and analogy of scripture, all play a vital role and function for the genuine understanding of what the scripture is saying.

Adams' approach then in exegeting scripture requires some additional explanation of his background and perspective.

Adams is probably best understood in light of those to whom he maintains a close affinity. Although Adams would readily agree that our situation is by no means

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<sup>67</sup> John 20:31. This Adams uses as a basis for nouthetic counseling. The word, he says, brings people to confront the Lord of the Word. The effective purpose thus becomes to discover what directions Christ, the King and Head of the Church has given concerning the counseling of people with personal problems.

identical to that in which the reformers of the sixteenth century were placed, he would point out that man's basic problems have not changed throughout history and that therefore, as the reformers did, one is constantly called back to the scriptures to apply them to the needs of the people today. Adams and Calvin on three basic issues - scripture, discipline, and holiness - are seen to be highly compatible.

A study of Calvin's life shows us that he had but one desire - to biblically respond to the needs of his age with a fervent prayer that God might equip men to live to the glory of His Name.<sup>68</sup> How was this accomplished?

Animated by the Holy Spirit and thoroughly convinced of the truth of God's Word he fearlessly applied the Word to the situations and challenges which confronted him. Tirelessly Calvin emphasized the fact the man's life was being nurtured by "Word and Spirit".<sup>69</sup> In Calvin's view the Bible "gives us the principles which must govern the whole of our life. It must govern all of our thinking. But the case applies, as well, to our moral conduct."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> John T. McNeil, A History of the Cure of Souls (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1951) Ch. ix.

<sup>69</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 70.

<sup>70</sup> H. Henry Meeter, Calvanism: An Interpretation of Its Basic Ideas Vol. I, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1949) p. 42.

Adams says that truly scriptural counseling is motivated by the scriptures, founded presuppositionally upon the scriptures, structured by the goals and objectives of the scriptures and developed systematically in terms of the practices and principles modelled and enjoined in the scriptures. It simply put means that scriptural counseling is counseling that is wholly scriptural.<sup>71</sup>

In this light we are strongly reminded of the words of Calvin.<sup>72</sup>

The Word is not only food, it is also medicine which we constantly use for our spiritual help. Everything that the doctor can do for the human body in the face of various diseases . . . the Word of God can do for our souls in the face of all evil vices. The Word of God is the instrument by means of which God's vineyard (whether the church or our own hearts) is pruned and cleaned and made fruitful.

Just as Jesus Christ interpreted from all scriptures the things concerning Himself in His days of the flesh to set men's hearts on fire, Adams in line with Calvin holds, so He fills people today with power if they believe the Bible to be God's infallible revelation of the truth

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<sup>71</sup>Jay E. Adams, The Use of Scripture in Counseling (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974) p. 16.

<sup>72</sup>Ronald S. Wallace, Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1959) p. 210.

regarding God Himself, regarding the world, and regarding man himself.<sup>73</sup>

D. THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Reformed theologians have always drawn an intimate relationship between the authority of the scriptures on one hand and the work of the Spirit in applying the scriptures to man's heart on the other. To be receptive to the Word of God, a supernatural activity is needed in man's heart. Calvin's interpretation is understood to be:<sup>74</sup>

When we speak of the authority of scripture, we must distinguish between the authority that is intrinsic to scripture and our persuasion or conviction that it is authoritative. This is the distinction between that which imparts authority to scripture and that which is the source of our conviction that it is authoritative, between that in which the authority resides and that from which our assurance proceeds. It is the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity as it pertains to this question.

The internal testimony of the Spirit is particularly to be understood as a "conviction", affected by the Spirit.<sup>75</sup> While Calvin warned against the danger of psychologizing this

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<sup>73</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 171 citing Abraham Kuyper.

<sup>74</sup> John Murray, Calvin on Scripture and Divine Sovereignty (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960) p. 44.

<sup>75</sup> See I Corinthians 2:4 and I Thessalonians 1:5, 2:13.

teaching of the testimony of the Spirit, he most certainly acknowledged that the internal testimony of the Spirit brings God's Word home to us with authority.<sup>76</sup> Understood in this way the scriptures may be experienced as the living, vital and dynamic Word of God. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit the preacher may authoritatively expound the Word of God and nurture the believer by prayer and personal conduct (i.e. counseling). Yielding to the sovereignty and authority of the Word, the security of the Christian may be subjectively realized. It is "only as the result of the work, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit within us that we can finally have this assurance about the authority of scripture."<sup>77</sup>

Adams sees the role of the Holy Spirit as effecting His work in the lives of believers through the means of grace. He uses the ministry of the Word, the sacraments, prayer and the fellowship of God's people as the principal vehicles through which He brings about such changes.<sup>78</sup> With that one note of explanation Adams then poses the question, "How can counseling that is removed from the means of grace expect to effect the permanent changes that come only by growth in grace?"<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 151.

<sup>77</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Authority (Chicago: Inter Varsity Press, 1967) p. 39.

<sup>78</sup> See Adams, C.C., p. 22.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

Adams asserts, that it is time to re-examine our stance as Christians and the most important factor in that re-examination should be an honest consideration of the place of the Holy Spirit in counseling.

Adams points out that the Holy Spirit expects counselors to use the scriptures.<sup>80</sup> The Holy Spirit's activity often has been viewed in a confused and a confusing manner. Adams believes that there is no reason for such confusion. He cites the view of Calvin in defence of the Holy Spirit's role.<sup>81</sup>

The Holy Spirit Himself has plainly told us how He works. He says *in* the scripture that He ordinarily works *through* the scripture. The Bible is the Holy Spirit's book. He inspired it. . . . Godliness does not come by osmosis. Human ideas and efforts will never produce it. There is no easier path to Godliness. It always requires the prayerful study and obedient practice of the Word of God.

Adams, in line with reformation theology, does not want to separate the Word, the Spirit and the life of the Christian. These three concepts are always to be related to one another. They are to interpenetrate one another. As soon as one concept is emphasized at the expense of another there is a terrible danger of subjectivism and

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<sup>80</sup> Adams says that the Word was given for just such a purpose and that it is powerful in the application of the purpose. He cites II Timothy 3:16,17.

<sup>81</sup> Wallace, Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life, p. 206ff.

mysticism. To be led by the Spirit, Adams says, "does not refer to inner feelings, or hunches or to visions or to extra-biblical revelation."<sup>82</sup> To be led by the Spirit<sup>83</sup> therefore, should be understood not as being led from, but rather by means of the scriptures.<sup>84</sup> The point that is being made is that since the Holy Spirit employs His Word as the principal means by which Christians may grow in sanctification, counseling cannot be effective (in any biblical sense of that term) apart from the use of the scriptures. And the fact that the Holy Spirit is involved in counseling or is the counselor therefore, implies the presence of the Holy Scriptures as well.<sup>85</sup>

Jay Adams sees the Holy Spirit as the Giver of all good gifts. He states:<sup>86</sup>

When the Holy Spirit moved directly in the hearts of believers at Jerusalem to motivate them by love, to pool their goods for the sake of the poor, He was no

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<sup>82</sup> Adams, C C, p. 23.

<sup>83</sup> See Galatians 5:18.

<sup>84</sup> Adams states that "The Holy Spirit is the One who enlightens believers as they read the Bible. In I Cor. 2, Paul clearly states that men cannot understand the things of God apart from the Spirit's work."

<sup>85</sup> See Adams, C C, p. 24. Adams points out that (Romans 15:13 and 15:4) "hope" and "encouragement" (KJV "comfort" the word paraclesis could be translated "counsel") are said equally to come from the scriptures and from the Holy Spirit. It is obvious, he concludes that both are true, since the Holy Spirit uses the scriptures to bring hope.

<sup>86</sup> Adams, C C, p. 24.

more at work than when Paul organized and conducted a successful fund raising campaign throughout the Mediterranean World for the same purpose. Methodology and technique, skill and the exercise of gifts are all consonant with the work of the Spirit.

Adams alludes to a person's attitude and inner motivation when he asks the question "Does he do what he does in reliance upon his own efforts or does he acknowledge his own inability and ask the Spirit to use His gifts and methods?"<sup>87</sup>

Man becomes aware of himself in Christ, Adams points out, when he discovers the multiplicity and variety of the gifts of the Spirit.<sup>88</sup>

Each man has his gifts; that means each man has his own ministry or ministries.<sup>89</sup> No one can say, that there is no place where he can serve. If he has not yet found the place, he must be helped to do so. Counselees will be neither happy or productive until they do . . . when he has found his proper place functioning within the body of Christ, the counselee not only will find that his life becomes satisfying and takes on new meaning, but he will begin to become productive.

Gifts, methodology and techniques, of course, may

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Adams, C C M, pp. 346-347.

<sup>89</sup> See I Corinthians 12:4-6.

be abused; they may set over against the Spirit and may be used to replace His work. But they also may be used in complete subjection to Him, to the glory of God and the benefit of His children. Davison has well stated this point, agrees Adams, when he warns against the attempt to secure a spiritual end by the adoption of habits, the multiplication of rules, and the observance of external standards, excellent in themselves, but useful only as means subordinate to the Spirit.<sup>90</sup>

#### E. COVENANT THEOLOGY

Nouthetic counseling is not only concerned with biblical theology, but it also draws attention to the fact that God has revealed His truth by means of a covenant. The more Christians understand the meaning of the covenant, the more useful they will be in the service of God's kingdom, Adams believes.<sup>91</sup>

In scripture, a covenant is a solemn arrangement imposed upon a subject by a ruler, and entails blessings

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<sup>90</sup> See W. T. Davison, The Indwelling Spirit (New York: Hodden & Staughton, 1911) pp. 167-168.

<sup>91</sup> Central to Adams' concept of "Covenant Theology" is a lengthy argument in favor of the Christian School. The covenant and education are seen together, one not being separated or spared from the other. It is not our position to discuss this relationship in length. Covenant theology is simply introduced here to point out the relationship or perspective Adams has of the use of scripture and its application to everyday life.

when kept and curse when broken. A covenant is the most solemn and binding arrangement of all.<sup>92</sup>

The idea of the covenant must be seen in historical perspective. Discussing his view of salvation - history (he uses the term "realized millennialism") Adams points out that "through it all runs the unifying theme of the covenant of Grace."<sup>93</sup> "In God's world, all men are related to Him as covenant breakers or covenant keepers (in Christ),"<sup>94</sup> This, Adams believes, has important consequences for the field of counseling.<sup>95</sup>

The judgments of unbelievers are arrived at and presented from a point of view which attempts to divorce itself from God. Such judgments must be understood, weighed and examined in this light.

We discover here the influence of Cornelius Van Til. If the unbeliever's view of God's revelation and of reality is so different, Van Til and Adams hold, that he

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<sup>92</sup> See Adams, C L H, p. 45.

<sup>93</sup> See Jay E. Adams; The Time Is At Hand (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970) p. 41.

<sup>94</sup> Adams, C C, p. 269. Adams is referring to the covenant God made with man through Adam. (Rom. 5:12) Apart from the grace of God, man is a covenant breaker. Though God's revelation is before him in creation and within him as a creature, man is "against God" and therefore, against the revelation of God. (Rom. 8:6-8).

<sup>95</sup> Adams, C C, p. 269.

cannot accept the Bible to be what the believer so jealously regards it, then it is impossible to bridge the gulf that divides their beliefs. It means that there is a radically different way of thinking in every respect.<sup>96</sup>

Adams believes that it is a "living out of the scriptures" within which we must understand the framework of biblical theology and the covenant. It is this effectual relationship that brings about unbelievable change. Man's values and the way he views life change, Adams holds, as well as his whole motivational system. For example, he says, the book of Proverbs was written primarily to promote divine wisdom among God's covenant people. It anticipates the pitfalls and problems of life and directs the reader to make biblical responses to them.<sup>97</sup>

#### F. THE ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE COUNSELOR

Of primary importance in nouthetic counseling is the authority of the counselor. The counselor has no authority "in his own right". Adams maintains that the counselor's authority is bestowed upon the counselor by Christ. Christ is the beginning and end of all authority. Therefore, every notion that the idea of office has issued forth out of man or the church must be rejected. Nouthetic

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<sup>96</sup> Cornelius Van Til, A Christian Theory of Knowledge (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed Publ. Co., 1969) pp. 41-68.

<sup>97</sup> Adams, C C, pp. 97-98.

counseling, as Adams sees it, is a concept devoid of all meaning except as Christ is viewed as the one to whom all things are to be subjected. He states:<sup>98</sup>

Nouthetic counseling is subject to the directives of the Bible and is not a law unto itself. It is counseling that uses (and does not exceed) the authority of God.

Adams strongly believes that there is a need for divine authority in counseling. Only biblical counseling possesses such authority. He insists that the counselor, as an ordained man of God, exercises the full of authority for counseling that Christ gave to the organized church.<sup>99</sup> To the extent that all Christians must counsel<sup>100</sup> they exercise the authority that Christ has conferred upon them as saints.

Because it is authoritative, the biblical counselor is seen as being directive. The New Testament word for counseling (*nouthesia*) implies scriptural direction. Counseling as directing was prominent in biblical times. Jay Adams believes that the meaning of counseling in the Old Testament and throughout subsequent history remained the same; it meant: "to give advice or direction".<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>Adams, C C M, p. 16.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>100</sup>Colossians 3:16; Romans 15:14.

<sup>101</sup>Adams, C C M, p. 17.

Adams suggests that it has only been in quite modern times that the concept of counseling did an about-face so that to some it came to mean listening rather than speaking. "This type of non-directive counseling<sup>102</sup> is clearly at odds with the unanimous testimony of the biblical data concerning counseling," asserts Adams.<sup>103</sup> In order to do biblical counseling, the human counselor must therefore know the good counsel of the scriptures, and develop those skills by which he may confront others directively in deep concern.<sup>104</sup>

The nouthetic counselors, says Adams, must accommodate their personalities to the message rather than seek to do the reverse. Though mediated through various styles, the fundamental authority of God in counseling must be evident in all biblical counseling. Therefore any personality traits that interfere with, rather than mediate the message must be altered. That is why the Lord changed the apostle Peter from a weak, vacillating, fearful disciple to the bold, fearless disciple who told the authorities: "We must obey God rather than men".<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Commonly called Rogerian counseling. This will be dealt with at length in a succeeding chapter.

<sup>103</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 17.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> See Acts 5:29. Adams maintains that the more faithfully a counselor ministers God's Word, the more he/she changes by conforming to it.

In order to counsel according to methods that are appropriate to biblical presuppositions, a would-be counselor may find that a rather radical change of his own personality is necessary.<sup>106</sup> Adams insists, wherever the Spirit of the Lord is at work, one of the discernible evidences of His presence is changed personalities. Men can and do change. Peter and Paul did; so can the counselee and the counselor. Sanctification (personality changed toward holiness) is the work of the Spirit through His Word.<sup>107</sup>

Based upon the fundamental Christian conviction that men can change as the Spirit works within them, Adams insists upon the idea that every man who has been called by God into the ministry has been given the basic gifts for the pastoral ministry and, therefore, can do nouthetic counseling. Adams believes that the gifts required for biblical counseling are precisely those that God requires for the pastor. He reasons that a number of changes may be necessary for him to achieve proficiency in counseling, but these changes can be made. After all, he says, the

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<sup>106</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 19.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. Readers are referred to Appendix A-8, A-9, and A-10 for a check list that can be used in cases of "counselor failure". Implicit in some of the material contained within this list are indications of the kinds of personality traits counselors should display. See for instance # 33 on page 149. The counselor is encouraged, even reprimanded for possibly not having been aggressive enough.

Christian counselor is engaged in the very work of effecting God's change in the lives of His children; if he does not believe that it is possible to occur in his own life, how can he expect to see change in others? How can he call upon counselees to change and assure them that such change is possible. Conversely, Adams submits, the person who has undergone the changes necessary to become a truly Christian counselor will be full of hope for a change in others and will helpfully communicate this confidence to them.<sup>108</sup>

Who then is qualified to counsel? That question is also responded to by Adams from the biblical perspective. The counselor is identified as a person with a scriptural knowledge of the Will of God, (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16) one who has divine wisdom in one's relationship to others (Colossians 3:16), and one of good will and concern for other members of the body of Christ (Romans 15:14). The ministry of counseling, therefore, is not simply limited to the pastorate but rather "every Christian must become a counselor to his fellow Christian".<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> See Adams, C C M, p. 20.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

## CHAPTER 3

### ADAMS AND PASTORAL CARE COUNSELORS

In the preceding chapters I have spent a great deal of time orienting the reader to what Jay Adams believes and developing the basis for his technique of nouthetic counseling. In this chapter I will highlight (compare and/or contrast) some of the contemporary "pastoral care" counselors' views with Adams. Specifically, I will deal with ideas from Howard Clinebell Jr., Wayne Oates, and Gary Collins. Their comments will reflect on much of what has been written in the previous chapters, address some new issues, and indicate positions that differ from Adams on several points. I wish to remind readers that many of my personal comments are reserved for the final chapter so that I can comment on the entire subject.

Howard Clinebell states:<sup>110</sup>

Counseling is an instrument of continual renewing through reconciliation, helping to help our estrangement from ourselves and our families, from other church members, and from those outside the church, and from enlivening, growing relationships with God.

