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**CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING
TOWARD A TRANSFORMATION MODEL**

by

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Master of Theology, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, 2000

THESIS

**Submitted to the Faculty of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Theology in Marriage and Family Studies**

April 2000

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Abstract

. This paper begins my personal journey toward developing a transformation model specifically geared to my approach to Christian pastoral counselling.

. The model seeks to integrate Scriptures with schools of psychotherapy without compromising either. The model explores my belief as a Christian that God sustains humankind; God plays an important role in health and, by extension, in Christian counselling. The idea for this paper came from my counselling practicum in a pastoral counselling centre where Scriptures were not used in the counselling program. Rogerian philosophy dominated the program with minor interventions from other psychotherapies.

. This paper looks at the response of psychotherapy and Scriptures to human nature with the understanding that a counsellor's definition of human nature determines the school of psychotherapy chosen.

. Interviews at pastoral counselling centres and a literature selection signalled the use of the Scriptures in pastoral counselling to be contentious. At one end of the continuum writers contend that there is no place in counselling for Scripture; at the other end Christian writers believe that to use humanistic psychotherapy is borrowing from the Devil. Some counselling centres do not use the Scriptures in counselling; others use them when clients feel a need.

. Scriptural precepts form the philosophical base for the transformation model; the model uses the knowledge base and applications provided by schools of psychotherapy.

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Introduction

The Author

I am fifty-eight years old and an ordained Baptist minister. Thirty years in railway marketing marked my first career. During that time I acquired an undergraduate degree with a major in religious studies. In 1995 I graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from McMaster Divinity College. I pastored part-time in a small church near Dunnville, ON, until December 1998. In the spring of 1998 I served also as chaplain at the McMaster University Hospital. I am married and have three grown daughters.

My basic assumptions for this paper began with my family of origin where I listened to my mother read the Bible; before I could read I spent hours looking at Bible pictures. From this experience with my mother and a lifetime of religious education that she encouraged, I cultivated the following assumptions: (a) Scriptures reveal glimpses of both functional and dysfunctional lifestyles and therefore represent a suitable source of data for Christian pastoral counselling. (b) Christ is God's son and became incarnate to demonstrate to humanity a way to live life in harmony with God and with oneself; Christ's teachings and the biblical record of His living example provide a model of life for Christian pastoral counselling. (c) The Holy Spirit, who Christ sent to humanity, creates the possibility for humanity to consciously experience life both on a horizontal plain and on a vertical plain; this experience can lead to significant positive changes in cognition and behaviour; therefore, I consider vertical communication with God as the major power that enables clients to reach their potential in God's purpose. (d) I assume that this power for change is available to all human beings, but some may choose not to consciously invite God

into their lives.

Toward a Transformation Model

I attempt to determine the possibility of the Bible serving along with schools of psychotherapy to form a Christian therapeutic counselling process. As a Christian counsellor, I want my counselling process to reflect my Christian perspective. I have designed the model to apply biblical precepts through the school of psychotherapy that best fits clients' needs. I have theorized that a client is a story in the making and that story, when shared, is shared at a physical, mental/emotional and spiritual level. These components cannot be separated out to identify specifically how each contributes; nevertheless, the telling of clients' stories may present as warped to one component area more than another. For example, clients may present an intellectual framework hiding to some degree the emotional and spiritual aspects of their life experiences. Holistic therapy requires that counsellors and clients work to achieve an I/thou relationship where the three components are acknowledged in psycho-social interaction. This understanding occurs as counsellors immerse their conscious minds in the client's shared personal stories. These three components affirm human value based on belonging. The model emphasizes human value based on belonging. Clients and counsellors belong to God and their high value and healthy self-esteem are gifts of grace. My hypothesis suggests that individuals neither captain their ships of life nor do they need to serve as victims of circumstance.

In the Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counselling Browning suggests that pastoral practice can be labelled pastoral care, pastoral counselling and pastoral psychotherapy. Each category defines a focus for pastoral practice: (a) Pastoral care is more inclusive and

serves all age groups in every venue. “Pastoral care must hold together religious, ethical, and psychological perspectives. It brings the full witness of the Christian Community—even the moral perspective—to each interpersonal exchange (p. 5). (b) Pastoral counselling focuses more on individuals and their specific problems.

“ . . . the problem entails some conflict, ambivalence, or depression in the person’s capacity to act freely and confidently. The major new development that has motivated the founding of the pastoral counseling movement has been the insight that most human problems are various mixtures of both conflicted human freedom and moral and religious discernment [emphasis added by author]. (p. 6)

(c) Pastoral psychotherapy, according to Browning, is more specialized and takes place outside the confines of church congregations.

“It addresses more completely than does either pastoral care or pastoral counseling the psychological and developmental obstacles within a person’s life which may be impediments to free and confident thinking, decision making, and action. Hence pastoral psychotherapy resembles, as its name suggests, more nearly the goals of psychotherapy in general. This is why it is shaped so significantly by some of the analytic tools and interventions devised by secular psychotherapeutic theories. (p. 6)

Browning in the above differentiation alludes to secular psychotherapy without defining it. He does, however, exclude it by this statement: “. . . pastoral psychotherapy is still pastoral because it takes place within the moral and religious assumptive world associated with the Judaeo-Christian tradition” (p. 6). Browning also makes the connection between the term pastor and Christianity.

A significant block of counselling not yet defined is secular psychotherapy. Hurding (1985) borrows this definition from Thomas Szasz:

... Psychotherapy is the name we give to a particular kind of personal influence: by means of communication, one person identified as the psychotherapist exerts an ostensibly therapeutic influence on another person identified as the patient. This process is, of course, but a special member of a much larger class - indeed, a class so vast that virtually all human interactions fall within it. In countless other situations people influence one another. (p. 22)

In a secular setting, religion would not play a significant role in the therapy. My stance in this paper is toward pastoral psychotherapy as defined above.

Content of paper.

