

Entrust 4/28/22 - Discerning what a Counseling System Really Believes¹

Introduction:

2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Col 2:8

- 1) Counseling systems have a **Source of authority**.
 - a) Behaviorism's (cognitive behavioral) source of authority.
 - i) Skinner
 - ii) DSMIV
 - b) The medical model's source of authority.
 - c) Biblical counseling's source of authority:
 - i) Psalm 19:7
 - ii) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - iii) "The Bible, then, is the only source of tangible, eternal Truth on earth (Isa. 40:8). This understanding ensures the total sufficiency of Scripture when applied to every issue addressed therein (Psalm 19:7-14). Having embraced this view, a scientist looking at the universe recognizes that the entire creation is the handiwork of a sovereign God (John 1:3). His/her subsequent observations and explanations will be consistent with this perspective. Any observations that appear to be at odds with this declaration of the origin of creation will be reassessed in a way that does not deny the Truth of what God has clearly and unambiguously said He has done" (Dr. Taylor Jones, *Think Biblically!*, page 236).
 - iv) **Sufficiency**

¹ My thanks to Dr. Baker for this outline

- v) “The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men” (1:6). - Westminster Confession

 - vi) The Bible promises that God will give you something to say from his Word to those who are in need.
- 2) Counseling systems have a view of what’s wrong with humans—***Sin***.
What’s the problem with humans?
- a) Behaviorism’s view of what’s wrong.
 - i) The “Sin” in behaviorism would be a person’s poor conditioning. Everyone is conditioned or trained by their environment to learn how to respond (or behave). When a person is taught wrong responses in any given situation (as opposed to what the social norm for responses in those situations), they have been poorly conditioned. This is the major problem to be fixed (or the sin).

 - b) The medical model’s view of what’s wrong—your brain made you do it.
 - (1) A big debate in the counseling world, is it nature or nurture?
 - (2) Is there a chemical imbalance that needs to be corrected?

 - c) The Biblical counseling view of what is wrong:
 - i) Image bearers—Genesis 1:26-27

 - ii) Worshipers, religious by nature

 - iii) The fall changes everything! Genesis 3; Romans 1:25 (We live in a fallen world, with fallen bodies, we sin and are sinned against)

 - iv) “Radical Corruption,” “Total Depravity”

 - v) We live out of our “hearts” (Proverbs 4:23) but the heart has been shaped by sin (Jer. 17:9).
- 3) Every counseling system proposes solutions—***a way of Salvation***.

- a) “Jungian psychotherapy is...a way of healing and a way of salvation. It has the power to cure...in addition it knows the way and has the means to lead the individual to his ‘salvation,’ to the knowledge of a fulfillment of his personality, which have always been the aim of spiritual striving....Apart from its medical aspect, Jungian psychotherapy is thus a system of education and spiritual guidance” (Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*).

 - b) Behaviorism’s solution:
 - i) Behaviorism’s salvation is reconditioning. This is a process of using behavioral principles to re-train a person to make correct responses to situations they have previously learned incorrect responses to.

 - ii) The medical model’s solution

 - iii) Biblical counseling’s solution:
 - (1) Isa. 61:1-2a
 - (2) Titus 3:3-7
 - (3) I Cor. 6:9-11

 - (4) The Gospel
- 4) Every counseling system has a view of how people change and how to help them change (methods) – ***Sanctification***.
- a) Behaviorism’s methodology
 - i) Behaviorism’s sanctification is operant (associate voluntary behavior and a consequence) and classical conditioning (associate an involuntary response and a stimulus).
 - (1) This view was developed by B.F. Skinner who denied God and viewed man as basically a sophisticated animal. If you can train someone based on rewards and consequences, then you will have achieved the desired aim.

 - ii) The objection may be that these practices can help some to learn a new way of thinking and function again in society. Again, just because something may work does not mean that we should use it. The aim of secular therapies is different than that of the Bible. There is no goal for conformity to Christ. No desire to help someone grow in the fruit of the Spirit or to repent of heart idolatry.
 - (1) The medical model’s “sanctification”

- (2) Biblical counseling's sanctification-
 - (a) 2 Cor. 3:18
 - (b) Romans 8:28-29
 - (c) Phil 1:6

- (d) Progressive Christlikeness is the goal.

- 5) Every counseling system has **support systems**.
Institutions that teach the worldview, support groups, mental hospitals, etc.
 - a) Behaviorism's support system
 - i) Behaviorism has support systems as well. These are the trained professionals and schools that teach behavioral principles, as well as group therapies designed to provide support to people.
 - ii) They will often point to results as proof that what they are doing works.
 - b) The medical model's support system
 - i) Institutions and schools
 - ii) Studies
 - c) Biblical counseling's support system is God's design—**the local church** (His incubator for growth)
 - i) Romans 15:14 – discipleship and counseling of each other
 - ii) The “one anothers.”
 - iii) Shepherding – 1 Peter 5
 - iv) Serving and using your gifts

- 6) Every counseling system has **servants**.
 - a) What is the role of the counselor/therapist?

- 7) Every counseling system does **sparring** (apologetics—defense of the system).
 - a) *The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*
 - b) *The Journal of the American Medical Association*
 - c) *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*
 - d) *The Bible and the local church/ conferences*

- 8) Applications of this material
 - a) Discernment with literature
 - b) Discernment with counseling theories/therapies
 - c) Discernment with science