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<sup>110</sup> Howard Clinebell Jr., Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling (Nashville: Abington Press, 1984) p. 14. (Hereafter cited as Clinebell, Pastoral Care)

With that one statement Clinebell indicates that there is a vast divergence between the way he views pastoral counseling and the way Jay Adams sees it. In each period of history, contends Clinebell, and every new environment, the church must find fresh ways of meeting the needs of troubled persons - new channels for its century-spanning ministry of caring, feeling and growth. Only thus can it remain relevant to the deep needs of people. The varied methods of pastoral care and counseling offer a widening channel of healing and growth in our period of church history.<sup>111</sup>

Howard Clinebell believes that a new chapter in the church's ministry to the heavy-laden is now possible. It can be a chapter, he writes, without equal in the history of our faith.<sup>112</sup>

Never before have we had such rich resources as are provided by fresh developments, in theology and pastoral care, by fresh insights in the human sciences and by innovative techniques from the psychotherapeutic disciplines. When these three streams converge in the pastoral care ministry, a broad river of healing and growth is released through a church.

A classic study of the church's mission by H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

concludes that the unifying goal of the church is to increase the love of God and neighbour among persons.<sup>113</sup> Because we have human, limited parents, all of us are limited to some degree, in our ability to love fully, contends Clinebell.<sup>114</sup> Many people are severely crippled in their ability to love in growth-nurturing ways. This is the heart of their problem. To say to such a person,<sup>115</sup>

"You need to love God and neighbour more," is like shouting to a person floating on a log in mid-ocean, "What you need is dry land!" Nothing could be truer and less helpful.

What such a person needs is to know where the land is and how to get there. Counseling and therapy, insists Clinebell, are methods of helping people learn to love themselves, their neighbour and God more fully and freely.

Clinebell suggests that traditionally the church's task has been divided into four basic functions - proclaiming the good news of God's love, teaching, the establishment of a caring community with a vertical dimension, and the expression of the good news in loving service.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> See H. Richard Niebuhr, in collaboration with Daniel Day Williams and James M. Gustafson, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956) p. 31.

<sup>114</sup> See Howard Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 65.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

Although Clinebell suggests that pastoral care and counseling are primarily an expression of the ministry of service, they are means of communicating the gospel, teaching life-enabling truth, and establishing the caring community. Because of their exhausting of inner conflicts and pain, however, many church members cannot contribute to the establishment of a Spirit-centered caring community in a congregation.<sup>117</sup>

Clinebell and many others believe that psychotherapy (and counseling) can help to prepare such persons to become constructive participants in the life of a healing community, however. They then can take part in the healing outreach of that congregation to the wider community.

#### A. THE PASTOR AS COUNSELOR

Jay Adams suggests that the qualifications for Christian counselors (pastors) may be summed up as an extensive knowledge of the scriptures, divine wisdom, and goodwill toward others.<sup>118</sup> Unfortunately, writes Adams,

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<sup>117</sup> See Clinebell, Pastoral Counseling, p. 66. Clinebell further suggests that God cannot be a real source of meaning because God is not a living symbol for them. Until people have experienced accepting unearned love in a human relationship and are grasped by caring acceptance in a life-to-life encounter, the good news of the Christian message cannot become a liberating, experienced reality for them. This is important for counselors to understand.

<sup>118</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 13. See also Adams, C C, pp. 59ff., for a more detailed explanation.

some men are ordained to the gospel ministry almost entirely on the basis of the successful completion of examinations systematic theology and church policy. In his trials for licensure and ordination, the candidate's personal qualifications either are assumed or ignored. Yet, the qualifications for the ministry found in Titus and I Timothy center even more fully upon personal qualifications than upon doctrinal prowess.<sup>119</sup>

Ministers (pastors) need to understand their uniqueness as counselors, *vis-a-vis* other professionals who do counseling and therapy, so that they can maximize their special contributions to helping the troubled, responds Howard Clinebell.<sup>120</sup> He writes, "the heart of our uniqueness is our theological and pastoral heritage, orientation, resources, and awareness."<sup>121</sup> Clearly separating his position from that of Adams, Clinebell writes that the unique training of pastoral counselors is their dual education in both the theological and the psychological/psychotherapeutic disciplines. Ministers, he says, are the only counseling professionals whose usual training includes systematic study of philosophy, theology ethics, biblical studies, church history, world religions

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<sup>119</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 14.

<sup>120</sup> Clinebell, Pastoral Counseling, p. 67.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

and - very important in their counseling - psychology of religion., Clinebell writes:<sup>122</sup>

Their knowledge of these theological areas can enable them to be uniquely helpful to persons whose problems and growth-blocks center around ethical dilemmas, religious conflicts, value distortions and such ultimate concerns as finding a meaning in life and handling the fear of death creatively.

Paul Tillich, noted Clinebell, describes pastoral care as a "helping dimension of ultimate concern".<sup>123</sup>

If ministers have integrated theological education with their clinical education in counseling, they are prepared to be uniquely helpful in this much-needed area of meanings.<sup>124</sup>

Clinebell stands then in rather stark contrast to Adams, when Adams states:<sup>125</sup>

Biblically there is no warrant for acknowledging even the existence of a separate and distinct discipline called psychiatry. There are, in the scriptures, only three specified sources of personal problems in living: demonic activities (principally possession) personal sin, and organic illness. These three are interrelated. All options are covered under these heads, leaving no room for a fourth:

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Cited in Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 67.  
From the address at the National Conference of Clinical Pastoral Education, Atlantic City, New Jersey, November 1956.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 9.

non-organic mental illness. There is, therefore, no place in a biblical scheme for the psychiatrist as a separate practitioner.

Because of this Adams contends, there is little question that the process of calling and ordaining ministers needs fresh examination. Clearly with that statement, Adams and Clinebell are at significant odds. Adams seeing training from a psychological perspective as being highly disadvantageous and Clinebell insisting that such training can only be of long term benefit when directly integrated into the counseling process.

#### B. THE GOALS IN COUNSELING

Most authors suggest that effective counseling establishes several concrete goals. Howard Clinebell believes that "the transpersonal Spirit of God is the core of all reality and should influence everything we do including our counseling".<sup>126</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer's familiar statement, "God is the *beyond* in the midst of our life,"<sup>127</sup> can be used to describe the unique focus of pastoral care and counseling. Wayne Oates calls this awareness "the God-in-relation-to-person's consciousness".<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 67.

<sup>127</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers From Prison (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1972) pp. 124.

<sup>128</sup>Wayne E. Oates, Pastoral Counseling (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974) pp. 11-12.

This consciousness should help pastors recognize the spiritual dimension present in every counseling situation. This transpersonal awareness, Oates believes, is central in all counseling that is truly pastoral.

Oates insists that spiritual growth is the essential goal in all caring and counseling. It is unique, he maintains among the helping professions. A minister's area of expertise is seen as fostering spiritual wholeness as the core of the whole-person growth. Therefore, enhancing spiritual wholeness should be an explicit goal in the pastor's mind, though it may not be discussed in particular counseling relationships.<sup>129</sup>

Clinebell sees a growing relationship with God as an indispensable aspect of total wholeness. If this awareness, Clinebell maintains, is held in the counselor's mind, it inevitably influences caring and counseling relationships, whether or not explicit religious topics are discussed.

Jay Adams, on the other hand establishes a different priority. "Biblical change is the goal of counseling," he states. "But change is hard."<sup>130</sup> Adams suggests that one of the major reasons that Christians flounder is because they are either unwilling to make changes or do not know how to make the changes that God requires of them in order

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<sup>129</sup>Clinebell, Pastoral Care, pp. 67-68.

<sup>130</sup>Adams, C C M, p. 171.

to meet the vicissitudes of life. He says:<sup>131</sup>

Some persons focus on the past. So long as they do, change will not be possible, since no one can change the past. It is not the past that needs to be dealt with; actually the past no longer exists. It is not his past that needs changing; it is the counselee himself as he now is that must change.

The task of the Christian counselor is to call for repentance, which is a call for change - a change of mind leading to a change of life, maintains Adams.

In his comprehensive guide on Christian counseling, Gary Collins raises some interesting questions when it comes to the position taken by Jay Adams. Collins believes that the writings of social scientists are frequently cited on the assumption that all truth comes from God, including truth about the people whom God created. He has revealed this truth through the Bible, God's written word to mankind, but He also has permitted human beings to discover truth through experience and through the methods of scientific investigation.<sup>132</sup>

In terms of effective goals in biblical counseling, Collins suggests, that surely Jesus Christ is the best model of an effective "wonderful" counselor whose personality, knowledge and skills enable him effectively

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<sup>131</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 173.

<sup>132</sup> Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 19.

to assist those people who needed help. When one attempts to analyze the counseling of Jesus there is always the tendency, unconscious or deliberate, to view Christ's ministry in a way which reinforces our own views about how people are helped.

Collins states:<sup>133</sup>

The directive-confrontational counselor recognizes that Jesus was confrontational at times; the non-directive "client-centred" counselor finds support for this approach in other examples of Christ's helping the needy.

Collins concludes that Jesus used a variety of counseling techniques depending upon the situation, the nature of the counselee, and the specific problem. At times He listened carefully and without giving much overt direction, but on other occasions He taught decisively. He encouraged and supported but He also confronted and challenged. He accepted people who were sinful and needy but He also demanded repentance, obedience and action.<sup>134</sup>

While Jay Adams believes that just about anybody can become a competent counselor as long as they confront authentically, that view is not shared by some who strongly believe that effective counseling requires an analysis of

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<sup>133</sup>With this statement Collins makes room for more than one acceptable technique or approach in the field of Christian counseling.

<sup>134</sup>See Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 15.

the situation and setting before the approach of how to deal with the problem is determined.

In one of his earlier books, Wayne Oates,<sup>135</sup> wrote, about the issue of counseling with startling clarity. The pastor, he said, regardless of his training does not enjoy the privilege of electing whether or not he will counsel with his people. They inevitably bring their problems to him for his best guidance and wisest care. He cannot avoid this if he stays in the pastoral ministry. His choice is not between counseling or not counseling, but between counseling in a disciplined and skilled way and between counseling in a disciplined and unskilled way.

Gary Collins states his view of counselor competence when he writes:<sup>136</sup>

As a way of helping people, counseling seeks to stimulate personality growth and development; to help individuals cope more effectively with the problems of life, with inner conflicts, and with crippling emotions; to provide encouragement and guidance for those facing losses or disappointments; to assist persons whose life patterns are self defeating and causing unhappiness.

In his contacts with people, Collins maintains that Jesus shared examples taken from real life situations and He

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<sup>135</sup>Wayne E. Oates, An Introduction to Pastoral Counseling (Nashville: Broadman, 1959) p. vi:

<sup>136</sup>Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 14.

sought constantly to stimulate others to think and act in accordance with divine principles. Apparently, He believed that some people need an understanding helper to listen, comfort, and discuss before they can learn from confrontation, challenge advice giving or public preaching.<sup>137</sup>

### C. THE BIBLE IN COUNSELING

The use of the Bible in nouthetic counseling is central to Adams' theory. One of the major criticisms levelled by Adams at other Christian counselors is that they ignore or misuse scripture. But, Adams' approach allows for a very narrow and dogmatic interpretation. Few others would agree with him.

Howard Clinebell states five valuable ways in which to use the Bible in pastoral care and counseling. The first is to allow biblical wisdom to inform the process, spirit, and goals of caring/counseling relationships.<sup>138</sup>

A second and very common use of the Bible in pastoral care and counseling, according to Clinebell, is to comfort and strengthen people in crisis.

The third use of the Bible in counseling relationships

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>138</sup> Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 124. For more detailed study of Clinebell's suggested use of the Bible in counseling readers are referred to pages 124-126 of his book. Mention here is made only of the five main points that Clinebell cites.

is as a means of diagnosing.<sup>139</sup>

A fourth use of the Bible which Clinebell advocates in pastoral care and counseling is to help heal spiritual pathology and change pathogenic beliefs.

Fifthly, Clinebell sees the use of Biblical wisdom as a key resource in the teaching and growth-nurturing dimension of pastoral care.

An example of the misuse of the Bible in pastoral counseling is the approach of Jay E. Adams, states Clinebell, who believes that the Bible can be misused in wholeness - constricting ways in pastoral care. It can be quoted in a legalistic way by pastors to buttress their sagging authority, manipulate counselees to conform to rigid moralizing, and justify life-constricting attitudes towards issues such as sex and divorce.

Clinebell<sup>140</sup> suggests that Adams begins with a moralistic reductionism (similar to and apparently learned from O. Hobart Mowrer), which reduces the cause of psychological problems to sin and irresponsible living. Psychological understanding of the human situation and

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid. Clinebell suggests that the inner conflicts of church people may be expressed in the biblical characters with whom they identify.

<sup>140</sup> Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 127. The discussion by Clinebell which follows here gives his evaluation of the nouthetic counseling technique advocated by Adams. Clinebell, who dispenses with nouthetic counseling in less than a full page of writing identifies a "misuse of the Bible" as the major flaw of the approach.

psychotherapeutic methods are rejected as "humanistic" and "non-biblical". All that a counselor needs to "be more competent than a psychiatrist", is the Bible. The method is exclusively confrontational - confronting persons with their sin and then pushing them by the use of scripture, to conform to a legalistic and literalistic understanding of the teachings of the Bible.<sup>141</sup>

There are three basic flaws in this approach, concludes Clinebell. It is poor counseling because it does not integrate Biblical wisdom with contemporary approaches from the human sciences and the psychotherapeutic disciplines.

Second, Adams' approach encourages authoritarian advice giving, reinforced by biblical authority. This tends to increase counselees' dependencies and block spiritual maturation.

Third, the rigid biblicism of this approach tends to prevent people from discovering the Bible as the "Living Word" that speaks to their particular situation in transforming ways.<sup>142</sup>

William Hulme<sup>143</sup> carries the discussion further when

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> I would agree with Clinebell's criticism of Adams. I speak to all of the issues raised here by Clinebell in the concluding chapter of the thesis entitled "Evaluations and Conclusions".

<sup>143</sup> William E. Hulme, Pastoral Care and Counseling (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1981) p. 113.

he writes:

In its misuse the Bible is converted into an ultimate authority - an end in itself. Converting a means into an end is basically what is meant by idolatry and there are no means more susceptible to this distortion than religious symbols. When this happens to the Bible, the flexibility of the Holy Spirit is replaced by the rigidity of the Holy Book. The Bible's value to pastoral care depends on its mediatorial function: it is a means by which the Spirit bears "witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16), that is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16).

But do Clinebell and Hulme really do justice to Adams' view of scripture and the Holy Spirit? The Spirit, maintains; Adams,<sup>144</sup> took pains to raise up men and mould those men, to fitly write His Book. Under His good providence they developed the vocabularies and styles in the kinds of the life situations that He required. Thus they could write a book of exactly the sort that He wanted to meet our needs. He was careful to insure that not one false word was penned; in His Book there are no errors. The Spirit works through His Word; that is how He works.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 187.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. Adams contends that there is no flexibility given to the Holy Spirit apart from the guidelines established in scripture. It seems however, that Adams has not specifically answered the criticism of biblical literalism.

D. THE PROCEDURES IN COUNSELING

Every man stands in need of assurance and encouragement. This, Adams finds, is the essential message of the Bible and this is the counselor's main object. There is no greater joy for the sinner than when he is told there is hope for him in Jesus Christ. The concepts of hope and love are the underlying principles of nouthetic counseling. He says:<sup>146</sup>

Apart from the scriptures, there is no basis for hope, but the scriptures were written to give hope, Christian counselors, therefore, should strongly emphasize God's promises that are found in the scriptures whenever they discover counselees who seem to have lost hope.

But there is also love. Man, the apostle says, could never love if God had not loved him first (I John 4:7). The love of God, Adams sets forth, should permeate the counseling process from beginning to end. Filled with the love of God, man can face life and its problems. It is precisely man's lack of love, Adams points out, that accounts for man's troubles. He writes, "the man who loves needs no counseling."<sup>147</sup> This man, Adams believes, will be enabled by God's grace to cope with life's

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<sup>146</sup> Adams, C C M p. 46.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

problems. The love of which Adams speaks does not come naturally. He says, "It must be learned." And "love . . . may be commanded (Luke 6:27ff; Ephesians 5:25) and taught (Titus 2:3,4)."<sup>148</sup>

Adams has touched upon something very significant in this question. He says:<sup>149</sup>

When Christ said that the whole law could be summed up in two commandments -(love for God, and love for one's neighbour) he intended to say exactly that and nothing else. Yet some Christians are not satisfied with that; they dangerously add a third commandment - love yourself. They claim that unless one first learns to love himself properly, he will never learn to love his neighbour, for Christ (quoting Leviticus 19:18) distinctly commands "love your neighbour as yourself".

Self-love, according to Calvin and Adams is basically nothing but self-righteousness, self-sufficiency and selfishness. Man in his total depravity is seen as only and ultimately being concerned about his own self. He loves himself and he hates God and his neighbour. Self-love thus considered is synonymous with egotism or, as Freud would term it, narcissism.<sup>150</sup>

Erich Fromm has a different view. He states, "The affirmation of one's own life, happiness, growth, and

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>150</sup> Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving, (New York: Mentor, 1972) p. 48.

freedom is rooted in one's capacity to love . . ."<sup>151</sup>

But the question is, Adams points out, whether the concept of self-love is biblical or not? It is Adams' strong conviction that the notion that one must learn to love himself is biblically false. The concept of self-love espoused by the psychologizers of the scriptures runs counter to the express principle that is repeated throughout the Bible in one form or another: that one's self-esteem and what he receives for himself is the by-product of that which he gives in love to another,<sup>152</sup> Adams contends.