In chapter 1 I define the transformation model and give an overview of the transformation process. In chapter 2 I view human nature from the insights of humanistic psychotherapy and Christian theology. Chapter 3 discusses the bridging of these contentions' perspectives with the concept of general revelation. In chapter 4 I discuss the concerns expressed by J. Adams and others about the integration of psychotherapy and the Scriptures for the purpose of counselling. The case study in chapter 5 demonstrates a theological construct for the counselling process. The review of the case study sheds some doubt on whether or not this particular Christian approach to counselling meets therapeutic requirements. Chapter 6 develops the philosophy and Scriptural base that support a transformation model. Chapter 7 looks at how three psychotherapies can be used as part of a transformation model and discusses what can be expected from

counsellors who counsel using a transformation model. The transformation model I envision is not about quoting the Scriptures at clients; it is about studying the life of Christ and gleaning and applying the techniques and relational qualities that Jesus modelled. Chapter 8 sets up a biblical situations as a one-session counselling case study. I composed the case study in verbatim format. The literature representation I reviewed is categorized by contextual motivation.

chapter 1

TOWARD A TRANSFORMATION MODEL**An Overview****Concept defined.**

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. (Ro. 12:1-2)

Holy Scriptures present the fundamental concept for a transformation model. This paper seeks to discover how I could develop that fundamental concept in counselling applications. I do not assume that there is a lack of good counselling models. Rather, I attempt here to begin the process of determining, in my own mind, what may work effectively in my counselling practice. In other words, what would a pastoral Christian counselling model look like based on my personality, my belief system, and my capacity for social interaction? I am attempting to move away from Adams' (1986) focus on sin to Christ's focus on grace, to move from spiritual pathology to spiritual potential, from evangelistic fervour to client-centred sensitivity. For an effective use of the Bible in Christian counselling I must understand the scriptural applications. For example, two verses from Romans define the purpose of the transformation model. What do the verses mean and can they be adopted for today's western society or do they need to be adapted? Can these verses be applied effectively in pastoral Christian counselling?

I beseech you.

Paul urgently appeals to wayward Christians to turn back from their sinful ways. Is this an appropriate counselling approach? Would it be effective? A hypothetical example serves to illustrate the case. A client named Bill [fictitious name and client] comes to a counsellor with a problem. Bill, a Christian, is seeing another woman and his wife found out and wants a divorce. The client [Bill] does not want a divorce but neither is he really interested in giving up an exciting part of his lifestyle. Counselling sessions became part of Bill's agenda when his wife threatened to leave him unless he received counselling and terminated his illicit affair. Under the circumstances, will an urgent appeal for Bill to consider his Christian commitment to his wife be effective?

Brethren.

Jesus taught His Disciples to address God as "Our Father." Christians are called children of God. What does it mean to be a child of God in a vertical relationship with God? What does it mean to be a child of God while on a horizontal relationship with other human beings? Clients in Christian counselling need an awareness of the meaning of their relationship with God and others. As a counsellor will it be appropriate to talk to Bill about what that means? Will Bill be open to instruction from a Christian brother or sister [counsellor]?

Mercies of God.

I believe God invited humankind to grasp the Transcendent because God is merciful. How will clients understand this mercy? How can it be presented? What does it look like in a counselling model? Does the counsellor model a demonstration of mercy? Is

mercy a practical concept? Bill, the Christian client, appears to believe that no matter what he does God will forgive and forget. Will Bill really be moved to change his behaviour if the counsellor reviews with Bill the great price God paid to redeem Bill? Will Bill honour God's expectation for Bill?

Present your bodies.

What does it mean to present your body and for what purpose? Christians are asked to live their lives with God as their first priority. But what does it mean to sacrifice? What would be sacrificed? The Apostle Paul gives the answer that Christians' lives respond to the Gospel of Christ. Sacrifice denotes going in an unnatural or transcendent direction. This means giving up bad habits to embrace a new style that is congruent with a person's belief system. Bill engages in an affair and enjoys the experience. Bill experiences his wife as boring. She no longer exhibits mystery or excitement for him. The Christian pastoral counsellor tells Bill that by fleeing from his marital responsibilities he is thwarting God's will in his life. And if Bill and his wife together sought God's will God may be gracious and restore the mystery and excitement that once played a part in their relationship. Will Bill be interested?

Acceptable to God.

What do Christian clients understand this to mean? Does it mean claiming Jesus as Lord and Saviour? This is where Scripture enters the picture. It seems to me that if the Christian counsellor is asked the question, "what is acceptable to God?" the Christian client assumes that the counsellor answers from an understanding of the biblical context. But Bill attends counselling under duress; is it possible that Bill is more interested in what

is acceptable to himself than to God? Bill presumably already knows the biblical teaching on this matter and has made his choice to the contrary. Will opening the Scriptures to reiterate God's will effect a change in Bill?

Reasonable service.

Paul considers his requests reasonable, but that is Paul's interpretation of what it means to be Christian. Can it be expected that Christian clients and Christian counsellors will see it that way? And what does it mean for mental and physical health if counsellors and counsellees don't respect the spiritual component? Is there a direct cause and effect relationship? Will Bill make the connection between his marriage breakdown and his self-interest? Is God really vital to Bill in shaping Bill's behaviour?

Be not conformed to this world.

Paul laments that the attractiveness of sin makes it difficult for humans to thwart sin. Does this mean that it is sinful to enjoy the colour and perfume of flowers, the cheerful sound of birds or the sound of a bubbling brook? No, the Bible talks about shunning pride, envy and lust. These are the serious personality flaws that prevent humans from reaching God's potential for them. But because these powerful self-serving drives are so much a part of human nature they are difficult to change. When Bill understands that by cheating on his wife he has succumbed to the world's value system, will Bill then desire a change?

Be transformed.

I have called the model under development the transformation model because the model facilitates a transformation process. But what does it mean to be transformed?

How does this happen? Is it a legitimate experience? Can it be expected that every client will be transformed? Paul does not seem to be talking in these verses about his miraculous experience on the road to Damascus. Rather he is implying that transformation is a process and therefore is intentional and continuous throughout life. Will this process seem too arduous for Bill?

Renewing of the mind.

The Interpreters Bible states this about Paul's use of the word, "mind":

It is often argued whether Paul thought of personality as having three basic elements—body . . . , soul . . . , spirit . . . – or two. . . . but on the whole it seems likely that he associated "soul" closely with "flesh" and thought of both as set over against what could be called "mind," "conscience," "heart," "spirit," or more vaguely "the inner man." (cf. 11 Cor. 4:16), vol. 12, pg. 502)

This arbitrary division of personality suggests a polarization between our nature and transforming knowledge. The "inner person", the "conscience", desires at some level of conviction to claim this transforming power; but there is another powerful part of our being that dissuades the internal decision centre from fulfilling "inner person's request for spiritual well-being. Ultimately, in understanding this concept, the mind chooses the course for action. What then determines how the mind processes the barrage of stimuli that constantly assault it? God's word as found in the Bible helps this interpretive process. For me this activity consists of two stages: (a) actively present in meditation with God and (b) actively present in "our reasonable service." Will Bill be interested in praying or attending Christian marital support groups and in applying biblical principles to his

marriage?

Clients' choices reveal the precepts, [belief systems] that control the interpretation and application of all input into mental, physical and spiritual health. Spiritual health, like physical and mental health, implies a state of well-being. This means that spiritual health requires a person to function toward congruency, a belief system that affirms lifestyle. This transformation model incorporates the precept that God created humankind, and He desires to be present for humans in good times and bad. Individuals, however, must choose an awareness of God from among all other choices. We learn this lesson from the biblical record of Adam and Eve and from the life of Christ. Humans choose well or badly. The process of choosing is active and polarised. With certain exceptions, [when the mind is incapable of such choice], the mind sorts between a perception of sin, [unhealthy data], at one pole and righteousness, [healthy data], at the other pole.

I define sin as a human response that denies Christ and the pattern of life highlighted by His teachings. Righteousness is the human response that claims Christ as Lord and Saviour and seeks to live in the will of God as found in the Bible. For example, Christ tells us to pray for those who spitefully use us (Mt. 5:44). Sinful behaviour responds to abuse with abuse. Righteously motivated behaviour mirrors faith in God; faith encourages humans to follow God's instructions and to trust God to work things out. Paul suggests that human behaviour focuses on self-preservation whether it be for life or self-esteem. It does not seem natural for humankind to seek God first and to trust that He knows best for our lives and that He is willing to share that knowledge with us. For this transformation of character to happen, clients need a motivational attitude that transcends

self-inclination. Transformation requires an expanded worldview that removes individuals from a perception of being the centre of the universe.

Faith empowers individuals to reach beyond their present perception of experiences to establish new thought processes. Faith grasps the reality of Christ and processes experiences through the reality of this communion. Faith in Christ denotes the therapeutic thrust of this transformation process. Transcendent faith refuses to accept past experience as the only pattern for a healthy response to life. This transcendent faith transfers reliance from self to Christ. Faith does not disable individuals and make Christ a crutch. Faith acknowledges that individuals are finite and dependent for the development of their potential on the infinite Creator .

The transformation process is first comprehended and then practised. Jesus tells Nicodemus, “Unless you are born again you will never see the Kingdom of God”(Jn. 3:3). I desire a transformation model to facilitate this process for my clients. The transformation model offers a learning process that employs an intentional walk with Christ. The model allows clients, in this journey, to differentiate between mental processes and physical responses in conjunction with spiritual growth. All three human elements can be experienced as contributors to holistic health. Reality suggests that human beings cannot separate out these elements for controlled experiments, but they can choose to regulate them towards a perception of well-being. The transformation model empowers clients to seek the Power that is greater and external to human capacity. Counsellors encourage clients to focus on Christ as the one who desires to intervene in human activities; this requires the mental and physical elements to be brought into submission to the infusion of

the transcendent Power.

But what is the venue for this type of Christian counselling? I learned that not all pastoral counselling centres present a Christian position. Like many people, I equated the term pastoral with Christianity [We noted above that Browning also makes this connection]. The term, however, may be more descriptive of a counselling style than a faith statement. Nevertheless, I became interested in whether or not the Bible could be used in pastoral counselling centres. The transformation model provides a means for clients and counsellors to dialogue from within the comfort zone of their belief systems. Such a model encourages clients and counsellors to step beyond themselves into the mystery of possibility. Is there a usefulness for this type of model in an interfaith pastoral counselling centre? What altered thinking is required of individuals to motivate them to avail themselves of this opportunity for change?

The motivation for change must come from the individual. For motivation to activate change in clients, clients must be able to fit the incoming variables into therapeutic compartments: physical, mental and spiritual. To begin this process counsellors must be willing to introduce and teach about the importance of clients' spirituality while clients must be open to incorporate the work of the Holy Spirit. Because of the requirement to bring focus to the Holy Spirit, the venue may require a private practice or a Christian counselling centre. As well, an understanding of how the mind processes information prepares counsellors and clients to comprehend new information. Freeman and Freeman in Essential Psychotherapies (1995) under the section "Cognitive Behaviourism", outline how individuals respond to new information. The mind processes information based on its

programmed response to the stimuli from life's experiences. Sometimes new information is distorted and this may lead to functional difficulties (p. 191). Human development depends on adapting stimuli to secure human survival. Individuals, convinced of positive change, filter stimuli such as the environment, family of origin memories, and culture to create and sustain positive change. Therefore, the objective and the journey to that objective must be clearly understood by clients and counselling centres. The transformation model facilitates the process to encourage replacement of maladaptive functioning with adaptive functioning that responds to their health generated reference points, [a familiar feeling about well-being]. Transition between malfunctioning behaviour and functioning behaviour requires recognition by clients of these reference marks. Otherwise, clients may choose not to participate. It seems that some clients make wrong decisions within their comfort zone to avoid the panic of possibly losing their perceived control of the context. This situation occurs when guideposts along life's journey change too frequently and cause clients confusion. But maladaptive behaviour, disguised by a form of functional behaviour, may preclude the perception to distinguish low functioning behaviour. This form of maladaptive behaviour is probably the most difficult to change because it does not cry out for correction. But even this subtle and less helpful behavior can be differentiated if brought under the scrutiny of a clear frame of reference.

Clients observe spiritual transformation in themselves when they learn to filter the thought processes that lead to behaviour through a reactivated belief system. When clients realize that their spirituality can become a dynamic health component, they will more readily accommodate this process. They begin to learn that when the Lord enters lives He

comes as a friend, an encourager, and brings hope. The focus in counselling changes from client despair to client hope. Clients learn that health is not about reaching within themselves for the power to heal; they learn that by reaching up for help God intervenes. Clients learn what it means to have a consciousness of God within themselves, friends together tackling the complex patterns of life. Counsellors and clients build a faith based on new experiences and begin to learn that apprehending the Spiritual reality has become their greatest resource for well-being. The transformation model focusses on Christ as the introducer and sustainer of the Spiritual relationship with God. The theory behind the model emphasizes God's willingness and availability in time of clients' needs. This replaces the philosophy that medicine or human effort alone causes healing to occur.

It seems to me for this transformation model to be useful in counselling requires a certain type of counsellor. Counsellors must be in awe of the mystery of God and His creation and dependent on His sustaining power. They must be open to allow that mystery to reveal itself to them from within themselves or through the client. Spiritual discernment and an expectation of God's involvement are primary attributes of transformation counsellor. The transformation model is a process model that seeks to discover with clients what Pinnock (1992) writes about in A Wideness in God's Mercy and what Wilkinson (1992) focuses on in his model, The 7 Laws of the Learner. Wilkinson stresses that spirituality is contagious. Teachers/counsellors demonstrate this spiritual reality when they come alongside students and clients as friends. Friends encourage potential from each other. For Wilkinson, this happens when a spiritual connection results in the transference of mutual love. The experience for counsellors and clients is a holistic reality of an I/thou

relationship.