Wayne Oates maintains, and I would agree, that the problems of self-acceptance (self-love) are basically of a religious nature. He states that illustrations of ambivalent feelings towards self reflect a fear of one's own emotions and a confusion of one's purposes in life. The need for self-rejection and self-acceptance constantly tend to stale-mate each other. These opposing needs usually appear in the context of the question that arises as to whether the persons at hand should express or deny themselves in the search for personal satisfaction. Oates maintains that insight for its own sake may be a waste of time and energy. It is not enough, he says, to beg the question by

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>152</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 143.

saying that the person simply needs more insight.<sup>153</sup>

To understand (love) oneself, however, is often a first step in healing, maintains Gary Collins.<sup>154</sup> Many problems are self-imposed, says Collins, but the one being helped may fail to recognize that he or she has biased perception, harmful attitudes or self-destructive behaviour. Consider, for example, the person who complains, "nobody loves me!" but fails to see that the complaining is one reason for this rejection by others. One goal of counseling is for an objective, perceptually alert helper to assist those being helped to get a true picture of what is going on within themselves and within the world around them.<sup>155</sup>

One of the techniques vital to good counseling is skill in gathering relevant data, maintains Adams.<sup>156</sup> Christian counselors should be deeply concerned about data. They know that these are needed in order to solve the counselee's problems. Adams suggests that a counselor may gather data basically in two ways: 1) overtly and 2) covertly. Data gathering depends upon communication and Adams states that we communicate primarily in two ways:- 1) verbally and 2) non-verbally (i.e. by what kindergarten teachers call the show and tell methods). Two

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<sup>153</sup> Wayne E. Oates, The Christian Pastor (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982) p. 250.

<sup>154</sup> See Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 23.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Adams, C G M, p. 257.

kinds of data, he says, in counseling that would correspond roughly to these two methods may be called core and halo data.<sup>157</sup> Some data, suggests Adams, are given by the counselee, usually by word of mouth. But other significant data may be gathered by observation. Sometimes the halo data are as important as, (or more important than) the core data.

Under Adams' system of nouthetic counseling, counselors are encouraged to keep extensive notes.<sup>158</sup> As counselors refer to their notes in subsequent counseling sessions they find that exact quotations often make the differences. By reading these as direct quotation, at least with respect to the pith of a comment, a counselee can often be caught in a lie, reminded of a commitment, discern changes in attitude or opinion, and so on. Such use of notes, says Adams, can enable the counselor to uncover many other significant data. Early in counseling sessions (usually in the first) the counselor must begin to help counsees to start to sort out their individual responsibilities. This is one of the first things to do with the data that he collects. Often as he progresses in collecting data he can fix responsibility in the process. Data gathering

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<sup>157</sup>Arbitrary terms used simply to distinguish data gathered in two distinct ways from two distinct but interrelated sources.

<sup>158</sup>See Adams, C C M, pp. 263-367.

and responsibility fixing work hand-in-glove with one another.<sup>159</sup>

Asking questions is a vital part of data gathering, according to Adams. When you ask questions he suggests that you ask them in the way that Christ asked them. Begin with the basic "what's", which are the fundamental data gathering questions. In the gospels you will notice that Jesus asks many questions, notes Adams. Some are rhetorical, some are for the benefit of the other person, and some are for the purpose of data gathering. The basic-data oriented questions are summed up by Adams in three inquiries:- 1) What is your problem? 2) What have you done about it? and 3) What do you want us to do?<sup>160</sup>

Adams speaks of three dimensions of problems:- presentation problems, performance problems and preconditioning problems. These problems, he says, are to be distinguished in counseling and often considered separately. What is a presentation problem? It sounds like this; Adams says, "I'm depressed; I'm not making it with people . . . People are out to get me."<sup>161</sup> The performance problem is "The specific way in which there

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<sup>159</sup> See Adams, C C M, p. 267.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 274. See Appendix A for a complete "Personal Data Inventory" suggested by Adams. Taken from Adams, C C M, pp. 433-436, 451-453, and 459-463.

<sup>161</sup> Adams, C C, p. 149.

is poor behavioural response to life's problem . . . "162  
And the preconditioning problem? It is "really a kind of  
computer problem. The client has programmed himself by  
his past activity to act in certain ways in response to  
given stimuli."163

In presenting this approach to man's problems, Adams  
is deeply mindful of two things: the holiness of God and  
the sinfulness of men. Both are seen as having equal importance.  
True counseling rips aside superficialities and generalities.  
Before ~~the~~ eyes of the Lord all is seen as being naked  
and bare. If counseling must avoid any danger at all,  
according to Adams, it is the danger of "syncretism".  
A counselor who is a syncretist is a counselor who believes  
that good and evil, holiness and sinfulness can be  
reconciled and united. Modern counseling, Adams insists,  
has succumbed to the spirit of syncretism.164

By way of comparison, Adams says, examining, for  
example, Clinebell's and Oates' approach, we find that  
their philosophical and theological pre-suppositions have  
been exposed to Tillich and other modern thinkers.165

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162 Ibid.

163 Ibid.

164 Adams, C C M, p. 92.

165 H. Clinebell, Pastoral Care, pp. 50, 56, 230, 244.  
cf. Wayne E. Oates, Protestant Pastoral Counseling  
(Nashville: Broadman, 1962) pp. 92, 95, 189.

This, Adams states, has very important consequences for one's view of sin, grace, justification and ultimately one's whole view of reconciliation. The root reason Adams argues, for the syncretism of modern counseling, is that biblical Christianity has been abandoned by most counselors in favour of humanism and a secular approach to the gospel. Clearly in that statement Adams has put considerable distance between himself, Clinebell, Oates and others whose methods of counseling do not follow his directive nouthetic technique.

There is perhaps, however, agreement between Adams and others when it comes to the principle of homework and action therapy. Clinebell, for example, points out:<sup>166</sup>

When a person is stunned or paralysed by feelings of defeat, fear, or failure, damaged self-esteem, or tragic loss, it is often helpful for the pastor to prescribe some activity that will keep him functioning and in touch with people . . . . The prescribed homework should have a bearing on the achievement of the goals which the person had in coming for help.

In his excellent book on helping, psychologist Paul Welter notes that each person has a special way of learning. Some people learn best through hearing -

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<sup>166</sup>Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 143. See also Oates, An Introduction to Pastoral Counseling, p. 253ff, and Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1970) p. 62f.

listening to the words of others. Some learn best through seeing - reading books, watching movies, and looking at diagrams. Then there are people who learn best by doing - completing projects, doing role plays or acting out their feelings. Although there have been some recent exceptions, traditional people-helping has involved a talk/listen approach.<sup>167</sup>

Gary Collins suggests that since the term "homework" often raises thoughts of dull busy ~~work~~ imposed upon an unwilling recipient, it has been suggested that "task agreements"<sup>168</sup> might be a better and more accurate term. Collins identifies five types of homework task agreements that have been used between counselors and counselees most often. These have been categorized as 1) testing [including questionnaires, sentence completion forms, standardized tests, and writing assignments] 2) discussion and study guides [a task to be completed between counseling sessions and discussed subsequently in counseling] 3) behaviour assignments [an encouragement to change actions in some small but important ways between counseling sessions] 4) reading [books and articles often contain

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<sup>167</sup> Paul Welter, How To Help A Friend (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1978) p. 173.

<sup>168</sup> This term was actually suggested by Paul Welter in How To Help A Friend. See also Gary Collins, Christian Counseling pp. 30-32 for a more detailed discussion on homework in counseling.

helpful information which can supplement the counseling sessions] 5) recordings [the use of music to help people with their problems].<sup>169</sup>

Homework, writes Adams,<sup>170</sup> is the essence of good counseling. The counselor who perfects his ability to do homework soon will see the difference in his effectiveness in helping people. Learning how to give good homework, homework that is biblical, homework that is concrete, and homework that creatively fits the situation takes time and effort, but is worth both.

It would thus appear that a little common ground between Adams and others involved in the field of Christian (pastoral) counseling has finally been established.

The assignment of homework, Adams points out, serves the following useful purposes:- 1) regular homework assignments set a pattern for expectation of change; 2) homework clarifies expectations; 3) homework enables the counselor to do counseling more rapidly; 4) homework keeps the counselee from becoming dependant upon the counselor; 5) homework enables both the counselor and counselee to gauge progress or lack of it; 6) homework allows the counselor to deal with problems and patterns

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<sup>169</sup>See Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 31.

<sup>170</sup>Adams, C C M, p. 343.

that develop under controlled current conditions.<sup>171</sup>

The way the counselee applies himself to his homework demonstrates his willingness to do something about his problems, but if the counselee fails to do his work then Adams suggests the following questions the counselor must ask: 1) Has forgiveness truly been requested and extended between all parties involved? 2) Is there hope? 3) Is the counselee a genuine Christian? 4) Is the counselee immobilized by fear?<sup>172</sup>

There is, insists Adams, complete openness in nouthetic counseling. Time and again both counselor and counselee examine themselves in the light of scripture to see whether they really advance in the knowledge and grace of Christ.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup>Ibid., p. 301-310.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid., p. 315.

<sup>173</sup>Ibid., pp. 318-320.

## CHAPTER 4

### JAY ADAMS AND TRADITIONAL PSYCHIATRY

Much of what Jay Adams says he is strongly opposed to is what I have labelled traditional psychiatry. This chapter will look at two men in particular that Adams takes aim at, namely, Sigmund Freud, and Carl Rogers. The central issue which will arise here (and will be dealt with in even greater detail in the next chapter) is the idea of acceptance of "responsibility" for one's actions. This chapter will also give brief attention to the themes of freedom, neutrality in counseling, listening and sin.

Rober Lee Mason states:<sup>174</sup>

Psychologists and psychiatrists do not have all the answers to the world's problems. Neither do they possess some magic power or super pill capable of curing all mental illness. True, there are some who have become so awed with their own importance that they dare to stand before the world and pontificate sometimes so persuasively that they convince a sizeable audience that they do indeed possess answers not yet discussed by the less gifted.

On the other end of the continuum, psychologists and psychiatrists have come in for their share of ridicule

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<sup>174</sup>Robert Lee Mason, The Clergyman and the Psychiatrist (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978) p. 211.

serving as the butt of never-ending jokes. Some punster has, for example, defined psychology as the study of the id by the odd. It is not uncommon for example, for critics to inject the "physician heal thyself" bit, citing the high suicide rate among psychiatrists as evidence that they cannot handle their own problems much less help others with theirs.

Ignoring these extremes Mason says that most of us would agree that psychology and psychiatry have made significant contributions to our understanding of human behaviour and to the treatment of mental illness.<sup>175</sup>

It does however, go without saying that theology itself has not escaped the impact of psychological theory and practice as seen in the following statement by Paul Tillich.<sup>176</sup>

Theology has received tremendous gifts from these movements (existential philosophy and psychoanalysis) gifts not dreamed of fifty years ago. We have these gifts. Existentialists and analysts themselves do not need to know that they have given to theology these great things. But the theologians should know it.

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<sup>175</sup> See Adams, C C; p. 2. Clearly Adams finds himself in disagreement when he makes this statement, "Psychotherapy has not yet been proven more effective than general medical counseling in treating neurosis or psychosis. In general, therapy works best with people who are young, well-born, well educated and not seriously sick."

<sup>176</sup> Paul Tillich, "Psychoanalysis, Existentialism and Theology" Pastoral Psychology, No. 87 (1958) pp. 9-17.

Conversely, Mason states that psychology would do well to note the contribution of theological giants like Paul Tillich, Martin Buber and Reinhold Niebuhr in the area of human relationships and behaviour.<sup>177</sup> Those psychiatrists who themselves are not religiously oriented should recognize that religion is a vital force with widespread repercussions in the lives of millions. As D. E. Trueblood once said: "Belief in God . . . may be false and it may be true, but it cannot possibly be trivial".<sup>178</sup>

Gordon Allport in his book states:<sup>179</sup>

Scarcely any modern textbook written in psychology devotes as much as two shamefaced pages to the subject even though religion, like sex, is an almost universal interest to the human race. The psychologist has no right to retire from the field. Fully two thirds of the adults in our country regard themselves as religious people, at least nine tenths, by their own report believe in God.

Jay Adams exhibits considerable contempt for psychiatry when he writes, ". . . psychiatry, that illegitimate child of psychology which historically has made the most grandiose claims, is itself in serious trouble."<sup>180</sup> Taking aim at

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<sup>177</sup> Mason, The Clergyman and the Psychiatrist, p. 212.

<sup>178</sup> David E. Trueblood, Philosophy of Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957) p. 6.

<sup>179</sup> Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion (New York: MacMillan, 1950) pp. v-x.

<sup>180</sup> Adams, C C, p. 1.

Sigmund Freud as being the prime culprit, Adams comes into a head-on collision with psychoanalysis. There are no two ways about it, Adams points out, if the Freudians are right, then the God of Christianity has failed. But the opposite is true also.

The problems of existence of mental illness has troubled Christian theologians and philosophers since the first century. There has always been difficulty in separating the psychological from the spiritual.<sup>181</sup> While Sigmund Freud has carried a major portion of criticism by a few dissenters, much of that criticism is unjustified writes Calvin S. Hall, who states:<sup>182</sup>

One is dismayed by the prevalence of criticism based upon incomplete understanding. Freud seems to have suffered more, in this respect, than any other major thinker of our times. His theories have been so widely misrepresented and distorted that it is almost impossible for the unsuspecting reader to separate fact from falsification. The exposition of Freud's psychology is not an easy one. His ideas are scattered throughout his writings from the early 1890's to the late 1930's, and one has to read everything he wrote to be sure that no essential point is missed . . .

Freud has not been viewed by all with the same kind of generosity. One of his major critics, O. Hobart Mowrer<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Quentin Hyder, The Christian Handbook of Psychiatry (New Jersey: Flemin H. Revell Co., 1971) p. 21.

<sup>182</sup> Calvin S. Hall, A Primer of Freudian Psychology (New York: The New American Library, 1979) pp. xi and xii.

<sup>183</sup> O. Hobart Mowrer, The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1961) p. 131.

writes that there are widespread and growing indications that Freud's aim and motivations are not to be considered as messianic, but rather demonic. He writes:<sup>184</sup>

We have good reason to believe that psychopathology instead of stemming from unexpressed sex and hostility comes rather from an outraged conscience and violated sense of human decency and responsibility.

#### A. FREUD AND RESPONSIBILITY

Adams believes that the idea of sickness as the cause of personal problems vitiates all notions of human responsibility. People no longer consider themselves responsible for what they do wrong. They claim that their problems are allogenic (other-engendered) rather than autogenic (self-engendered). Freudian psychoanalysis, Adams says, turns out to be an archeological expedition back into the past in which a search is made for others on whom to pin the blame for the patient's behaviour.<sup>185</sup> The fundamental idea is to find out how others have wronged the counselee. In seeking to excuse and shift blame, psychoanalysis is seen by Adams as an extension of the

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Adams, C C, pp. 5,6ff.

problem it pretends to solve.<sup>186</sup>

The question of rejection of responsibility for one's actions is the presupposition upon which the expert knowledge approach to counseling is based.<sup>187</sup> Since it is assumed that the counselee's problem arose from the outside, the counselee himself is virtually passive. The assumption that a man is not responsible for his condition leads to the notion that he is not responsible for getting himself out of that condition.<sup>188</sup>

But clearly, Adams is not being fair to Freud. It could easily be argued that there is a profound difference between seeking ways to blame a condition of someone else and seeking reasons or causes as to the root of a condition. It would seem reasonable to discover reasons for a counselee's condition as a first step toward helping the counselee understand and isolate the problem, thus becoming able to deal with it.

When speaking to the idea of responsibility, Freud can clearly defend himself when he writes:<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid. The subject of responsibility is a major theme throughout this thesis. While only passing attention is paid to it here, the subject will be raised repeatedly. The responsibility ethic, in fact is why some contemporary approaches to counseling have challenged traditional teaching.

<sup>187</sup> See Adams, C C M, p. 76.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (New York: Pocket Books, 1970) p. 459.

Analytic treatment makes as great demand for efforts on the part of the patient as on the physician, efforts to abolish the inner resistances. The patient's mental life is permanently changed by overcoming these resistances, it is lifted to a higher level of development, and remains proof against fresh possibilities of illness. The labour of overcoming the resistances is the essential achievement of the analytic treatment; the patient has to accomplish it and the physician makes it possible for him to do this by suggestions which are in the nature of an education. It has been truly said therefore, that psychoanalytic treatment is a kind of re-education.

#### B. FREUD AND THE CHURCH

Premature attempts to bridge the gap between psychiatry and religion created early antagonisms between the two disciplines. For example, Freud explained religion as a figment of man's dependency needs and God as an illusory counterpart of man's father image. Yet, Freud's position provoked many churchmen to look more carefully at this developing discipline called psychiatry. They were curious and suspicious; some were critical and some were hostile (including Adams).

The furor that Freud awakened in religion gradually abated as religious writers and philosophers distinguished between the acceptable and the unacceptable in emerging psychiatry. But, Adams maintains that Freud saw Christianity as an illusion which had to be dispelled.

Adams writes:<sup>190</sup>

All that can be said for Freud is that his views have encouraged irresponsible people to persist in and expand their irresponsibility . . . Freud provided a philosophical and pseudoscientific rationale for irresponsible people to use to justify themselves.