The Scriptures soundly support this process. The Scriptures refer to the need to change thoughts, attitudes and behaviour if one is to serve God in righteousness. The Scriptures make the point dramatically through the concept of God incarnate in Jesus, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. The fallen human nature requires the intervention of God to create positive change. The process, once begun, continues for the life of the individual. The transformation model claims reality for the biblical process of becoming our potential in and through Christ. The Apostle Paul reminded the early Church that transformed lives proved that the Holy Spirit worked in the lives of individuals (2nd Co. 5:17). The Apostle Paul reprovved, reminded and exhorted early Christians that transformation meant being more like Christ (Ph. 2:5). Problems existed in the early Church when Church members refused to follow Christ and His teachings. Dysfunction in the lives of individuals and families occur because individuals and families live lives counter to their intended created purpose. Created purpose can be defined as the reason for being according to a belief system. Clients experience adaptive functioning when their conscious effort appropriates the positive tenets of their belief systems. The transformation model attempts to facilitate the practical healing application of a belief system. The model examines belief systems through the eyes of clients. The model functions to help clients sort out what is helpful, and what is not, and to develop those tenets that support the healing process.

The next chapter discusses human nature. All counsellors consciously or unconsciously identify and solidify a philosophy of human nature to help them in their

counselling.

chapter 2**HUMAN NATURE**

Humans observe human nature but do not understand fully its complexities.

The Scriptures record that Jesus was birthed by a young Jewish woman and was born without sin. Jesus possessed a human nature untarnished by the genetic birth defect of original sin. Jesus modelled a human nature devoid of sin; He also understood human nature undermined by sin. Jesus represented the ultimate goal for humanity and mirrored the ultimate human dilemma, the seriousness of the “original sin” defect. Jesus manifested the bipolar reality of human nature. Although He took on Himself the potential to sin he nevertheless avoided doing so. Humanity born into sin, on the other hand, strives consciously or unconsciously for a transcendent nature. This dynamic tension causes individuals to have both the capacity for good, healthy choices as well as wrong, unhealthy ones. It is this ongoing struggle that describes my view of human nature. Poor decision making within and through this dynamic tension contributes to depravation in the physical, psychological and spiritual makeup of what it means to be human. A good understanding of human nature clears the path of obstacles preventing healing. All schools of psychotherapy begin by giving definition to human nature. In developing this chapter, I have relied heavily upon DeCarvalho’s (1991) to interpret the intent of the founders of humanistic psychotherapy to define human nature.

DeCarvalho (1991) quotes Abraham Maslow: “Everyone, even the year-old child has a conception of human nature, for it is impossible to live without a theory of how people will behave”(p. 83). Maslow continues with the theory that no matter who we are or

what we do, we all operate from a predisposition of what it means to be human. An internally mapped behaviour pattern directs human responses to life's experiences. However, humans deny the existence of this map and take great care to protect themselves so that they are impervious to new knowledge. Maslow maintains that human beings pay more attention to the prompting from this critical map than any acquired formal training. Maslow offers a rational declaration about why human nature responds as it does. He suggests that most humans have experienced hearing that inner voice that informs them how to respond relationally. When therapists empathetically walk with a client according to the client's private mental map, meaningful dialogue apprehends the client's psychological journey. Some determination can be made as to the psychological destination and what that may mean. Interested counsellors focus on clients in their journeys rather than on their pathologies.

DeCarvalho (1991) credits Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Gordon Allport and James Bugental for packaging this humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychology derives its name from its purpose. This psychology of human nature attempts a holistic understanding of human nature. Whereas the Freudian model categorizes persons according to dysfunctional behaviour patterns, humanistic psychology honours clients as human beings, individuals active in the process of becoming their potentials. The founders of humanistic psychology agreed on this shift in focus. Agreement broke down when it came to identifying the cause of behaviour, especially dysfunctional behaviour. Since causes are elusive, therapists need a theory that substitutes for cause, a theory that makes sense of human nature. This theory becomes the foundation from which therapists counsel.

For a theory about human nature and human behaviour to make sense, it must pass through counsellors' belief systems. Some beliefs, [worldview as conditioned by belief systems], are held in common by various faith groups such as Judaism, Christianity, Muslim, Hinduism and others. Beyond this commonality, I believe counsellors and clients possess unique belief systems. Therefore, counselling that engages the idiosyncratic nature of clients' belief systems empowers clients in the agency of healing.

But human nature is complex and the humanistic founders contributed substantially to an understanding of that nature, a nature we possess, can analyse, and describe. DeCarvalho (1991) describes Allport's belief as follows: "Allport believed that even eclecticism would fall short in describing human nature. Human personality was, for Allport, the unique pattern or agglomeration of generic attitudes, formations, or traits operating within the person"(p. 85). Allport explains human nature using different words but maintains Maslow's theory, ["instinctoid inner core"], (p. 86), a unit programmed by the manufacturer, [creator], and sealed to prevent tampering. Allport settled on calling this conglomerate "trait." He describes a trait in greater detail to expand, yet confine, this complex field. Maslow believes that within the human core functions a command system that makes demands on the human psyche to direct self-development. For development to occur requires the human psyche to comprehend, or at least seek to understand, the mysteries of the cosmos. This higher function within the human core metaphorically reminds the soul that not only can the soul walk, it can soar with the eagles. There is a functioning polarity: grounded and yet desiring to fly. Maslow seems to be saying that human motivation seeks to transcend human nature while holding to human nature. For

Maslow, human beings who do not recognize and engage this transcendent potential exhibit dysfunctional behaviour. The dysfunction reveals itself in distorted judgment in values and ethics in relations to others. I believe Maslow to be saying that basic human nature, without the transcendent component, functions inappropriately in an I/thou relationship. Without an I/thou relationship, selfishness, a primary negative human characteristic, eventually does harm to self and others.

Rogers agreed in part with Maslow and the other founders of this system of humanistic psychology. Rogers too discusses the transcendent nature of the organism, [humans], that evolved in the development of consciousness. DeCarvalho (1991) interprets Rogers as suggesting that humans consist of organisms that in a healthy state seek only to reproduce themselves and work to maximize their positive potential. Rogers assesses the functions of “nausea” and “self-destruction”(p. 88) as under developed. This suggests to me that as humans become aware of themselves and others they develop their potentials to make healthy decisions. These healthy decisions harmonize with the biological program of survival for the human species. DeCarvalho’s analysis of Roger’s theory suggests that humans make choices incongruent to their biological program because their educational inputs have been either insufficient or erroneous; humans have not mastered the art of learning and discerning properly and appropriately. Therefore, education serves as the therapy for human dysfunctions, education congruent with the programmed biological pattern. Good counselling will give willing clients the opportunity to make healthy choices. Rogers seems to be saying that everyone will make good choices if the choices are presented in the appropriate fashion. This positive view of humanity supports Rogers’ theory of

human nature.

DeCarvalho (1991) interprets Rollo May to theorize that humans evolve because of tension, continuous tension. The healthy persons recognize the reality of this polarity and seek to use the tension that is created to actualize their potentials. These are the people who learn from their wrong choices and have the internal fortitude to change for growth. Healthy people turn the negative aspects of life into opportunities (p. 90). Rollo May believes that meaning derives from contrast and comparison. For example, health has no meaning unless one has experienced sickness. Or life may have no meaning unless one is aware of death. Human nature develops potentially only when involved in discerning the sharp contrasts and comparisons. Discernment clears the way for better, healthier choices.

But humanistic psychotherapists disagree among themselves that education and good counselling prevents humans from displaying malfunctioning behaviour. For example, May disagrees with Rogers' hypothesis. DeCarvalho (1991) describes May's criticism of Rogers and the related client-centred philosophy. May takes exception to person-centred philosophy that denies the existence of evil as a negative influence in the decision process. May argues that people don't make wrong choices just because they lack knowledge of good choices. May believes that therapists must acknowledge this evil force operating within individuals for healing to proceed. Misapprehending the force of one pole causes weak resistance to that pole. May maintains that without the adoption of his theory of person-centred therapy, therapists misunderstand human nature. Tension serves a useful purpose when acknowledged and understood (p. 83). The final member of this group, James F. T. Bugental, believes also that healthy individuals intentionally confront

existential anxiety. DeCarvalho (1991) interprets Bugental as suggesting that the avoidance of such tension reduces the “authenticity of being.” Authenticity of being lacks credibility in substitution. Religion, for example, will not functionally substitute for personally accepting responsibility for one’s life. When religion, or any other substitute, is used as life’s meaning, the person, according to Bugental, has given up the fight for legitimate meaning (p. 90). Bugental suggests that the practice of religion contributes to maladaptive behaviour. Humans in their effort to find meaning have sacrificed their self-sufficiency for puppet-hood. Individuals sacrifice their right and choose the group mentality, [church authority]. Choice becomes the victim of demands from social, economic and religious groups. Bugental seems to require that individuals who desire real meaning from life pursue independence. Bugental’s philosophy regards adaptive human behaviour as functioning independently of external influences. Social health requires interdependence with others; this precludes dependence on others and God. Interdependence promotes adaptable behaviour which results in balanced tension.

These four men embraced humanistic psychology in an effort to refocus therapy on the personhood of individuals and not just on their dysfunctions. They felt that human beings were more than the sum of their parts. They believed that human beings were not mechanical, not just a collection of behaviours, and not just biological. Human beings, they concluded, included all of these things and more. The founders of humanistic psychology observed human beings wrestling with the meaning for their existence. There was a human desire to be more than human nature provides. These therapists felt that it was within the human being to force the balance in this tension. Religion can be seen this way as well.

For the Christian and Hebrew religion serve to help extricate meaning from existence.

According to Harper's Bible Dictionary, "In Hebrew and Christian thought religion is man's recognition of his relation to God and his expression of that relation in faith, worship, and conduct" (p. 608). There are therapists who feel comfortable integrating

humanism with a Christian perspective. Jones (1963) bridges the two belief systems for us:

Man's nature is not so simple. Man's capacity is to transcend himself infinitely. . . .

It is the consistent biblical witness that the body is not evil; man's instincts are God-given and God-intended. . . . and in no way, [emphasis added by author], a sign of fallenness. . . . Love, creativity: these are impossibilities without the tension between "is" and "ought," between "was" and "might have been," between "actuality" and "potentiality," between "ugliness" and "beauty," between "sin" and "faith."

Anxiety is for the creativity which is love. (p. 158-163)

Jones proclaims the choices humans make consist not of good or evil. Choices result in health or sickness. Sickness may be caused by wrong choices but not because of a judgmental God. Rather, God stands with humans pointing to human nature's transcendent element and encouraging humans to keep trying to reach their potentials.

But what does that potential look like? Are humans capable of actualizing their potentials?

Jones (1963) quotes T. S. Eliot, . . . "through our age to every age, 'Come and I will show you fear in a handful of dust.' . . . Here is man existentially involved in the religious question - standing naked, threatened from within and without by a meaninglessness which undermines all reason for continuing" . . . (p. 92-93). Jones (1963) points out that philosophers such as Rene Descartes (1596-1650) pondered the meaning of life in the face of

not being able to know anything for certain (p. 84). Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) wondered about just how much scope the human being had when it came to knowing. Kant suggested that the mind was programmed to process thoughts in a causal relationship. Kant states that science is possible because science is done with empirical things on a horizontal level. Religious knowledge is impossible to comprehend rationally. Therefore, religion concerns the innermost essence of meaning; as such it cannot be observed to be verified or replicated. When religious leaders such as St. Thomas insisted that all things have a cause that is only because his mind cannot perceive of an effect without a cause. The human reality is horizontal and not vertical (p. 84-85).

This theoretical statement of Kant's rings true with the human experience; human nature seems content even on the horizontal plain to placate its search for cause and effect relationships by substituting reasonable, [possible, probable or just convenient], causal explanations. If human nature needs meaning to exist, and meaning comes in the cause and effect relationship, can it not be said that Christianity is nothing more than human nature seeking cause in a creator? Could religion exist as psychological construct only for the purpose of giving humans meaning? Religion itself possesses no inherent meaning of reality. Theology becomes a discussion among humans merely to ease their fear of nonmeaning. The case could be made that humans derive philosophical meaning for existence, for the purpose of existing. Procreation works because humans content themselves with the meaning they create. Cause and effect relationship is merely a perception of reality. If the vertical relationship, [with the Creator], cannot be proved, yet Christians and others continue to insist that it does exist what does this say about human

nature? Jones (1963) suggests the following:

Some existential Christians maintain that the only “knowledge” of God to be gained is through the “wager” which the enigma of creation forces humans to choose. Since no answer to the ultimate question is certain, man is forced, as Tolstoi once insisted, to affirm God or die. . . . Such an approach to the problem of ultimate meaning appears to be not the “leap of faith” to God but a “leap from despair” toward a fond hope. (p. 92)

It appears that ultimate meaning for human existence must contain an explanation for what can't be rationally explained. This striving for meaning grasps a sense of mystery. There is that sense that humans want to believe that there is more to life and to themselves that can easily be explained away. Almost the plea, “there must be more.” This is noted within humanistic psychology to explain humans' desire to better themselves. This can be expressed as reaching their potentials or transcending themselves. Theology talks about human beings as created by God, and to a more or lesser extent, engaged by God in life through time and eternity. Theology advocates that, God the transcendent power, gives life meaning. But what kind of meaning? Is it one of fear, dreading the day when there is a face to face encounter with this judgmental God? Or is it one of hope, knowing that God loves humans and He will not change his mind when humans arrive on His door step? Humans' thoughts about God, [Creator], will not change God, but to humans it certainly makes a difference in how they experience life.