It is Adams' alarm at the great number of people in need of counsel that are being referred to psychiatrists trained in Freudian theory which has inspired his sharp rebuke of Freud himself. He believes that Freudian therapy consists of making one feel right by dispelling false guilt.<sup>191</sup>

Nevertheless, it appears that Adams has once again overlooked significant ideas that Freud espoused. In defense of Freud, R. E. Brennon wrote:<sup>192</sup>

The great merit of Sigmund Freud and his school is from having shown the real importance of unconscious mental processes and their influence on conscious activities, particularly in the orientation of the individual toward a normal goal of life.

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<sup>190</sup> Adams, C C, p. 17.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> R. E. Brennon, Thomistic Psychology (New York: MacMillan, 1941) p. 352.

Generally, except for a few extreme views like those held by Adams, religion and psychiatry has evaporated in a mutual openness. The most obvious meeting place for religion and psychiatry has become a shared concern and interest in the individual. This concern lays in the struggles, weaknesses, happiness and fulfilment of being human.

### C. FREUD AND SIN

It is what he sees as a lack of concept of genuine Christian belief and values which has prompted Adams to denounce Freud and pose the question: "Is the fundamental problem of persons who come for personal counseling sickness (i.e. according to Freud's medical model) or sin (i.e. according to a scriptural model)?"<sup>193</sup>

Sin, says Adams,<sup>194</sup> in all of its dimensions clearly is the problem with which the Christian counselor must grapple. It is difficult for some to acknowledge personal sin as the root and cause of most of the day-by-day counseling problems that arise. This is particularly true in an age deeply steeped in Freudianism.<sup>195</sup>

It is with the question of sin and the corresponding issue of responsibility for sin where the practice of

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<sup>193</sup> Adams, C C, p. 19.

<sup>194</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 124.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

nouthetic counseling diverges dramatically from traditional therapy. Perhaps a bit reluctantly, Adams writes; however,<sup>196</sup>

Freud is a cause of the ills in modern society only as a complicating factor and not as a basic cause of those ills. The ultimate cause is sin.

Such a comment however, does not go unchallenged, especially when we contrast it with the words of Freud himself:<sup>197</sup>

There are two tenets of psychoanalysis which offend the whole world and excite its resentment; the one conflicts with intellectual, the other with moral and aesthetic prejudices. Let us not underestimate these prejudices; they are powerful things, residues of valuable, even necessary stages in human evolution. They are maintained by emotional forces, and the fight against them is a hard one.

The basic problem has become Adams' preoccupation with placing the blame of the ills of society upon any one person or institution. It is undeniable that Freud has made some basic and most valuable insights into the nature of man. The unfortunate part of the problem is that Adams has not taken the opportunity to elaborate on them.

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<sup>196</sup> Adams, C C, p. 17.

<sup>197</sup> Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 25.

D. ROGERS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Central to Carl Rogers' teachings is man's autonomy. It is, relates Adams,<sup>198</sup> perfectly consistent with liberal and humanistic thought in that it teaches that the solution to man's problems lies in the man himself. Rogers concludes a paper on personality change with a final philosophical statement.<sup>199</sup>

. . . it means that the individual has the capacity to guide, regulate, and control himself providing only that certain definable conditions exist. Only in the absence of these conditions, and not in any basic sense, is it necessary to provide external control and regulation of the individual.

The non-directive viewpoint, says Rogers, places high value on the right of every individual to be psychologically independent.<sup>200</sup> Adams states that this theory leads to the acceptance that man is autonomous and that, in non-directive counseling, the counselor becomes a wall upon which the client bounces his questions. The role of the counselor is thus to reflect the client's

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<sup>198</sup> See Adams, C C, p. 81.

<sup>199</sup> Carl Rogers, "A Theory of Therapy and Personality Change: As Developed in the Client-Centered Framework", Perspectives in Abnormal Behaviour, Richard Morris (ed.), (New York: Pergamon Press, 1974) p. 348.

<sup>200</sup> See Carl Rogers, Counseling and Psychotherapy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1942) p. 127 cited in Adams, C C, p. 81.

words in a more sharply focused form directing the client to devise his own solution.<sup>201</sup> The joy of man's freedom, Rogers maintains, becomes evident when man takes on an inner discipline against outer controls.<sup>202</sup>

Rogers presents the following conclusions about the characteristics of the human organism.<sup>203</sup>

1) The individual possesses the capacity to experience in awareness the factors in his psychological maladjustment, namely the incongruences between his self-concept and the totality of his experience.

2) The individual possesses the capacity and has the tendency to reorganize his self-concept in such a way as to make it more congruent with the totality of his experience thus moving himself away from a state of psychological maladjustment, and toward a state of psychological adjustment.

3) These capacities and this tendency, when latent rather than evident, will be released in any interpersonal relationship in which the other person is congruent in the relationship, experiences unconditional positive regard, and empathetic understanding of the individual and achieves some communications of these attitudes to the individual.

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<sup>201</sup> See Adams, C C, p. 82.

<sup>202</sup> See Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 130.

<sup>203</sup> See Rogers, "A Theory of Therapy and Personality Change" pp. 347-348.

Rogers sees psychotherapy as the releasing of an already existing capacity in a potentially competent individual, and not the expert manipulation of a professional.<sup>204</sup>

E. ROGERS AND FREEDOM

Adams insists that the fundamental presupposition of the Rogerian system confirms sinful man's belief that he is autonomous and has no need of God.<sup>205</sup>

Discussing the interrelation between freedom and determinism Rogers has stated about man:<sup>206</sup>

He is free . . . to become himself or to hide behind a facade; to move forward or to retrogress, to behave in ways which are destructive of self and others, or in ways which are enhancing, quite literally free to live or die, in both the physiological and psychological meaning of those terms.

The joy of man's freedom, Rogers is saying here, becomes evident when man takes on an inner discipline against outer controls. There is therefore, in Rogerian counseling an underlying fundamental belief that man can make himself whatever and whoever he wants to be through

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Adams, C C, p. 81.

<sup>206</sup> Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 130 citing Carl Rogers, "The Concept of the Fully Functioning Person", Pastoral Psychology, Vol 16, (April, 1965) p. 32.

a power which lies within himself and is developed through himself. Adams analyzes it this way:<sup>207</sup>

Rogarian techniques based upon this presupposition (i.e. man is his own solution to his problems) are so unsatisfying to many conservatives because they clash with scriptural principles. According to Rogers, men in sin must be "accepted", not admonished . . . The nouthetic element in all such counseling is conspicuously absent, for genuine responsibility is undermined by the idea of acceptance.

#### F. ROGERS AND NEUTRALITY

Within the Rogarian school of "client-centered counseling"<sup>208</sup> a non-directive (or reflective) approach is taken. The client is advised that he will work out his own solutions with the main role of the counselor being simply to restate the problem in a more sharply focused form. The counselor, therefore, assumes a passive role and accepts the client's ability to make sound judgments based upon his own strengthened insight.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Adams, C.C., p. 83.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., p. 81. Adams insists that Rogers' use of the term is a misnomer. The word "client" etymologically indicates "one who is dependant upon another" and has as its root the Greek word *kluto* "to listen". This means that a "client" strictly speaking is one who is dependant upon the information imparted by the counselor. Adams further states that when nouthetic counselors refer to the counselee as the client, they always do so in its etymological sense.

<sup>209</sup> cf Adams, C.C., p. 82 and Rogers, "A Theory of Therapy and Personality Change" pp. 347-348.

This, challenges Adams, is a blatant cop-out. He sees responsibility as respond-ability: the God-given ability to respond to any situation of life in accordance with His commandments.<sup>210</sup> Adams concludes that since the counselor is neutral (not giving specific direction) and in the Christian sense not giving insight from scripture, then the counseling technique that is non-directive is non-Christian.<sup>211</sup>

Adams' feelings about neutrality are summarized by direct questions:<sup>212</sup>

How can the Christian pastor "accept" sinful behaviour? He is pledged to give a proper Christian response to such behaviour. How can he fail to offer to declare and minister God's Word. . . . In short, how can he forget that he is a Christian and attempt to become neutral or disengaged. Such neutrality is impossible. The pastor cannot set aside his convictions - even temporarily. Even if he could, he would be wrong in doing so.

But it seems possible that Adams has missed the point on neutrality. Neutrality should not necessarily be seen as ambivalence to sinful behaviour. It might be strongly argued that Rogers is referring to the acceptance of the counselee as a person and not necessarily to the acceptance of the counselee's behaviour.

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<sup>210</sup> Adams, C C, p. 83.

<sup>211</sup> Adams, C C, p. 83-86.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., pp. 85-86.

G. ROGERS AND LISTENING

Another question that has been raised when discussing Rogerian counseling is about the value of listening and the part that it plays in the counseling process. Adams tells us that the Bible taught us the value of listening long before Carl Rogers said anything about it.<sup>213</sup> Proverbs 18:13 makes the crucial remark on this point.<sup>214</sup> Adams, however, implies that Rogerian counselors do not really listen, in spite of the emphasis placed upon it, because they consider content to be unimportant, caring only about the emotional emissions and refusing to address the data.<sup>215</sup>

More to the point of the discussion then, is the motivation in moving from "listening" to "guiding" the counselee during the counseling process. Could counseling become more effective when the listening is influential in guiding the client in a shepherding (pastoral) perspective?

Seward Hiltner answers the question: When does the pastor have a real understanding of the nature and needs of man? Hiltner believes that takes place when he is capable of distinguishing between what Paul Tillich calls "preliminary concerns" as against "ultimate concerns". The

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<sup>213</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>214</sup>Proverbs 18:13 - "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

<sup>215</sup>Adams, C C, p. 87.

difference is this: "The religious concern is ultimate; it excludes all other concerns from ultimate significance; it makes them preliminary".<sup>216</sup>

To Adams, the nouthetic approach requires giving advice and not simply listening.<sup>217</sup> Rogerian counseling, none-the-less has tended to dominate the field of pastoral counseling and form the basis of most liberal and much conservative counseling, Adams concedes.<sup>218</sup>

William E. Hulme states:<sup>219</sup>

Some of the leaders in pastoral counseling consider the client-centered therapy of Rogers extreme and have modified it to fit into their particular concept of the pastoral role, while others have taken it and given it a religious setting.

Adams is not happy with that approach. His view is that the pastor cannot demonstrate neutrality.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, (Chicago, 1951-1957) Vol 1, p. 11. Cf also Seward Hiltner, Preface to Pastoral Theology (New York: 1958) p. 57 cited in Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 73.

<sup>217</sup> Adams, C C, p. 91.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>219</sup> William E. Hulme, Counseling and Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1956) p. 4 cited in Adams, C C, p. 81.

<sup>220</sup> Paracletos means "one who is called to another's side to aid him by his counsel". The word comes to mean "counselor" in the same sense as when we speak of a counselor-at-law. See Adams, C C, p. 84.

Think of the sorry picture of the conservative minister as he sits behind his desk grunting non-judgmentally. The Christian pastor is called to be a paraclete not a parakeet. He ought to act like a Christian - even when counseling.<sup>221</sup>

Psychotherapy, Adams criticizes, is blind to the fact that man is corrupted by nature and that from an evil root there comes only evil fruit. This means that man's ideas are tainted by sin. Man therefore cannot help himself or others apart from a deliverance from sin through the atoning work of Christ.<sup>222</sup> No amount of listening will change the direction or the destiny of man. It is only man's confession of sins and asking for forgiveness that will alter the situation. Adams writes:<sup>223</sup>

God's remedy for man's problems is confession. The concealing of transgressions brings misery, defeat and ruin, but the confession and forsaking of sin will bring merciful pardon and relief.

Summarizing then his views of Rogerianism, Adams says:<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Adams, C C, p. 84.

<sup>222</sup> Adams, B U, pp. 239-240.

<sup>223</sup> Adams, C C, p. 105.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

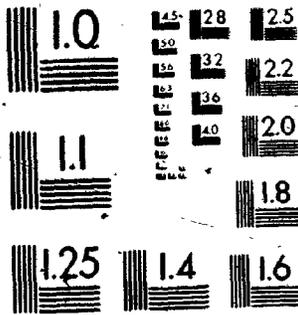
Rogerianism . . . must be rejected in toto. Every remnant of this humanistic system exalting man as autonomous must be eradicated. The basic premises lead to the methodology. Reject the one and you reject the other.

Once again, however, Adams has missed another vital point. Most people seek for or consent to counseling because they (or other people) are not happy with a specified behaviour, attitude, etc. Adams seems to insist that if people do not want to change to God's way, then they do not want to change at all. Because Rogerian counseling is "client-centered" should not make it less valuable. If Adams is suggesting that no change within a person is important unless it reflects divine intervention/interaction then clearly something is wrong.

Adams is correct when he says that listening will not change the destiny of man but he has clearly misunderstood the point of non-directive counseling. One of the strengths of the approach is that counselees are instrumental in arriving at their own solutions to problems. This will substantially reinforce the new behaviour since most people by nature respond better to their own ideas than they do to provocation (nouthetic counseling). Assuredly a total rejection of Rogerianism appears to be in error.

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## CHAPTER 5

### ADAMS AND NON-TRADITIONALISTS

Non-traditional approaches in the field of psychology and counseling have become quite commonplace. This chapter will attempt to dialogue the non-traditionalists and their approaches with that of Jay Adams. It is my strong suspicion that Adams has been more than just influenced by the new crusaders. It is even quite possible that he has simply appropriated many of their ideas to a theological context to arrive at his nouthetic counseling technique.

Most pastors move from one crisis to another with those whom they shepherd. In a single day, they may visit the mother of a newborn baby, give guidance to a person who is becoming a Christian, talk with high school or college graduates about their life work, unite a couple in marriage, comfort a person who is bereaved, call upon someone who is confronting a serious operation and listen to the last words of a patient who is dying. Two thousand years of Christian ministry has conditioned Christians to expect their pastors to be with them at these times of crisis.

Christian pastors come to the task in the strength of a great heritage. Gripped by the awe in the presence

of the mysterious and tremendous crises of life, they can be secure in the fact that people both want and expect them to be present at their times of testing.<sup>225</sup>

The crises of everyday living involve the shared experiences of all people in one way or another. They are the common ventures of life in which "the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now" (Revised Standard) (Romans 8:22). The straitening anxieties of these times of crises call for a re-organization of the total personality of individuals and their families. The result may easily be disorganized. These crises either strengthen or weaken; they are situations which call for ethical choices, an increase in emotional maturity, and additional spiritual resources.<sup>226</sup>

The history of psychiatry is interwoven with a thread of religion. Yet, it is impossible to recapture fully the shifting moods, the cautious contacts, and the precarious moments that have occurred even over the past eighty years in the uncharted border between religion and psychiatry.<sup>227</sup> Just as certainly as there is a crisis involved in most counseling situations there is also a

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<sup>225</sup>Oates, The Christian Pastor, p. 17.

<sup>226</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>227</sup>Robert J. McAllister "Psychiatry and Religion", A. W. Richard Sipe and Clarence Rowe (ed.) Psychiatry, Ministry and Pastoral Counseling (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1984) p. 24.

continuing crisis between psychology and religion in this decade.

O. Hobart Mowrer, a dissident, writes that it has been evident that something is seriously amiss in contemporary psychiatry and clinical psychology. He suggests that under the sway of Freudian psychoanalysis, these disciplines have not validated themselves either diagnostically or therapeutically. Their practitioners, as persons, have not manifested any exceptional grasp on the virtue and strength they purportedly help others to acquire. And the impact of their philosophy of life and conception of man in society as a whole, Mowrer believes, has been subtly subversive.<sup>228</sup>

Mowrer does not claim to be a Christian and his book attacks some basic Christian doctrines such as the substitutionary atonement and the concept of original sin. But, he challenges counselors and pastors alike to acknowledge the central place of sin and forgiveness in counseling. He argues that "man sickens in mind, soul and perhaps even body because of unconfessed and unatoned real guilt".<sup>229</sup> Mental illness, he proposed, is really moral illness that can only be cured by confession to

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<sup>228</sup> O. Hobart Mowrer cited in the foreward to William Glasser, Reality Therapy, A New Approach to Psychiatry (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1975) p. xi. (Hereafter cited as Glasser, Reality Therapy).

<sup>229</sup> Mowrer, The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion, p. 82.

significant other people and by the making of restitution.

The best view of religion, according to Mowrer, would be that not any one point of view should be mandatory at all. He has a "let's leave the door open" attitude.

Mowrer has no desire to live in a world dominated by "religious" planners who insist that everyone must conform to their mould. Mowrer states:<sup>230</sup>

There is . . . no place for Calvinistic knowledge in the modern world: we have, it seems, a completely symmetrical choice between observing natural principles and prospering, on the one hand, and disregarding and getting into trouble, on the other. And we have just as much responsibility -- and deserve just as much "credit", positive or negative -- in the one case as in the other. If we are to end the wasteful and undignified conflict between scientific and religious world views, it must surely be along these lines . . .

Religion in Mowrer's system must be considered as something having psychological survival value. He would maintain that if religion can help us to function as responsible beings in society then we must certainly make use of it.

Jay Adams initially contacted the works of O. Hobart Mowrer while preparing a course assignment in Poimetics (the shepherding work of the pastor). While preparing to teach that course material he read some of Mowrer's works which had just been published. The books astounded him.