The Scriptures teach that finite knowledge is limited and incomplete. Nevertheless, there exists a human need for unlimited knowledge and complete understanding. Humans

possess an adventuresome and creative energy that seeks meaning in spiritual phenomena. God possesses this realm. Wisdom indicates that humans walk circumspectly as they attempt awareness of these mysteries. Johan L. Aitken in tribute to Northrop Frye (1995) provides a sense of what it means to walk circumspectly into life's mysteries: "With malice toward none, Frye defends his church, [United], against those who demand absolute certainties, replying simply that we do not pretend to know what nobody actually knows, [emphasis added by author], anyway" (p. xiv). Frye in this same book views the Scriptures not as doctrine but as vision and revelation through story. Taking Frye's suggestion, I explore the biblical explanation of human nature. Jones (1963) says "Man of necessity, is religious" (p. 90). Jones suggests that humans did not choose religion from a pool of options; they are simply religious by nature. Their belief system provides meaning for their existence. Humankind desires feet of gold while being reminded that they stand on "clay feet." Jones reminds us that for religion to be meaningful it must operate at the conscious level. Jones (1963) defers to Kierkegaard's insight "that a pagan involved with his wooden idols with infinite passion is far more religious than passionless Christians with all the correct beliefs. Man is best when he worships that which he finds greatest"(p. 90).

If we postulate that meaning of existence is a mental construct of our own making, then a plausible explanation for existence may be that we are finite gods. The Book of Daniel focuses on two forms of worship that human nature finds meaningful: God-worship and its polarity self-worship. Scripture teaches that God-worship leads to health while self-worship leads to sickness. Daniel, in his relationship with God, models human nature that seeks spiritual health. Nebuchadnezzar displays a maladaptive or malfunctioning

relationship with God. Daniel chapter 3 reports that Daniel and his two friends, despite pressure to do otherwise, stayed the course and faithfully worshipped their God. Chapter 4 provides the story of the great Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar who wanted to be a god. This king claimed power and position for himself that God alone possesses. God was not about to relinquish this power and appears to resent the fact that Nebuchadnezzar desired it. By a punishment meant to teach a lesson, God changed Nebuchadnezzar's behaviour and mental processes into what the Bible describes, "as like oxen." The Bible describes it this way, "Nebuchadnezzar . . . did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like bird's claws" (Dan. 4:33). At this stage was the king a man, [possessing human nature], or was he given a nature that was nonhuman? The Open Bible index describes Nebuchadnezzar as insane (p. 212). Nebuchadnezzar's nature was human but nonfunctioning. What really was the mental and emotional difference between the king and the oxen? When the human mind is incapable of declaring its owner human, what validation of humanness is there? Insanity denotes a disease of the mind that renders a person incapable of controlling some functioning. This could mean that Nebuchadnezzar thought he was an ox and acted accordingly. It could also be argued that human nature is not a given, even in humans. More likely, however, if humans manifest behaviour, the behaviour is human behaviour regardless of the outcome. The Scriptures teach that human nature functions according to its purpose when there exists a proper relationship with God. The story informs us that Nebuchadnezzar's understanding returned and when he remembered his proper relationship with God, he was healed. The king became troubled when he thought and

acted as he was a god. When the king determined in his mind to change his relationship with God to be transcended in nature as God is, God changed Nebuchadnezzar's nature to animal-like in appearance. It appears from the story that God alone determines by his relationship with his creation the limitations of human nature. God set the boundaries of human nature.

Humanistic psychology, Old Testament stories, and Judaeo-Christian thought all allude to human nature that searches for meaning outside of itself. When humans consider their capacity to see what cannot be rationally explained, they naturally assume that some greater power must be in control. Humans feel attempts must be made to bridge the gap between what is known and what is knowable. In chapter 3, I discuss how general revelation can act as a bridge between schools of psychotherapy and Christian biblical counselling to sustain the attempt to comprehend the knowable.

chapter 3

GENERAL REVELATION

In my quest for the meaning of human existence I discuss whether or not “general revelation” plays a part in Christian pastoral counselling. The question that I need to answer for myself is this, If God can reveal Himself through general revelation, can humanistic psychology be understood as general revelation? The Random House College Dictionary defines humanism as “any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values and dignity are taken to be of primary importance.” Based on this definition, it seems reasonable to understand humanistic psychology as general revelation. For me, however, for humanistic psychology to be general revelation according to our definition, the underlying philosophy must be stated as such, “human interests, values and dignity are of primary importance. But the primary importance is determined by God’s standards and not by human standards. With this condition guiding the underlying philosophy, I can feel a personal integrity with clients using the concept of general revelation that embraces humanistic psychotherapy. What will that mosaic of “special revelation” and “general revelation” look like in the transformation model? Deinhardt (1995) defines general revelation and special revelation without reference to Christ:

General revelation then concerns God’s intentionally revealing of Himself to all persons through nature and in the human heart. . . . special revelation, which is specific things about Himself that He communicates to particular people at particular times. (p. 44)

Karl Barth holds a different view of revelation but it supports Deinhardt’s position against

the evangelical position of exclusivity. Deinhardt (1995) informs us that Karl Barth believed general revelation was a convenient idea that was without merit. According to Barth, the God of all creation does not have to deal in generalities, [general revelation], when He addresses His creation. When God has something to say to individuals He says it directly. God also chooses the mode or form by which He will communicate (p. 48). Barth does not allow for human interpretation. He prefers to see objective truth planted in the hearts of individuals. In other words, God puts the text, context and interpretation into the human mind. Presumably, this avoids the danger of subjective interpretation or skewed truth as happens with general revelation. Barth turns general revelation into special revelation by claiming that all God's words are personal. God's instructions are never to be viewed as collective, open for all to receive. For example, God communicated with Moses through the burning bush or to Samuel in dreams.

Deinhardt states that the evangelical view of Christianity isolates special revelation to the Bible and specifically the Word, Jesus Christ. Jones (1963) agrees with the evangelical stance on revelation and supports this narrower interpretation using a quote by Augustine: "This is what Augustine meant when he said that all that the Christian affirms could be discovered without need of special revelation, all things but one –'The Word made flesh'",[which according to my interpretation of the Gospel of John, the Word of God became human in Christ] (p. 118). Christ defines God's love, holiness, and grace by the redemptive acts of crucifixion and resurrection. Christ is the fulfilment of God's plan and purpose for humankind.