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

"Mowrer", states Adams, "had gone far beyond my own thinking".<sup>231</sup> After corresponding with Mowrer, he was invited to participate at his Eli Lilly Fellowship program at the University of Illinois, where he was Research Professor of Psychology. Adams spent the summer session at the University of Illinois working with Mowrer. That was for Adams an unforgettable experience for which he acknowledges, "I shall always be grateful".<sup>232</sup> In reference to Mowrer, Adams says,<sup>233</sup>

Along with five others, I flew with him, drove with him, ate with him, counseled together with him and argued with him five days a week. I learned much during that time and while today I would, certainly not classify myself as a member of Mowrer's school, I feel that the summer program was a turning point in my thinking.

It was during that time that Adams made a study of the principle biblical data on the subject of counseling, with special reference to what the scripture says about conscience. He states,<sup>234</sup>

That summer's experience left me with some large convictions. First, I discovered why the large

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<sup>231</sup> Adams, C C, p. xiv.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. xv.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. xvi.

majority of people in mental institutions are there . . . To put it simply, they were there because of their unforgiven and unaltered sinful behaviour. Secondly, the whole experience drove me back to the Bible to ask once again - What do the scriptures say about such people and the solution to their problems?

Mowrer antithetically proposed a moral model of responsibility because he maintained that the medical model took away the sense of personal responsibility. Mowrer said that the patient's problems are moral not medical. The patient is seen as suffering feelings (false guilt). The basic irregularity is not emotional but behavioural. He is not a victim of his conscience, but a violator of it. He must stop blaming others and accept responsibility for his own poor behaviour. Problems may be solved, not by ventilation of feelings, but rather by confession of sin, states Mowrer.<sup>235</sup>

While being undeniably impressed with the works of Mowrer and William Glasser (a writer of the Mowrer tradition who has recently become popular) Adams states that he stands far from them. Their systems, he says, begin and end with man. Mowrer and Glasser fail to take into consideration man's basic relationship to God through Jesus Christ, neglect God's law, and know nothing of the power of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. xvii.

Their presuppositional stance must be rejected totally, Adams says. Christians may thank God that in his providence He has used Mowrer and others to awaken us to the fact that the "mentally ill" can be helped. But Christians, Adams insists must turn to the scriptures to discover how God (not Mowrer) says to do it.<sup>236</sup>

Adams, however may be much closer to Mowrer than he is willing to acknowledge. Using the basis of many of Mowrer's ideas, Adams could be seen as borrowing the foundation to complete the building. In other words nouthetic counseling might not be as entirely biblically based as Adams has suggested.

#### A. MOWRER'S TWO-FACTOR LEARNING THEORY

Mowrer's two-factor learning theory has received a great deal of attention. It is his thesis that, whatever else therapy may be, it is a teaching/learning relationship; and no conception of this process seems likely to be ultimately satisfactory which does not give a prominent place to learning principles. In his theory Mowrer seeks to build a bridge between learning, personality and the findings of clinical psychology. Elaborating on Thorndike's principle that a behaviour is most likely to be learned and sustained if it affects the solution to some problem,

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. xviii.

Mowrer points out:<sup>237</sup>

There are clinical, experimental, logical, and common sense considerations which all suggest that there are two fundamentally different processes which may be most simply referred to as solution learning and sign learning.

Mowrer advocates the use of insight in psychotherapy but he suggests that it is insight into man's overt behaviour, his need for sociality that is more important, not his impulses or his anxieties.

Both Mowrer and Adams seem to be residing on the same plane. Both deal with bringing about behavioural change. Mowrer is saying that behaviour is modified through the teaching/learning relationship and Adams is saying that the behaviour is modified through a confront/change interaction. Albeit different terms the two approaches are seen as bringing about the same result.

#### B. MOWRER AND FREUD

Neurosis, Mowrer believes, did not develop by a repression of memories, etc., into the sub-conscious as Freud maintained but they are brought about by a repression of the super ego. Problems, Mowrer says, are part of living. The main thing is not the problems but our reaction

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<sup>237</sup> Cited in Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 137.

to those problems. People who panic and run at the first danger "signal" when problems arise are seen as failing to "solve" these problems and managing to pile up a bundle of troubles and difficulties for themselves in the process.<sup>238</sup>

Adams would agree. He sees the avoidance of problems as a failure to confront them nouthetically.

### C. MOWRER AND RESPONSIBILITY

Again, Adams and Mowrer are seen as being highly campatable in their views on "responsibility".

Mowrer maintains, you cannot escape from a problem by running away from it or pretending that it isn't there. Problems have to be responsibly faced and dealt with. One's conviction to solve problems has to be strong enough to endure some risks. As in the case of a child learning to walk, each step involves a risk. He may fall. But there is no other way to learn to walk. Man facing his problems, Mowrer says, must experiment and dare. A man cannot succeed if he does not try.<sup>239</sup>

Nearly a decade after Mowrer wrote The Crisis In Psychiatry and Religion, another eminent psychiatrist, Karl Menninger, expressed similar ideas in a book with the intriguing title Whatever Became of Sin?<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> New York: Hawthorn, 1973.

Of both of these books, Gary Collins states,<sup>241</sup>

Regrettably they were written from an humanistic perspective, and although they used theological language they failed to acknowledge the biblical truths about confession, forgiveness and justification. These concepts must be in the thinking of every Christian counselor who attempts to help those with guilt feelings.

Very clearly, however, they were in the thinking of Jay Adams.

Nevertheless, Mowrer would insist, any cure only occurs when the individual, already relieved of conflict, recognizes the source of his trouble in his overt act and re-commits himself to the society he has forgone, healing his original violations directly or, if this is impossible (as it often is), paying in kind, that is, compensating for his behaviour with new overt behaviours that facilitate sociality instead of violating it.

With that thought, Adams agrees. In counseling sessions, he relates, it was discovered with astonishing consistency that the main problems people, who were imprisoned, were having were of their own making. They themselves were their own worst enemies. Some had written bad cheques, some had become entangled in the consequences of immorality, others had cheated on income tax, and so on. Many had

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<sup>241</sup> Collins, Christian Counseling, p. 124.

fled to the institutions to escape the consequences of their wrong doing. A number had sought to avoid the responsibility of difficult decisions. Evidence of dramatic recovery was also seen when people straightened out these matters. Adams says:<sup>242</sup>

Humanistic as his methods were, Mowrer clearly demonstrated that even his approach could achieve in a few weeks what in many cases psychotherapy had been unable to do in years.

#### D. MOWRER AND NOUTHETIC COUNSELING

The contact between Mowrer and Adams initiated, under the guidance of God's Spirit, the rise and the formulation of nouthetic counseling, according to Adams. Faced with the facts that the traditional ways of psychiatry were not necessarily adequate and effective -- as Mowrer had made clear in his books -- and deeply impressed by the application of scripture to man's problems, Adams started to rethink the way psychiatry, clinical psychology and poimenics had dealt with man's complexities.<sup>243</sup>

While there are many significant similarities between the counseling techniques advocated by Mowrer and that of nouthetic counseling formulated by Adams, there nevertheless

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<sup>242</sup> Adams, C C, p. xviii.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., p. xvi.

remains a few unresolved differences. Jay Adams' very confession that he was deeply indebted to Mowrer, however, is an outright acknowledgement of special influence.

The underlying point shared by the two men is unquestionably the area of responsibility for one's own behaviour. Clearly here the single prominent point in nouthetic counseling is a direct appropriation of the central theme and teaching of O. Hobart Mowrer. Mowrer urged people to confess their wrongs to those whom they had wronged. Adams urges that people confess their wrongs to God. Both men advocate the making of restitution wherever possible. Both men almost appear antagonistic with their confrontational style and both men share an equal scorn of traditional psychiatry.

Howard Clinebell, also believes that confrontational methods are essential at times, in counseling.<sup>244</sup> According to Clinebell, William Glasser's reality therapy, (also learned from Mowrer) assumes that it is impossible to maintain self-esteem if one is living irresponsibly.

Glasser declares:<sup>245</sup>

Morals, standards, values or right and wrong behaviour are intimately related to the fulfillment of our need for self-worth.

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<sup>244</sup> See Howard Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 154.

<sup>245</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 11.

His, therapy, interprets Clinebell, aims at teaching persons to credit themselves when they are wrong. Self-respect comes through self-discipline and responsible behaviour, bringing increased respect from others.

#### E. WILLIAM GLASSER AND CONFRONTATION

Howard Clinebell admits that people with severe character disorders are very difficult to help, even by a highly trained psychotherapist.<sup>246</sup> Many people, he states, with less severe weakness of conscience can benefit from skilled pastoral counseling following confrontational, reality therapy principles. This is particularly true of adolescents whose difficulty often is simply a retardation of conscience maturation. By identifying with the pastor's more mature conscience, the counselee can gradually unlearn destructive patterns and internalize more constructive inner controls.<sup>247</sup>

A favorite question in reality therapy is, "What is your plan?" Or as Jay Adams would pose the question "How do you plan to change?"

This stimulates constructive thinking about the future. Glasser writes, "We must open up his life, talk about new horizons, expand his range of interests, make

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<sup>246</sup> Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 157.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

him aware of life beyond his difficulties."<sup>248</sup>

Many troubled people, writes Clinebell, do not feel there really is a meaningful future for them. Awakening realistic dreams and making and implementing workable plans to move towards a viable future can be decisive in helping persons break away from the unconstructed patterns of the past. In counseling with people who have weak inner controls, it is essential to help them discover something about which they can really care.<sup>249</sup>

Traditionally, states Gary Collins, counseling has been divided in three areas: remedial, preventive, and educative. Remedial counseling, he states, involves helping people to deal with the existing problems of life. Preventive counseling seeks to stop problems from getting worse or to prevent their occurrence at all. Educative counseling involves the counselor's taking the initiative to teach principles of mental health to larger groups.<sup>250</sup>

William Glasser's reality therapy, on the other hand, draws heavily upon what might be called a psychiatric version of the three "R's" namely, reality, responsibility and right/wrong.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> See Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 31.

<sup>249</sup> See Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 157.

<sup>250</sup> See Collins, Christian Collins, p. 55.

<sup>251</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. xii citing O. Hobart Mowrer.

Glasser says:<sup>252</sup>

A therapy that leads all patients toward reality, toward grappling successively with the tangible and intangible aspects of the real world might accurately be called a therapy toward reality. But it is not enough to help the patient face reality; he must also learn to fulfill his needs. Previously when he attempted to fulfill his needs in the real world, he was unsuccessful. He began to deny the real world and to try to fulfill his needs as if some aspects of the world did not exist or in defiance of their existence. To do reality therapy, the therapist must not only be able to help the patient accept the real world, but he must then further help him fulfill his needs in the real world so that he will have no inclination in the future to deny its existence.

This bears a strong similarity to the sentiments of Jay Adams who insists that people must be confronted with the reality of their behaviour and then commit themselves to change according to the scriptural model.

Psychiatry must be concerned with two basic psychological needs: the need to love and be loved, and the need to feel that we are worthwhile to ourselves and to others, writes Glasser. Helping patients fulfill these two needs is the basis of reality therapy, Glasser contends.<sup>253</sup>

Adams says, "The goal of our authoritative instruction (nouthetic counseling) is love"<sup>254</sup> He believes that the

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<sup>252</sup>Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 7.

<sup>253</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>254</sup>Adams, C C, p. 54. The brackets are mine.

purpose of counseling (and preaching) is to foster the love toward God and love toward one's neighbour which God commanded.

Glasser believes that whether a person is loved or not, to be worthwhile they must maintain a satisfactory standard of behaviour. If they do not evaluate their own behaviour or have it evaluated and do not act to improve their conduct where it is below their standards, they will not fulfill their need to be worthwhile and they will suffer as acutely as when they fail to love or to be loved.<sup>255</sup>

Glasser concludes from his discussion a very pointed observation. If we do not learn to fulfill our needs, we will suffer all our lives; the younger and the more thoroughly we learn, the more satisfactory our lives will be.<sup>256</sup>

#### F. REALITY THERAPY AND CONVENTIONAL THERAPY

Reality therapy in both theory and practice challenges the validity of the basic beliefs of conventional therapy.<sup>257</sup> One overall difference between reality therapy

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<sup>255</sup> As a matter of fact this discussion is central to the key pivotal point of reality therapy - responsibility for one's actions. This is a central theme in nouthetic counseling as well. Adams of course believes the standard that improves one's conduct is the scripture itself.

<sup>256</sup> See Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 15.

<sup>257</sup> See Glasser, Reality Therapy, pp. 51-53 for his detailed evaluation of the principles of conventional psychoanalytic therapy.

and conventional psychiatry is the difference between the involvement necessary for reality therapy and the involvement necessary for conventional therapy.<sup>258</sup> The conventional therapist is taught to remain as impersonal and objective as possible and not to become too involved with the patient as a separate and important person in the patient's life. Rather, the therapist is to strive for the transference relationship whereby the therapist relives with the patient the past difficulties and then explains how the patient is repeating the same inadequate behaviour with the therapist. The six points below may be considered as briefly highlighting the major differences in involvement between reality therapy and conventional psychiatry.<sup>259</sup>

- 1) Because the concept of mental illness is not accepted, the patients cannot become involved with the counselor as a mentally ill person who has no responsibility for their behaviour.
- 2) Working in the present and toward the future, counselors do not get involved with the patient's history because what has happened cannot be changed. The fact is not accepted that the counselee is limited by his past.
- 3) The counselor's relates to the patient as people, not as transference figures.
- 4) The counselors do not look for unconscious conflicts

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<sup>258</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 53.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

or the reasons for them. A patient cannot become involved with a counselor by excusing behaviour on the basis of unconscious motivations.

5) The counselors emphasize the morality of behaviour. They face the issue of right and wrong which they believe solidifies the involvement, in contrast to conventional psychiatrists who do not make the distinction between right and wrong, feeling it would be detrimental to attaining the transference relationship they seek.

6) Counselors teach patient's better ways to fulfill their needs. The proper involvement will not be maintained unless the patient is helped to find more satisfactory patterns of behaviour. Conventional therapists do not feel that teaching better behaviour is a part of their therapy.<sup>260</sup>

Conventional psychiatry, Glasser insists, almost without fail relates a problem to instances in the patient's previous life when he was unable to cope with stress. Glasser believes that there is no noxious psychological causative agent to remove. He states, "Our job is to help the patient help himself to fulfill his needs

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<sup>260</sup> Each of these points will not be discussed in complete detail. They are listed here to give a quick and overall picture of the differences between reality therapy and conventional psychiatry and serve comparatively as a quick reference point to the highlights of Adams' nouthetic counseling approach.

right now".<sup>261</sup>

A central part of reality therapy is getting patients to acknowledge the values they really believe in as a part of the therapy. Moreover, once acknowledged the major task is to help the patient live by these standards. Unfortunately, states Glasser, in their effort to avoid the issues of morality many conventional therapists accept behaviour that does not lead to "need fulfillment" in the mistaken belief that this is the best effort the patient is capable of making.<sup>262</sup> Where standards and values are not stressed, Glasser concludes, the most that therapy can accomplish is to help patients become more comfortable in their irresponsibility. He states; "Because our effort is always directed toward helping patients fulfill their needs, we insist on their striving to reach the highest possible standards".<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 56.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. Glasser at this point gives attention to a significant fact. He acknowledges that reasonable people can have serious conflicts concerning values. The position of the reality therapist would not be necessarily to change the person's values but to examine the reality of what he is doing in all of its implication and then decide, as a judge must, what he believes is the correct course. This highlights one of the few differences between Glasser and Adams since Adams would make every value judgment solely upon the basis of the counselor's interpretation of scripture and require that the value held by the counselee be amended. This, of course, would require an amended behaviour.

In reality therapy, Glasser explains, time is not spent looking for the insights so vital to conventional psychiatry. Instead every opportunity to teach patients better ways to fulfill their needs is taken. Time is painstakingly spent examining the patient's daily activity and suggesting better ways for him to behave. The many questions patients ask are answered and ways to solve problems and approach people are suggested. Patients who have not been able to fulfill their needs must learn both how to approach people so that they can become more involved and how to accomplish enough so they can gain an increased feeling of self-worth. In so doing it becomes most obvious that the reality therapist plays the role of a teacher. In this way reality therapy differs markedly from conventional therapy.

Glasser writes,<sup>264</sup>

Reality therapy is not another variety of the same approach but a different way to work with people. The requirements of reality therapy - an intense personal involvement, facing reality and rejecting irresponsibility behaviour, and learning better ways to behave - bear little resemblance to conventional therapy and produce markedly different results.

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<sup>264</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, pp. 72-74.

G. REALITY THERAPY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The teaching of responsibility is the most important task of all higher animals, man most certainly included, concludes William Glasser. Except for man, he says, this task is performed under the pressure of instinct - instinct related directly to the continuation of the species. Animals he says, have only a few months to learn to survive; if the time is not spent in intense training, they do not live. But man is not driven by instinct to care for and teach his children - he is driven by responsibility.

In place of instinct, Glasser submits, man has developed the intellectual capacity to be able to teach responsibility well. Responsibility is taught by responsible relatives, teachers, ministers, and friends with whom people become involved. The responsible parent creates the necessary involvement with his child and teaches him responsibility through the proper combination of love and discipline.<sup>265</sup>

Both Jay Adams and William Glasser believe that the younger we are exposed to love and discipline the easier and the better we will learn responsibility.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Glasser, Reality Therapy, p. 19. Glasser concludes that people who are not at some point in their lives exposed to love and discipline will not learn to be responsible. For that failure he suggests they suffer all of their lives.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

That it can be taught only to the young is not true, states Glasser, responsibility can be learned at any age.