The next chapter examines Jay Adams' book How to Help People Change. Adams

interprets special revelation as revelation to those who are “saved.” Adams contends that only the Holy Spirit reveals truth, and without Salvation through and by Jesus Christ, there is no Spiritual truth. Without salvation, Adams declares, humans are without the capacity to discern truth, special or general. Is there any hope for reconciling these two positions on the concept of revelation? I believe a position exists that will hold the two concepts, general and special revelation, in balance without compromise to either. Jones argues that Christians isolate themselves from the meaning of creation when they see the only purpose for the Incarnation is their own salvation. Jones wonders then about history. Is it only the playground on which God restores humans to the state of innocence they once possessed? This is not likely; salvation, justification, and forgiveness act to enable the restoration of the universe, including humankind (p. 234). Jones and I believe that general and special revelation must be taken together to understand the meaning of God’s glory.

If general revelation is God’s revelation to humankind what does that mean? Is it possible to know all things? Is it possible to be able to correctly interpret everything? Is it possible to know pure truth as truth relates to God? What is God’s truth? Has God promised to give truth only to born again Christians? Most humans will not provide definitive answers for general queries but will respond with definitive answers to personal faith questions. I believe that people convince themselves of truth in their personalized beliefs, whether it is done consciously or unconsciously. It appears to be their way of securing in their minds a safe place in their unknown eternity. Humans entered the world from a safe place, the womb. Is it an unreasonable desire to want to re-enter the “heavenly” womb? If this stance presents a fixation or religious paralysis what, if

anything, can free humans to broaden their scope and enable them to become more inclusive? I think that personal belief statements or belief systems are certainly a means of discovering the meaning of existence, existence in the finite realm and the eternal realm. Because our minds can think of such things, we must also seek a means to make sense out of what we have a capacity to wonder about. The story of Job fits this pattern:

In Job chapter 28 God responds to Job: “Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge”(v. 2)? God requires an accounting of Job. From the story it would appear that Job had not previously communicated with God directly yet because of general revelation God expected more of Job than Job offered. God expected Job’s wisdom to consist of humility. Speak for God only when one’s spirit understands His message. The Apostle Paul, in 1st Corinthians, chapter 13, puts it differently: “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part: but then shall I know even as I am known”(vs. 9, 10 &12). The Apostle Paul claims that because of Christ we do know some things about God. But until Christ appears again, human beings will not apprehend all knowledge; this includes complete knowledge of what it means to be human.

In the meantime we should be prudent in how we present general and special revelation in Christian counselling: Southard (1976) shares the concern of Carl Rogers and others when they observe the arrogance presented by those Christian writers who seem to speak with authority they may not possess, not unlike Job’s advisors:

Assessment of ministry assumes that a cleric does not know everything when he, [or

she], graduates from professional school. We could lay the groundwork for continuing education through the strengthening of field study and the introduction of research studies in every division of the curriculum. As professionals in other fields look at theological education, they are amazed by the assertions that are made apart from empirical verification. After reading Reinhold Niebuhr's The Self and the Dramas of History, Carl Rogers wrote: "I am impressed most of all by the awesome certainty with which Dr. Niebuhr knows. He knows, with incredible assurance, what is wrong with the thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas, Augustine, Hegel, Freud, Marx, Dewey, and many, many others. He also knows the errors of communism, existentialism, psychology, and all the social sciences. His favorite terms for the formulation of others is "absurd," but such other terms as "erroneous," "blind," "naive," "insane," and "inadequate" also are useful. It seems to me that the only individuals who come off well in the book are the Hebrew prophets, Jesus (as seen by Niebuhr), Winston Churchill, and Dr. Niebuhr himself." (p. 15-16)

The claim of arrogance is easier to project on others than to claim for ourselves.

Nevertheless, the perception of arrogance may preclude counsellors from the therapeutic exploration of belief systems. The difference between appearing arrogant while being forthright may be in how we treat others in our presentation of truth. Is it possible to state the truth in love with the objective of winning a friend, versus winning a battle? The very nature of a one-dimensional view that excludes all other views may easily appear as arrogant. Carl Rogers in his critique of Niebuhr took issue with a one-dimensional

observation of life. Whereas general revelation opens up creation with the hope of discovering the essence of the Creator. Jones, (1963) reveals Kant's unhappiness with a one-dimensional relationship with life, [Kant denied religious truth could be validated scientifically]. But Kant was prepared to admit that more may exist beyond what we know how to prove. "Though rational knowledge of God is impossible Kant came to see that in moral experience and in the experience of beauty one obtained sufficient grounds for theistic faith [emphasis added by author]" (p. 87). Rather than deny other dimensions of reality because they cannot be proven [scientifically], Kant embraces the experiences of the moral and the beautiful as another level of proof of the existence of the transcendent God. Jones credits Kant with provoking Protestant thinkers and others to an awareness that life consists of a "plurality of legitimate human experiences with what can be called corresponding dimensions of being" (p. 87).

In this plurality of legitimate human experiences, we can then say that general revelation plays an important role in helping humans understand the Creator. The nondiscovery of scientific proof does not negate the existence of proof. Furthermore, how can it be denied that the holistic human being may be consciously or unconsciously in some way in continuous contact with the holistic Creator? Jones (1963) provides an explanation about how these dimensions may operate; I discuss them under subheadings Jones supplies.

Institution of contingency.

Consider this the minimum level of contact with the Creator.

Humans' collateral experiences teach them of their mortality, finiteness and fragility. This

leads to a minimum level of realization that humans are contingent beings (p. 99).

Power of believing.

The second level consists of an inner feeling that openly affirms that God created human beings. Faith now factors into the equation. (p. 100).

Apprehension of the majesty.

The third level extends beyond contingency, and beyond emotional awareness of the Creator's presence in creation. Jones (1963) points to contemporary thinkers of his era, Abraham Heschel and Martin Buber, as persons who apprehend the majesty, awe, glory of God in the beauty and glory of a sunset and a rainbow. Jones seems to be saying also that unless self-appreciation exists, one cannot appreciate beauty elsewhere.

Mystery and religious experience.

This level of religious experience explains the mystery of the possibility of constant communion with God. God exists because humans experience God in every aspect of life. For example, the morning begins with meditation: the day is full of service for the Kingdom of God; each task is done only in the Will of God and with His blessings; each thought is brought under holy submission; each night consists of prayers of thanksgiving for a day lived in the presence of God. Jones admits this is the experience of the few but their testimony is enough for one to believe in this as reality (p. 101).

How does one become conscious of a relationship with God to begin these levels of experience? Jones proposes that we can enter into relations with God by going from meaning to truth. Sensing meaning suspends judgement about discernment of cause and effect, and of analytical scientific verification. Instead, humans experience their

surroundings through all the senses. Appreciating the beauty of roses apprehends sensory meaning of a Creator; apprehended meaning leads to understood truth. Otherwise, sensory meaning in itself becomes a poor substitute for the truth that is God. Kierkegaard severely criticised the aesthetic view of life when it does not lead to the religious I /thou relationship with Christ. Jones (1963) shares Kierkegaard's words: "Through the aesthetic, he stated, it is possible for one to participate in religious realities without ever being committed to their truth"(p. 126). Jones agrees with this assessment, but he also sees aesthetic knowledge in sensory perception as a good place to start the journey to truth. General revelation, seeing God in the beauty of the flowers, can lead to seeing aesthetically the New Testament portrait of Christ. General revelation declares that God is omnipresent, a journey that can start anywhere and find its destination in God. Meaning begins with the beauty of the rainbow and ends with the truth of God in Christ.