Nevertheless, concludes Glasser, it is easier to learn correctly at first than to overcome previous bad learning.

Few parents, he argues would quarrel with the statement that many children do not learn responsibility easily.

Children do not know that what seems easy to them will not fulfill their needs, so almost from infancy, he contends, they struggle against the reality that they must learn from their parents how to fulfill their needs. Later, when they are old enough to recognize reality, they test their parents with irresponsible behaviour in the same way that the psychiatric patient tests their therapist, Glasser theorizes. Through discipline tempered with love parents must teach their children to behave better. The child learns thereby that the parents care. Children want to become responsible, concludes Glasser, but they will not accept discipline and learn better ways unless they feel the parents care enough to show them actively the responsible way to behave.<sup>267</sup>

This seems to be almost exactly what Jay Adams is saying in nouthetic counseling. Adams believes that through the discipline of the scriptures we are taught (as children are taught) to behave better. God (the moral

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

Absolute) is seen as teacher and disciplinarian through love. Modification of improper or immoral behaviour is enhanced through facing the reality of the behaviour. Bad behaviour carries with it a negative result. Good behaviour carries with it a positive result. Once good behaviour is reinforced through greater acceptance the pattern for positive growth is learned.

As I have previously mentioned in this chapter, Howard Clinebell shows more than just passing support when he speaks of the reality therapy technique of William Glasser. He states that many people who demonstrate irresponsible behaviour must be counseled with the following therapies in mind.

- 1) Establish rapport. This often is a difficult step because this type of person tends to distrust and keep his/her distance from authority figures.
- 2) Confront the person with the self-defeating nature of their reality-denying behaviour. As Glasser puts it, the therapist must reject the behaviour which is unrealistic but still accept the patient and maintain his involvement with him. Clinebell obviously agrees with this conclusion.
- 3) Seek to block the irresponsible, acting-out behaviour.
- 4) Reward responsible behaviour with approval.
- 5) Help the person learn to satisfy his/her need in socially constructive, reality-oriented ways.
- 6) Explore the counselee's aspirations and help them make

and implement realistic and satisfying plans for the future.<sup>268</sup>

Summing his views on the responsibility issue, Jay Adams makes reference to the men he calls revolutionaries<sup>269</sup> of the institutionalized system.

He states:<sup>270</sup>

Advocates of the revolution press the issue: Shall we still speak of the repressed Id? They reply, no. Instead, they declare, it is time to talk about a suppressed Ego (conscience). They continue: Shall we seek to remove guilt feelings (that is false guilt)? Never, instead we must acknowledge guilt to be real and deal directly with it. Psychological guilt is the fear of being found out. It is the recognition that one has violated his standards. It is the pain of not having done as one knows he ought to do. Further, they insist that ventilation of feelings must be replaced by confession of wrong doing.

The connection between guilt and responsibility emerges. The similarity between the non-traditionalist and the nouthetic counselor has also emerged. Adams states that the non-traditionalists no longer speak of emotional

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<sup>268</sup> Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 156 and ff. Clinebell writes favorably of the "responsibility" ethic that Glasser instills as being fundamental to his counseling approach. At this point it is interesting to note that Clinebell does not disapprove of the confrontational (see point 2) style of reality therapy whereas earlier in his book he denounced the "authoritarian advice giving" of Jay Adams. See page 127.

<sup>269</sup> Adams includes Steve Pratt, William Glasser, G. L. Harrington, William Mainord, Perry London and O. Hobart Mowrer in his list of revolutionaries.

<sup>270</sup> Adams, C.C., p. 14.

problems but rather of behavioural problems. He states that the term "mental illness" must be replaced by words that indicate irresponsible behaviour. People who were formerly thought to have withdrawn from reality are now viewed in the context of seeking to avoid detection. The revolutionists, Adams states, naturally refuse to side with the "wants", but rather make every attempt to side with the "oughts".

The foundation of both systems lies in the fact that Adams and the non-traditionalists view problems not in the emotional context but rather in the behavioural context. The central theme of that behavioural context therefore, must be responsibility for one's actions. The only thing that Adams is saying that is significantly different from anybody else is that the behaviour must be modified within a theological (absolute) framework rather than what he sees as an arbitrary moral framework. Many observers would probably agree, however, that the end result is the same. Nouthetic counseling might be seen as an oversimplification by some Christian counselors of a long accepted psychological therapy - behaviour modification.

## CHAPTER 6

### EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding chapters, I have made comparisons (largely through dialogue) between Jay Adams and a wide range of others. Through conversation the reader has become familiar with any similarities that exist between nouthetic counseling and other approaches. Readers have also become aware that there are many within the field of counseling that Adams views with contempt. There are many who view Adams in the same light.

In this chapter I want to discuss some of the views that have previously been expressed and provide my evaluation of the relative worth of the nouthetic approach. I would like to make it clear at the beginning of this chapter that I believe there is seldom one right way of doing something (especially counseling) with people. Techniques, theories, strategies, approaches of all kinds can usually be found to have some measurable success and value at some time or other.

Within the framework of nouthetic counseling, however, there is a burden placed upon the role of the counselor that is awesome. It is the mastery of (or inadequacy in) the scriptures that tends to signal the success or failure

of the technique. No other approach that I have examined in my research has placed the counselor in such a precarious position. The counselor in some measure is not only seen as being the one guiding from the Word of God but could clearly be viewed by some as having the infallible authority of God. The consequences are mind-boggling. Nouthetic counseling could become nothing more than brainwashing in the hands of the theologically undereducated or unscrupulous.

A. IS NOUTHETIC COUNSELING THE ANSWER?

"Counseling is a special, but not separate, area of pastoral (or Christian) activity; indeed, biblically it is close to the heart of shepherding", writes Jay Adams.<sup>271</sup>

Adams feels that too frequently in the past God's shepherds have abandoned this ministry of preventive and remedial counseling. As a result, he says, the sheep have suffered greatly and presently are in dire need.

It seems to be of himself that Adams refers when he writes:<sup>272</sup>

In His providence, however, He is raising up other shepherds - men whose hearts have been touched by the plights of God's scattered, torn flocks - who truly

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<sup>271</sup> Jay E. Adams, Shepherding God's Flock - Pastoral Counseling (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975) p. 14.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid. The point that Adams makes here is that foolish shepherds use means of helping others which are not ordained of God. He cites Zechariah 11:15.

desire to meet these needs. Yet, many of them lack knowledge and skill. Determined to rely no longer upon the "equipment of a foolish, useless shepherd", they are demanding biblical training in counseling in seminaries, buying those books that explain the use of the Word of God in counseling, and rejecting the views of those who have sought to restore souls according to unscriptural principles, by means of the world's gear.

Adams suggests that people should thank God for this significant change and, as a result look forward to new and better days for the church of Jesus Christ.

This rather flattering assessment of his own work is most typical of Jay Adams. But is Adams correct in his implied claim that nouthetic counseling is the only acceptable version of "Christian counseling? It is very easy for people to read the different approaches to counseling and become confused, concludes Gary Collins.<sup>273</sup>

If we count both popularizers and writers in the counseling field, Collins states that we have at least one hundred Christian (primarily evangelical) approaches to helping people. Many of these approaches are similar, with like presuppositions and goals. But there are also sharp differences which sometimes leave the advocates to criticize and condemn, and frequently leave the casual reader bewildered and floundering.

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<sup>273</sup>Gary R. Collins, Helping People Grow (California: Vision House, 1980) p. 17.

Collins writes:<sup>274</sup>

Some counselors and writers have attempted to develop definitive, theological and biblically based approaches to counseling; others have started with secular theories and proposed "Christianized versions" of transactional analysis, behaviour modification, psychoanalysis, rational-emotive therapy and other contemporary psychologies. A few Christian approaches and their developers have attracted bands of enthusiastic followers; most others have had limited acceptance and application. It is of little comfort to realize that the secular counseling world is even more diversified and disrupted.

In spite of the wide diversity of opinion, I agree with Collins that it is unlikely we will ever have one true Christian approach to counseling, anymore that we can hope for one generally accepted approach to homeletics, church government, evangelism, or eschatology. In fields such as evangelism, preaching, and counseling the diversities of opinions and approaches might even be good. Because people are different, they are reached and helped in a variety of ways. Surely, no one approach to counseling speaks to every problem and benefits every person. Since Jesus used different approaches with different people it would seem logical that counselors should do the same today.

No one of us can reach everyone like Jesus could. Our unique personalities permit each of us to be especially

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<sup>274</sup>Ibid., p. 319.

helpful to some people but not to others. It is likely therefore, that Christian counseling will continue to be a diversified field.

Chapter three of this thesis indicated some of the differences and the similarities between Jay Adams and others who are involved in the fields of pastoral counseling. In much of his thinking it is evident that Adams has failed. Adams has seen counseling as having its object in the task of changing the way people live their lives. Many of his contemporaries, however, have placed a healthy emphasis upon understanding the way people are living their lives. Nouthetic counseling, Adams believes, must involve the alteration of values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and life. But God does not call for us to lose our individuality simply because we identify with the Christian faith. Nouthetic counseling might be looked upon as nothing more than gross manipulation if Adams really believes what he says.

#### B. EVALUATING SUCCESS

According to Adams, over the years since 1969, when nouthetic counseling was introduced, it has enjoyed phenomenal acceptance among Bible-believing Christians. Literally thousands, he states, today are successfully engaged in doing nouthetic counseling. Interest in biblical counseling has grown immensely since its inception. God

has blessed beyond all expectation, Adams reports.<sup>275</sup>

Adams answers his critics by suggesting that negative evaluations by those who hold other viewpoints increasingly show concern over the spread and acceptance of nouthetic counseling. Adams argues that the systems they offer instead are highly unsystematic and usually lacking, he says. It is not the desire of nouthetic counselors to argue and debate with them; rather their concern is to continue to help those who want to become better counselors, retorts Adams.

But is Adams correct with his generous self-evaluation of nouthetic counseling? And is not the concern that some have expressed regarding nouthetic counseling justified? In fact, it is interesting to note that few have written specifically about nouthetic counseling. Possibly dismissing Adams as not being worthy of a prolonged response many have devoted little energy to responding to him.

"Nouthetic counseling was born out of desperation!"<sup>276</sup> Those very words stem from the pen of Jay Adams, himself. Because both the referral method and the integration model had proven unsatisfactory to Adams, he deemed it necessary to strike out on a new path. Adams is profoundly incorrect when he so blatantly dismisses the other approaches to counseling within the Christian environment.

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<sup>275</sup>Collins, Helping People Grow, p. 154 citing Jay Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling".

<sup>276</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

I would wholeheartedly concur with the common sense of Gary Collins who writes,<sup>277</sup>

As a Christian counselor, I believe that psychology and counseling must be built on the assumption that man is created in the divine image, marred by the Fall, loved by a real God who exists, and able to be changed into a new creation by the act of confessing one's sin, committing one's life to Christ, and experiencing the "new birth". In deriving truth, however, we realize that it may come from empirical methodology, from logical deduction, from analysis of fiction and other forms of literature and from the Bible - God's inerrant Word. Whether or not all Christian counselors agree or disagree with these conclusions, each one must pause to delineate their assumptions, since these influence what they do in their counseling whether they realize it or not.

It is Collins' derivation of truth which is most refreshing. After reading Jay Adams, it is easy to get the impression that unless people are confronting noutheetically, then there is little or no value (or truth) in what they are saying. It is most appropriate to point out (as Collins has) that truth is basically an agreement with reality. Certainly reality is expressed in broader terms than the nouthetic counselor is trained to deal with. If the basis for training the nouthetic counselor is the scriptures it is a commendable place to start. However, if potential counselors do not receive a much broader exposure in their training, their perspective is too

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<sup>277</sup> Collins, Helping People Grow, p. 340.

severely limited.

Surprisingly, Jay Adams concedes (but does not elaborate upon) some shortcomings within the techniques of nouthetic counseling. He writes:<sup>278</sup>

While much has been achieved, much more needs to be. Nouthetic counseling is in its infancy and even though all sorts of problems . . . have been solved biblically, more scriptural teaching, more sophisticated methodology, etc. are needed.

That small and yet significant admission by Adams indicates that he is not so clearly devoted to nouthetic counseling that he is not willing to acknowledge that there are weaknesses within the approach.

#### C. MISUSE OF CONFRONTATION

Nouthetic, by the virtue of the term itself means confrontation. There is little doubt that confrontational methods are analogous to a powerful medicine. Used properly they can be a potent means of healing. Yet the dangers of misuse are increased by their potency. James A Knight notes<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Jay Adams, "Nouthetic Counseling" cited in Collins, Helping People Grow, p. 162.

<sup>279</sup> James A. Knight, "Confrontation in Counseling with Special Emphasis on the Student Setting", Pastoral Psychology, December, 1965. p. 49.

Pastors and teachers have not always understood the meaning of confrontation in counseling. It is often confused with a vertical type of authoritarianism, moralistic preachments, or hostile attacks indulged in under the guise of "righteous indignation".

The covering expression used for nouthetic counseling (and also for reality therapy) is "doing it in love". That is simply not enough to satisfy Knight who establishes several principles to provide protection against the danger of moralisms. He believes that confrontation should be used with care and restraint.

Secondly, he suggests that the emphasis should be on helping the person face reality (self-confrontation) as they come to understand it and discover their own responsibility within it.

Thirdly, Knight believes that counselees should be given full opportunity to respond to confrontation, to discuss it thoroughly, and to disagree with the counselor.<sup>280</sup>

Jay Adams would never stand for that. Adams wants to counsel in love but on his own terms. Adams allows the scriptures to be the basis of the confrontation and the only response that is allowed for is the response of change, or else! To disagree with the counselor is seen as a disagreement with God. That seems to be such an awkward distortion of such a great potential. If only Adams could

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

see that the value of the scriptures is not limited to a context of perpetual confrontation!

Howard Clinebell says that in the final analysis, the minister's level of maturity will determine whether he/she misuses confrontational methods to manipulate counselees or uses the methods constructively. The crucial variable, believes Clinebell, in all counseling is ethical integrity and wholeness.<sup>281</sup>

Confrontation in counseling matters of ethical importance, suggests Clinebell, has several critical flaws.<sup>282</sup> First, from both the theological and psychological viewpoints, the therapy is a work-righteousness approach. It lacks grace or its psychotherapeutic parallel, caring acceptance by the counselor.

Secondly, the therapy, like most other behaviour and action therapies, focuses exclusively on making behaviour more constructive. Feelings are understood as the simple consequences of behaviour. What is lacking in such approaches is a recognition that destructive feelings and attitudes do cause destructive behaviour, as well as vice-versa. Therapy needs to focus on helping people change both their feelings and their behaviour.

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<sup>281</sup>Clinebell, Pastoral Care, p. 162.

<sup>282</sup>Clinebell actually raises this discussion while commenting on O. Hobart Mowrer. The flaws that Clinebell highlights here are equally applicable to nouthetic counseling.

Another error, as outlined by Clinebell, is the reduction of all guilt to an appropriate guilt. This is seen as an error with serious consequences for all counselors who accept it as valid, including Adams. Some neurotic guilt is a cover up for appropriate guilt. But much neurotic guilt is just that and must be so treated in counseling if a person is to be helped!

The fourth and closely related weakness in ethical confrontation is the over simplified view that all personality problems are caused by disobeying one's conscience. What is not accounted for in this thinking is that a neurotic conscience can produce guilt in response to behaviour that is actually constructive.<sup>283</sup>

#### D. LOVE AND RESPONSIBILITY

One of the most satisfying dimensions of being created in the image of God is our ability to love and our need for love. God is love, the scriptures tell us. Gary Collins says;<sup>284</sup>

He is the source from which it comes, the Fountain Head from which it springs. It is inconceivable that one so rich in love should have a need for it Himself. In the minds of some, to suggest that God has a need is to conclude that God is insecure in Himself. Yet Jesus declares that the first and greatest command

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>284</sup> Collins, Helping People Grow, p. 230.

is to love thy God! If God has no such need, why is our love so important to Him.

Love therapy is biblically based. It is the total involvement of the therapist in the therapeutic process. When William Glasser wrote Reality Therapy, contends Collins, it was clear that what he was saying was verbatim what the scriptures taught: Loving involvements with a focus on responsibility.<sup>285</sup>

The thought that an extremely effective psychiatrist used clearly articulated biblically principles in his therapy greatly intrigued Collins. As Collins began to study Freud, Jung, Adler, Mowrer, Rogers and others, he made a significant discovery. He concluded that a biblically supportive argument could be made for every demonstrable principle which these eminent theorists found to be true.<sup>286</sup>

Is Adams really accurate, then, when he accuses psychiatry of failure? Freud may be seen as having short changed the notion of responsibility, but sufficient evidence is available that he was definitely interested in the mental health and maturity of his patients. In

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<sup>285</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid. Collins has made a point that I believe is valuable. In his haste to extol the virtues of nouthetic counseling, Adams has totally overlooked this profound observation.

line with this it might be asked; who can estimate the blessings that have accrued from the use of the medical model also in the field of psychiatry?

Fromm has pointed out,<sup>287</sup>

Psychiatry may be pictured as being in the midst of a crisis, but one cannot deal with this crisis without being aware that it is part of a larger whole. Is it the crisis of contemporary society? Is it the crisis of man. Yes, it is these, but the real crisis of today is one that is unique in human history: it is the crisis of life itself.

The objections lodged by Adams against the Freudian view that we are living by our unconscious (implying man's irresponsibility) are shared by Hans Eysenck who claimed that nowhere in the scientific literature was there any good evidence that psychotherapy worked.<sup>288</sup> Eysenck has tirelessly worked on an empirical criterion for therapeutic results. Sense can only be put into people, Eysenck argued, when they are taught the nonsense of methods that keep digging into people's lives without coming to any adequate conclusions.

But here an interesting point surfaces. If Eysenck sought such empirical criterion for therapeutic results in

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<sup>287</sup> Erich Fromm, The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology and Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963) p. 190.

<sup>288</sup> Hans J. Eysenck, Sense and Nonsense in Psychology (Harmondsworth: Penquin Books, 1957) p. 191.

traditional psychiatry he would also have to have equal distain for Adams as well. The truth of the matter is that there is no evidence that nouthetic counseling works! Adams has launched an assault on traditional psychiatry by largely challenging the success rate of various therapies. He on the other hand offers only generalities when it comes to evaluating the success rate of the nouthetic counselor.

E. FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Being less than gracious to Carl Rogers, Adams sums up his view of Rogerianism in this way:<sup>289</sup>

The idea that God is not necessary, the Spirit is not necessary, the scriptures are not necessary, the help of other Christians with gifts that have been given for the mutual edification of the whole church is not necessary, stems directly from Rogerian anthropology. His concept of man fully boxed and packaged with all the resources in himself can lead to no other conclusion. His approach must be rejected.

But is Adams not being harsh if not hasty with this evaluation? Is it not true that man is an amazing creature as Rogers has suggested who does come alive when he uses his capacities and sensibilities for fulfilment (self-actualization)? Should man not search for a greater ability to understand

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<sup>289</sup> Adams, C C M, p. 86.

himself? Is it therefore wrong for a man to crave fulfilment? And is the "joy of man's freedom" that Rogers advocates not evident when man takes on an inner discipline against outer controls? Surely, Rogerianism emphasizes freedom but freedom at a cost. Carl Rogers believes that freedom is a frightening responsibility; the risk of freedom may be heavy but the rewards are marvellous.

When genuine freedom is cultivated there is a new expression of real feeling, positive and negative. Each person moves towards greater acceptance of his total being -- emotional, intellectual, and physical -- as it is including its potential. With this greater freedom and improved communication, new ideas, new concepts, and new directions emerge. Innovation can become a desirable rather than a threatening possibility. Rogers believes that changes in behaviour are bound to occur. He says:<sup>290</sup>

Experience in a group can set in motion profound changes within the individual person and his behaviour; in a variety of human relationships; and in the policies and structure of an organization.

The reservoir of man's potentialities, Rogers is saying is filled to overflowing. Surely anyone, including Adams, must agree with the reasoning that indicates that

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<sup>290</sup> Carl R. Rogers, Encounter Groups (Middlesex: Harper, 1970).

man can be instrumental in solving at least some of his own problems.

My investigation of Adams and the nouthetic technique has indicated that he is probably more closely aligned to O. Hobart Mowrer and William Glasser than any other people in the field of psychology. There appear to be such vast similarities in the thought processes that Mowrer, Glasser and Adams may all be perceived in the same realm. As a matter of fact I have already suggested that Adams has done nothing more than appropriate the concept of reality therapy and confrontational counseling to a Christian context. While he avows that he is neither a disciple of Mowrer nor Glasser he, by his own admission, has been profoundly influenced by them.

What does not seem to be accounted for in either Adams' nouthetic counseling or that of the non-traditionalists is a very important distinction. That distinction is between the counseling task of helping heal disoriented, inadequate and crippled consciences and the kind of pastoral care-education of helping people develop healthy and maturing consciences in a community of moral nurture, reflection and action. Both tasks are seen as being vital aspects of the ministry, and each complements the other. It would almost appear that Adams has become more of a proselyte of the non-traditionalists than even he himself realizes or is willing to acknowledge.

F. THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE

Critics of Jay Adams have posed the following questions: Is the overuse of the Bible its only possible role in counseling? Might the Bible inform the pastor in counseling without actually being used in counseling? If so, how might this occur? Is it a matter of allowing the Bible to guide the counselor's thoughts? Or does the Bible inform the counselor in a more systematic or structured way, if so, how is this done?

Wayne Oates has largely concerned himself with the misuse of the Bible in pastoral work. He criticizes the pastor who uses it as the symbol of authority, citing the case of a minister who advised a man with homosexual thoughts and habits to place a Bible under his pillow at night "to drive away your evil thoughts and dreams".<sup>291</sup> He also warns against encouraging worship of the Bible, as though it were a good luck charm, and against fostering its ritualistic use, as when "daily Bible reading" becomes an obsession rather than a search for meaning, direction, and purpose.

Oates points out that these particular misuses of the Bible are common among the mentally ill, which leads him to

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<sup>291</sup> Wayne E. Oates, The Bible in Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) cited in Donald Capps Biblical Approaches to Pastoral Counseling, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press) p. 21 ff.

propose the diagnostic use of the Bible in pastoral care.<sup>292</sup>

The Bible is the pastor's "royal road" to the deeper levels of the personalities of his people, and particularly those who are deeply disturbed. Traditionally the Bible has been used by ministers as a means of reassurance and comfort to people whom they visit and who come to them for counseling help. . . . the use of the Bible as an instrument of diagnosis, however, needs much attention and extended study.

Wayne Oates stresses the need to replace the legalistic approach to the Bible with one that encourages greater sensitivity to one's "inner consciousness of self-hood" and "inner reality of feeling".<sup>293</sup> Oates discusses other uses of the Bible in pastoral work besides the diagnostic one (for example - instruction). Sometimes this involves helping parishioners understand the intended meaning of a particular biblical text that they have misunderstood or distorted. Other times this means introducing a biblical text or reference that relates to a counselee's problem.

The third important use of the Bible that Oates points to is to bring hope-giving comfort to the counsees who are either going through typical crises of life or are having to adjust to various situations within their lives that might include bereavement, divorce, chronic illness, or physical handicaps. It is therefore in the strains of

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

diagnosis, instruction and comfort that Oates gives special attention to the use of the Bible. Indiscriminate use of the Bible in pastoral care, he suggest, will do more harm than good. The pastor's use of the Bible should be appropriate to the problem at hand and well timed, he writes, to the the counselee's particular moment of need. The pastor must resist the temptation to offer "many words" of scripture instead of the "right" or "seasonable" word.<sup>294</sup>

Wayne Oates' common sense use of the Bible in counseling comes as a very welcomed relief if one has been reading Jay Adams for too long. Clearly, the use of scripture must be within a practical and appropriate context. Adams, it could be said, usually sees the Bible only as a tool to effect behavioural change. Oates believes that the Bible can be used as a source of comfort, encouragement, and peace. One can only try to imagine the grave consequences of an impractical approach (by a nouthetic counselor) to someone who is suffering rather than a few, kind, loving and caring words of scripture spoken by someone else who cares.

Many authors have warned against appealing to the formal authority of the Bible. Since its formal authority has lost much of its value for people today, its authoritativeness will depend on the appropriateness of

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

the selected passage. The pastor, they suggest, should not make overt claims of the Bible's authority. Simply read it, and the other person will discover what power these words have for him.

Edward Thurneysen, emphasizes the importance of the Bible for pastoral counseling. Thurneysen views pastoral counseling as a conversation that proceeds from the Word of God and leads to the Word of God. He does not believe that the counselor must primarily deal with the presentation of the content of the Word, however. The thing that makes the conversation pastoral is not its Biblical content, Thurneysen concludes, but the fact that the counselee is confronted with the questions that the Bible puts to him.<sup>295</sup>

Writing in the early 1960's Thurneysen's views have been criticized because he insists that pastoral counseling requires explicit disclosure of the Word of God. The mid-1960's ushered in a period in which reference to the Bible was noticeably absent.

Howard Clinebell, for instance, has no real sustained discussion of the Bible's role in pastoral counseling.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Edward Thurneysen, A Theology of Pastoral Care Jack A. Worthington and Thomas Wieser (ed.) (John Knox Press, 1962). Chapters 5-8.

<sup>296</sup> I discussed Howard Clinebell in Chapter 3. He is only mentioned here for the sake of historical perspective.

Claiming that theological moderates and liberals were neglecting the Bible's role in pastoral counseling, there were a number of theologically conservative authors who took hold of the issue in the early 1970's. When, for example, Gary Collins discusses the use of "spiritual resources" in counseling he takes a middle position between those who contend that reading the Bible or saying a prayer is all that is needed for successful pastoral counseling and those who ignore these spiritual resources in their counseling, using psychological techniques almost exclusively.

Collins favours the use of the Bible but says that no hard and fast rules can be given for its use. He sees the extent to which spiritual resources will be used in counseling as depending upon the counselor, the counselee and the problem . . . . For some counselees, prayer and scripture reading during an interview will be a strengthening and reassuring experience but for others this will be a source of considerable embarrassment and discomfort. Therefore, Collins sees the counselor as having to use careful judgment in deciding if, when, and how he introduces such practices. It is therefore, the nature of the problem which is the determining factor in the amount, if any, that scripture is used in the counseling situation. Collins, here reflects the major concern that

the Bible not be used indiscriminately.<sup>297</sup>

Adams, however, refused to mix what he called man's ideas with what he said were God's ideas.<sup>298</sup> Adams acknowledged the scriptures to be the only source of divine authority and, therefore, judged all other matters by the teaching of the scriptures. When Adams contended that the scriptures are all one needs to counsel, for every conceivable view of human life, he suggested that all life's difficulties are invariably dealt with somewhere or other within the scriptures themselves. Adams does not believe that a Christian counselor can ever choose not to apply the Bible to the counselee's problem. He would not agree that the use of the Bible in the counseling session may depend upon the circumstances involved. To him, there is no possible circumstance in which the Bible would not be appropriate.

Conservative discussions of the Bible's role in pastoral counseling were dominant in the past decade, but there were signs by the late 1970's that theological moderates and liberals were taking renewed interest in the topic. John B. Cobb Jr., signalled this revival by worrying once again that recovery of biblical language in

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<sup>297</sup> Collins, like Clinebell, has previously been cited. Here, his views are being presented in context with his contemporaries.

<sup>298</sup> See Adams, The Use of Scripture in Counseling. This is a central theme throughout this book.

pastoral counseling could lead to its indiscriminate use.<sup>299</sup> But, more than that, he expressed concern about the possible irrevelancy of the Bible.

Cobb believes that if used, the Bible must grow out of the living experience of Christian people who are fully immersed in this modern world. They must find, he states, that the authentic use of biblical language illuminates their experience that have been neglected or obscured by modern conceptualities . . . . If this occurs and only when it occurs, he theorizes, will it become proper and natural to employ such language in pastoral counseling.

The issue of the Bible in pastoral counseling was also taken up in 1979 by David Switzer. Switzer takes the view endorsed by Seward Hiltner, that any use of the Bible should not violate any basic counseling principles. Switzer also supports the view emphasized by Oates, that the counselor's role sometimes involves biblical re-education. Switzer's book marks the resurgence of the attitude that the Bible can be an important resource in pastoral counseling if used in a discriminate and sensitive way.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> See John B. Cobb, Jr., Theology and Pastoral Care cited in Capps, Biblical Approaches to Pastoral Counseling, Chapter 1.

<sup>300</sup> See David K. Switzer, Pastor, Preacher, Person: Developing a Pastoral Ministry in Depth (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979).

Another particularly important author in this period of moderate resurgence is William B. Oglesby Jr. His is the only book devoted solely to the Bible during this particular period.<sup>301</sup> Oglesby discusses three types of psychotherapies. Those that give primacy to knowing, to doing and to being. Psychoanalysis and Eric Bern's transactional analysis are identified as "knowing therapies". Willams Glasser's reality therapy is a "doing therapy", and Carl Roger's client-centered therapy is a "being therapy". Oglesby argues that the Bible affirms all three objectives but being is given primacy in its scale of values and knowing and doing are derivatives of being.

From this analysis Oglesby concludes that:<sup>302</sup>

Those forms of therapy which move toward being are more consistent with the biblical point of view than those which move toward knowing or doing.

Spanning a variety of therapies that Adams has spurned in his work Oglesby highlights the theological unity of the Bible which, he says, points to the fact that

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<sup>301</sup>William B. Oglesby, Jr., Biblical Themes for Pastoral Care (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).

<sup>302</sup>See Capps, Biblical Approaches to Pastoral Counseling p. 28 ff. for a discussion in greater detail concerning Oglesby's earlier article "Pastoral Care and Counseling In Biblical Perspective".

man's basic problem is that he is a sinner in need of forgiveness, in need of reconciliation, but that the Bible deals with this problem in a variety of ways.

Without being a textbook of counseling -- as Adams maintains -- the Bible contains truth which is normative for counseling or whatever other field of interest. It is true, for example, that scripture contains all the commandments; scripture contains everything that God requires us to believe and to do. But does scripture tell us how to wire the home that we are building, or does it tell us how to drive the car that we own?



Scripture, for instance, does not tell us how many kinds of trees there are, but it does tell us what God wants us to do with the trees -- to use them to His glory, and out of love for our fellowman. As we grow in knowledge and in experience of the world, we learn how to apply God's command in new situations.

How then, is the Bible to be used? Is it proper use of scripture to invite medical doctors to prove on the basis of scripture that mental illness exists? Isn't such an invitation on Adams' part a contradiction with his observation that "the Bible was not written to deal with the intricacies of shipbuilding"?<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>303</sup>Adams, C C M, p. 18.

Adams wants to take scripture seriously. But does he understand the nature and the character of the scripture? Adams maintains that the Bible is the means by which God has provided for every facet of life that may arise. But life is very complex and we are constantly faced with the most baffling questions and situations.

John Murray said:<sup>304</sup>

The demand of the multi-form situations in which we are placed in our thinking and in our life are met only by the multi-form wisdom deposited in the Holy Scriptures.

Has Adams brought this multi-form wisdom of scripture to bear upon every problem which he discusses?

In Adams' plea to use the Bible as a textbook for counseling we find a serious underestimation of the Holy Spirit's work in both the history of Christianity and the life of the believer. Furthermore, it cannot be accepted as fact that the Bible speaks to every instance that would confront modern day humanity.

I believe that Adams' narrow and dogmatic use of the Bible thwarts God's plan for people to grow in grace. Should a part of growth not be an ability to grow in an

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<sup>304</sup> John Murray, "The Study of the Bible" The Presbyterian Guardian, Feb. 25, 1945 pp. 53-54 cited in Hielema, Pastoral or Christian Counseling, p. 233.

intellectual capacity? To be opposed to anyone developing an effective counseling therapy makes about as much sense as being opposed to finding a cure for cancer.

Jay Adams believes that nouthetic counseling is the only approach to Christian counseling that will work effectively. Has history not spoken to him at all concerning, for example, the development of church doctrine itself? That has created such a diversity of faith and standard that it is clear we never will agree on many of the peripheral issues of Christianity. Bible doctrine itself usually only points to general areas of agreement and even major doctrines are subject to much debate.

As clearly as the Bible is not a medical textbook which educates a doctor as to how to remove an appendix neither is it a manual which speaks to an exclusive means of maintaining man's mental health.

It is quite refreshing, on one hand, to discover someone who is willing to place an emphasis upon scripture as a basis for directing human behaviour. But, by no means is Adams conclusive or can he be considered authoritative when he presses the point that all that is needed in order to modify a human behaviour is to cite a biblical reference.

G. SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

Jay Adams is a gifted writer. He is a preacher and a crusader. It is one thing, he states, to be critical of the theories of man. It is another thing to do something about them. Man cannot be understood, Adams believes, unless he is understood in terms of the teaching of scripture. Adams, therefore, summons counselors and counselees to return to the scriptures.

In a day of theological relativism this strikes one like a breath of fresh air in a room that needs ventilation. Nouthetic counseling rightly deplores some of the blindness of many pastors and other similar counselors who pay too much attention to humanistic theorists at the expense of the scriptures. Christianity, Adams insists, if it is to be any religion at all, must be a practical and useful religion. There is little doubt that in an age of secularism and biblical criticism it needs to be said with added emphasis that the life that one must opt for is to be a life in harmony with the Bible.

We who are Christians in the field of counseling have tremendous potential for the future. We cannot afford to be rigid, however. Instead, we must try to build approaches to helping people which clearly delineate our pre-suppositions and values; which recognize and helps those who are interested in non-professional approaches,

religious experiences and prevention; which have an emphasis on the family; and which are research and body oriented. In all of this we must be flexible.

Counseling is a growing, developing field, and it is easy to equate biblical counseling with Christian counseling and with the further assumption that ours is "true counseling" which cannot change or cannot grow. All of us are fallible as human beings, and Christians will probably continue to develop a series of different approaches to counseling. We all (including Jay Adams) must be open to new findings in counseling methodology, to new understanding of scripture and to new Christian counseling approaches which appear in the future. Counseling with all its reflection, techniques, methods and analyses must be employed by the Holy Spirit. As we work and counsel and pray we have the promise that our work will not be in vain in the Lord, for he will confirm the work of our hands.<sup>305</sup>

Is Jay Adams right? No! It is unrealistic to expect that we will ever arrive at a single biblical approach to counseling, anymore than we have discovered a single biblical approach to any other field of Christian endeavour.

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<sup>305</sup> See Psalm 90:17.

Psychology and counseling present the Christian with an exciting and potentially rewarding challenge. It is a field which needs creative thinkers who are willing to become pioneers. If they make any significant contribution, however, these pioneers must be products of solid psychological and theological training, and they must be deeply committed to both the authority of scripture and to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Like all pioneers, people in this expanding field will find the way rough and uncharted at times, but the rewards will be deeply satisfying, where they count on not only helping people in the present but also preparing people for eternity.

APPENDIX A\*

Some material used by Nouthetic Counselors .

\* Adapted from: Jay Adams. The Christian Counselor's Manual. Baker Book House, 1973. Pages 433, 434, 435, 436, 451, 452, 453, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463

Appendix A-1  
(Adams, C C M, p. 433.)

### PERSONAL DATA INVENTORY

#### IDENTIFICATION DATA:

Name ..... Phone .....

Address .....

Occupation .....

Business Phone .....

Sex ..... Birth Date ..... Age ..... Height .....

Marital Status: Single ..... Going Steady ..... Married ..... Separated.....

Divorced ..... Widowed .....

Education (last year completed): ..... (grade) Other training (list type and years) .....

Referred here by ..... Address .....

#### HEALTH INFORMATION:

Rate your health (check): Very Good... Good... Average... Declining... Other...

Your approximate weight ..... lbs. Weight changes recently:

Lost ..... Gained .....

List all important present or past illnesses or injuries or handicaps:

Date of last medical examination ..... Report: .....

Your physician ..... Address .....

Are you presently taking medication? Yes... No... What .....

Have you used drugs for other than medical purposes? Yes... No...

What? .....

Have you ever had a severe emotional upset? Yes No... Explain .....

Have you ever been arrested? Yes .... No ...

Are you willing to sign a release of information form so that your counselor may write for social, psychiatric, or medical reports? Yes... No ..

Have you recently suffered the loss of someone who was close to you? Yes... No ..

Explain: .....

Appendix A-2  
(Adams, C C M, p. 434.)

Have you recently suffered loss from serious social, business, or other reversals?  
Yes... No... Explain: .....

**RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:**

Denominational preference: ..... Member .....

Church Attendance per month (circle): O 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10+

Church attended in childhood ..... Baptized? Yes... No...

Religious background of spouse (if married) .....

Do you consider yourself a religious person? Yes... No... Uncertain...

Do you believe in God? Yes... No... Uncertain...

Do you pray to God? Never... Occasionally... Often...

Are you saved? Yes... No... Not sure what you mean...

How much do you read the Bible? Never... Occasionally... Often...

Do you have regular family devotions? Yes... No...

Explain recent changes in your religious life, if any .....

**PERSONALITY INFORMATION:**

Have you ever had any psychotherapy or counseling before? Yes... No...  
If yes, list counselor or therapist and dates: .....

What was the outcome? .....

Circle any of the following words which best describe you now: active ambitious  
self-confident persistent nervous hardworking impatient impulsive moody  
often-blue excitable imaginative calm serious easy-going shy good-natured  
introvert extrovert likeable leader quiet hard-boiled submissive lonely  
self-conscious sensitive other .....

Have you ever felt people were watching you? Yes... No...

Do people's faces ever seem distorted? Yes... No...

Do you ever have difficulty distinguishing faces? Yes... No...

Do colors ever seem too bright? ..... To dull? .....

Are you sometimes unable to judge distance? Yes... No...

Have you ever had hallucinations? Yes... No...

Are you afraid of being in a car? Yes... No...

Is your hearing exceptionally good? Yes... No...

Do you have problems sleeping? Yes... No...

Appendix A-3  
(Adams, C C M, p. 435.)

**MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INFORMATION:**

Name of spouse ..... Address .....

Phone ..... Occupation ..... Business phone .....

Your spouse's age ..... Education (in years) ..... Religion .....

Is spouse willing to come for counseling? Yes... No . Uncertain...

Have you ever been separated? Yes... No... When? from ..... to .....

Has either of you ever filed for divorce? Yes... No ... When? .....

Date of Marriage ..... Your ages when married: Husband ..... Wife .....

How long did you know your spouse before marriage? .....

Length of steady dating with spouse ..... Length of Engagement .....

Give brief information about any previous marriages: .....

**Information about children:**

PM*	Name	Age	Sex	Living		Education in years	Marital status
				Yes	No		
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

\*Check this column if child is by previous marriage

If you were reared by anyone other than your own parents, briefly explain:

How many older brothers ..... sisters ..... do you have?

How many younger brothers ..... sisters ..... do you have?

**BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

1. What is your problem?
2. What have you done about it?
3. What can we do? (What are your expectations in coming here?)
4. As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? Describe yourself.
5. What, if anything, do you fear?
6. Is there any other information we should know?

Appendix A-4  
(Adams, C C M, p. 436.)

### COUNSELOR'S CHECK LIST

1. Determine whether evangelism is indicated.
2. Sort out responsibilities.
3. Gather concrete data.
4. Stress *what* rather than *why* for data.
5. Distinguish presentation, performance, and preconditioning problems.
6. Talk not only about problems; talk also about God's solutions.
7. Check motivation (ultimately it must be *loving obedience*: because God says so).
8. Insist on obedience to God regardless of how one *feels*.
9. Check out Agendas.
10. Give concrete homework at every session. (Explain "how to"; begin with single-stranded problems.)
11. Check on homework.
12. Would a medical checkup be advisable?

Appendix A-5  
(Adams, C C M. p. 451.)

*Typical Counselee Remarks*

*Typical Counselor Responses That  
May Be Used*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. "I can't!"                              | 1. "Do you mean can't or won't?" or, "God says that you <i>can</i> ."  |
| 2. "I have done everything that I could."  | 2. "Everything? What about. . . ."   |
| 3. I've tried that but it didn't work."    | 3. "Did you <i>really</i> try? How many times? For how long? In what way? How consistently?" (Get the details: "precisely, what <i>did</i> you do?")   |
| 4. "I did my best."                        | 4. "Are you sure? Tell me precisely <i>what</i> you did." or, "Remember, the <i>best</i> is what God says to do. Did you . . . ?"  |
| 5. <i>No one</i> believes me, etc."        | 5. "Can't you think of <i>one</i> person who does? How about some more?" or, "I believe you. . . ."  |
| 6. "I could <i>never</i> do <i>that</i> ." | 6. "Never is a long time. Really, how long do you suppose it might take to learn? By the way, if you think hard enough you will discover that you have learned to do a number of things that are just as hard (or harder). Take for instance. . . ." |
| 7. "If I had the time, I'd do it."         | 7. "You do. We all have 24 hours each day; it all depends on how you slice the pie. Now let's work on drawing up a schedule that honors God."  |
| 8. "Don't blame me. . . ."                 | 8. "Are you saying that you are not responsible? God says. . . ."  |
| 9. "Don't ask me. . . ."                   | 9. "But I am asking you. Who else would know? I am sure that you know the answer. Think hard: I'll help you by asking some other related questions, and perhaps we can come up with it."   |
| 10. "I guess so."                          | 10. "Are you really guessing or is that what you believe (think)?"   |
| 11. "You know how it is. . . ."            | 11. "No, I don't know; can you explain it more fully?"   |

Appendix A-6  
(Adams, C G M, p. 452.)

*Typical Counselor Remarks*

*Typical Counselor Responses That  
May Be Used*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 12. "But I've <i>prayed</i> about it."                            | 12. "Fine! Then what did you <i>do</i> ?"<br>or, "Have you prayed for help to discover what God's Word says to <i>do</i> about the problem?" or, "What, exactly, did you pray?" |
| 13. "I'm at the end of my rope."                                  | 13. Which end? Perhaps you are beginning to uncoil your problem for the first time."  |
| 14. "I have a need to . . ."                                      | 14. "Is it a need or only a desire? (or, habit)."   |
| 15. "I'm just one of those people who has to. . ."                | 15. "Yes, I'm sure you are; but Christ wants you to become a different sort of person."   |
| 16. "That's just the way I am."                                   | 16. "Doubtless, but God says that you can be different."  |
| 17. "That is impossible."   | 17. "What you mean, of course, is that it is very difficult."   |
| 18. "There are all sorts of [too many] objections to doing that." | 18. "Would you mind naming six or seven so that I can see what sort of things you have in mind and determine what it will take to answer them?"                                 |
| 19. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks."                      | 19. "Perhaps that is true—but you are not a dog. You were created in the image and likeness of the living God! He knows you and commands you to change."                        |
| 20. "It'll never work."   | 20. "It is God's way and it <i>always</i> works when people abandon that attitude."   |
| 21. "I'll never forgive him!"                                     | 21. "If you are a child of God, as you claim, you will. You are going to live with him for eternity; why don't you forgive him and begin to get used to it now?"                |
| 22. "I don't do anything half way, so. . ."                       | 22. "Are you sure? Can't you think of some things that you do? For instance, what about . . .?"   |
| 23. "Everything [one] is against me. . ."                         | 23. "No, you are wrong. If you are a Christian the Bible says the opposite: 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' (Romans 8:31)"   |
| 24. "How do you <i>feel</i> about . . .?"                         | 24. "May I tell you what I think, or may I only discuss my emotions?"   |

Appendix A-7  
(Adams, C C M, p. 453.)

**THE COUNSELOR'S LIST OF PATTERNS  
AND THEMES OF SIN**

Sinful Patterns and Themes	Corresponding Bible Passages	Corresponding Counseling Cases (use code names and give thumbnail sketch)

Appendix A-8  
(Adams, C C M, p. 459.)

## FIFTY FAILURE FACTORS

For a quick check on what *may* be behind counseling failure, consider the following factors:

1. Is the counselee truly a Christian?
2. Has there been genuine repentance?
3. Is there a vital commitment to the biblical change?
4. Are your agendas in harmony?
5. Do you have *all* of the necessary data?
6. Are you trying to achieve change in the abstract or concretely?
7. Have you been intellectualizing?
8. Would a medical examination be in order?
9. Are you sure that you know the problem(s)? Is more data gathering necessary?
10. Are there other problems that must be settled first?
11. Have you been trying to deal with the *issue* while ignoring the *relationship*?
12. Did you give adequate scriptural hope?
13. Did you minimize?
14. Have you accepted speculative data as true?
15. Are you regularly assigning concrete homework?
16. Would using a D.P.P. form help?
17. If this is a life-dominating problem, are you counseling for total restructuring?
18. Are you empathizing with self-pity?
19. Are you talking about problems only or also about God's solutions?
20. Have you carefully analyzed the counselee's attitudes expressed in his language?

Appendix A-9  
(Adams, C C M, p. 460.)

21. Have you allowed the counselees to talk about others behind their backs?
22. Has a new problem entered the picture, or has the situation changed since the counseling sessions began?
23. Have you been focusing on the wrong problem?
24. Is the problem not so complex after all, but simply a case of open rebellion?
25. Have you failed to move forward rapidly enough in the giving of homework assignments?
26. Have you as a counselor fallen into some of the same problems as the counselee?
27. Does doctrinal error lie at the base of the problem?
28. Do drugs (tranquilizers, etc.) present a complicating problem?
29. Have you stressed the put-off to the exclusion of the put-on?
30. Have you prayed about the problem?
31. Have you personally turned off the counselee in some way?
32. Is he willing to settle for something less than the scriptural solution?
33. Have you been less aggressive and demanding than the Scriptures?
34. Have you failed to give hope by calling sin *sin*?
35. Is the counselee convinced that personality change is impossible?
36. Has your counseling been feeling-oriented rather than commandment-oriented?
37. Have you failed to use the full resources of Christ? (e.g., the help of the Christian community).
38. Is church discipline in order?
39. Have you set poor patterns in previous sessions? (e.g., accepting partially fulfilled homework assignments).
40. Do you really know the biblical solution(s) to his problem? (Can you write it out in thematic form?)
41. Do you really believe there is hope?
42. Has the counselee been praying, reading the Scriptures, fellowshiping with God's people, and witnessing regularly?
43. Could you call in another Christian counselor for help? (with the counselee's knowledge, of course).

Appendix A-10  
(Adams, C C M, p. 461.)

44. Would a full rereading of your Weekly Counseling Records disclose any patterns? Trends? Unexplored areas?
45. Have you questioned only intensively? Extensively?
46. Have you been assuming (wrongly) that this case is similar to a previous case?
47. Has the counselee been concealing or twisting data?
48. Would someone else involved in the problem (husband, wife, parent, child) be able to supply needed data?
49. Are you simply incompetent to handle this sort of problem?
50. Are you reasonably sure that there is no organic base to the problem?

Appendix A-11  
(Adams, C C M, p. 462.)

### SOME DON'TS IN COUNSELING

(Sometimes useful to reread before each period of counseling)

#### DON'T ALLOW COUNSELEES TO:

1. Act on feeling
2. Avoid problems
3. Blame others
4. Lose hope
5. Remain undisciplined and disorganized
6. Harbor grudges
7. Simply talk about problems
8. Stop with forgiveness
9. Talk about another behind his back
10. Shut off communication
11. Give up when they fail
12. Goof off on homework
13. Settle for solutions to immediate problems when wrong underlying patterns remain
14. Neglect regular prayer, Bible study, and church attendance
15. Leave without hearing the gospel
16. Generalize rather than specify
17. Use any other basis than the Bible for belief or action
18. Make major decisions when depressed or greatly pressured
19. Use inaccurate language to describe their problems
20. Call sin sickness
21. Hurt others in solving their own problems
22. Wallow in self-pity, envy, or resentment
23. Become dependent upon the counseling session
24. Set unbiblical agendas for counseling
25. Continue counseling in an uncommitted manner

Appendix A-12  
(Adams, C C M, p. 463.)

SIGNS OF TEN COMMON PROBLEMS

SIGNS	PROBLEMS									
	1 Anger	2 Blame Shift- ing	3 Depres- sion	4 Envy, Jeal- ousy	5 Fear	6 Guilt	7 Re- bellion	8 Self Pity	9 Sexual Devia- tion	10 Organic Prob- lem
CROSS REFERENCES	(2),(4), (5),(6), 7 (8)	1,(4),5, 6 (8)	2,(4), 6,8	1,(3), (5),8	(1),2, (4),6 (8)	(1),2, (3),5 (8)	1,2, 6,8	1,(2),3, 4,5, 6,(7)	(2),(3), 5,5,8	(3),(11)
Failure to do daily chores			•				(•)		•	
Slackening of interests			•				•		•	•
Withdrawal, avoidance	•		•		•	•		(•)	(•)	•
Frequently asks why? Dwells on past			•	(•)		(•)		•		
Loneliness			•	(•)	(•)	(•)	(•)	•		
Disorder of person, in home, on job			•	(•)	•	•	•	•		•
Muscular tension	•	•			•	•	•	(•)	•	•
Dry mouth, clammy hands, heart palpitation					•	•				•
Tiredness	(•)	(•)	•	(•)	(•)	•	(•)	(•)	(•)	•
Shyness			(•)		•	•			(•)	
Blue, sad, tears	(•)		•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Sensitive, touchy, irritable	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•
Bitterness	•	•	(•)	(•)		•	(•)	•		
Suicidal tendencies	•		•	•	•	•	(•)	•	(•)	•
Violence (verbal or physical)	•	(•)		(•)	•	•	•	(•)		•
Communication breakdown	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Immobility	(•)	(•)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sleeplessness	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Loss of appetite (weight loss)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Excessive eating (weight gain)			•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Headaches	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•
Sexual impotency	•	(•)	•		•	•		•		(•)
Hallucinations										•
Anxiety	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bizarre behavior	(•)			(•)	•	•	•	•	•	•
Excuses, lies		•	•		•	(•)	•	•		
Trouble with people	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Suspicion				•	•	•	•	•		•
Ulcer	(•)	•			•	•	•	•	(•)	•
Colitis	•	(•)	(•)	•	•	•	•	•		•

Key  
Numbers = cross references to items listed across top of table (e.g. 1 = anger)  
• = probable presence of sign.  
(•) = possible presence of sign.

APPENDIX B \*

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

\* All references from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

CHAPTER 1

Colossians 3:16; II Samuel 12; I Samuel 3:13; I Samuel 2:23;  
I Corinthians 4:14; II Thessalonians 3:15; II Timothy 3:15;  
Colossians 1:28; II Timothy 4:2; I Timothy 1:5

CHAPTER 2

John 5:45-47; John 5:39; Zechariah 7:7,12; Ezekiel 1:3;  
Jeremiah 1:4,9; John 20:31; I Corinthians 2:4;  
I Thessalonians 1:5, 2:13; II Timothy 3:16,17;  
Galations 5:18; I Corinthians 2:11; Romans 15:4,13;  
I Corinthians 12:4-6; Romans 5:12; Romans 8:6-8;  
I Thessalonians 5:12,13; Colossians 3:16; Romans 15:14;  
Acts 5:29;

CHAPTER 3

Romans 8:16; II Timothy 3:16; Luke 6:27; Ephesians 5:25;  
Titus 2:3,4; I John 4:7; Leviticus 19:18;

CHAPTER 4

Proverbs 18:13;

CHAPTER 5

Romans 8:22; Revised Standard Version.

CHAPTER 6

Zechariah 11:15; Psalm 90:17;

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