General revelation is inherent in faith statements about God. I am not referring here to the polished church statements found in confessions and creeds; rather I refer to that little piece of faith that individuals hold sacredly and privately. It may be Scriptural, but it may not be; it may be part of the cultural tradition and church doctrine, or it may not be. That belief becomes for humans truth because it gives their lives meaning. Truth then becomes subjective truth. Does subjective truth have a universal application? I believe it does. Individuals interpret spiritual truth. Therefore, subjective truth holds universal value. Humans process the spiritual truth that God has purposed for them to know. Objective truth never changes but the subjective interpretation may change and does. God owns objective truth [truth absolute]. He subjects us to that truth. God will

not, however, subject us to objective truth without the means for interpretation. For example, if persons cannot fit the objective truth into their subjective terms of reference, they will not understand His objective truth. I believe Paul's words, "to know in part" (1st Co. 13:12) recognizes human subjectivity not only in interpretation of meaning, but in the application of that meaning as a valid form of knowledge and practice. Nevertheless, Southard (1976) requires that truth be seen as objective truth. If two persons make subjective observations that agree, than objective truth is discovered.

People are looking for objectivity, especially in a report on a subjective subject area such as values and religious beliefs. I visualize objectivity as the ability to stand beside another observer and show him a subject of interest to us in such a way that he can identify what we see. (p. 76)

The Apostle Paul tells us that creation was supposed to be a means to introduce the Creator to humankind. Humans had the opportunity to stand together, to observe the universe, and confirm in their minds that a loving Creator was sustaining the miracle of life. But recorded biblical history suggests that humans were incapable of looking beyond the creation to the Creator:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves wise they became fools. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible

man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. . . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the creator who is blessed forever. (Ro. 1:20-23&25)

I believe Paul to be saying that God manifested Himself in His creation for the purpose of attracting worship from humankind. Apparently, humankind chose not to understand this general revelation. But exceptions exist: Psalm 19 informs us that “The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament showeth his handiwork”(v. 1). The psalmist sees God in creation but he does not make creation God. The psalmist is saying I know God because I have experienced His creation. Subjective experience interprets objective truth. From general revelation - the creation, the psalmist affirmed his belief in God. His subjective experience led to a declaration of worship: Psalm 89, “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generation”(vs. 1). General revelation can also be historical. Because we were rescued from our enemy, I know God’s presence. General revelation as a faith experience fills humans with hope and they see the works of God as answered prayer. In Romans chapter 2, Paul tells us that the Gentiles did not have the Jewish law of Moses and were not taught it; yet they responded to life as if the law was written on their hearts. Why is this the case? I believe that God, through general revelation, manifested psycho-social and environmental cues that were in this scenario appropriately apprehended by these non-Jews.

But subjective truth may have human-based motives that deny any close proximity to the objective truth that is God. Deinhardt (1995) refers to the work of Demarest; Demarest gives what he considers an example of the misuse of general revelation when he

talks about Nazi Germany. This regime discarded the Bible as “Jewish swindle” and turned to an interpretation of general revelation that fitted their agenda. General revelation holds an inherent danger when interpreted apart from the contextual application of the Scriptures. Hitler accomplished his interpretation of general revelation by outlawing the Christian Church; in its place Hitler created the church for “German Christians.” This state church became a Christian front for legitimizing the horrendous acts perpetrated against those persons who were not in agreement with the National Socialist Party (p. 44-45). This political faction, blessed by its church, moved the focus from the life of Christ to its own agenda.

A misuse of general revelation or specific revelation may also derive from a need to make God’s plan of Salvation fit our perception of God. Pinnock (1992) attempts to modify evangelistic thinking concerning revelation. Pinnock identifies components of a belief system that may be a misuse of revelation. He wants to see his God as a God who determined universal salvation. To strengthen his argument, Pinnock refers to the Noahic covenant. “The scope of God’s concern embraces the whole of humanity, not just Abram and his descendants. Any attempt to present God’s saving plan on a small scale is on the wrong track and misses the point of early Genesis”(p. 21). Pinnock, (1992) in explaining his “control belief”, puts all revelation in perspective; he also defines subjective truth.

My reading of the gospel of Jesus Christ and my control belief causes me to celebrate a wideness in God’s mercy and a boundlessness in his generosity towards humanity as a whole. (When I use the term “control belief,” I mean a large-scale conviction that affects many smaller issues) (p. 18).

It is an understanding of clients' "control belief", [or critical map in chp.2], that opens a belief system and allows counsellors and clients to approach general revelation in a nonthreatening manner. We can define subjective truth as truth that passes through the screening of one's control-belief reference process. Counsellors need an awareness that their truth, even if held with great conviction, is nevertheless interpretive and thereby subjective truth. This does not make the belief invalid, just personal. For counsellors it means that a successful interaction with clients must begin with clients control beliefs. Paul's observation, as quoted above, suggests that general revelation can point to God but there is the human propensity to skew sense data. Nevertheless, if we heed Deinhardt's advice given below, general revelation can be a good starting place to determine clients' subjective truth and whether or not that truth enhances their well-being.

Deinhardt (1995) argues against an easy approach to the interpretation of general revelation. He suggests that some Christians who author books on counselling imply that no special ability is needed to interpret general revelation because all truth is God's truth. Deinhardt suggests that when Christian counsellors borrow extra-Scriptural material, counsellors carefully differentiate such material from Scriptural truth (p. 51). Deinhardt is expressing the view that Christian pastoral counsellors should take seriously how general revelation is interpreted. Not all "truth" is God's truth. Put another way, only God's "truth" benefits clients. If Christian counselling caters to the "me generation", counselling advice may be popular, but it will not be ordained by God and therefore not therapeutic. Christian clients expect or assume that Christian counsellors hold intelligently the teachings of Christ. Goleman has a best seller on the market called Emotional Intelligence

with application for companies. I concentrate on what I call Spiritual Intelligence, [emphasis added], with application for Christian pastoral counselling. It seems that God expected the same thing when He challenged Job. “Who is it that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge”(Job 37:2)? It is worth noting that the author of 2nd Timothy instructs young Timothy about revelation [Old Testament]:

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane [useless theories that do not honor God] and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

(2 Tim. 2:15)

Deinhardt (1995) has provided six questions that a Christian pastoral counsellor should consider before dispensing revelation “truth.”

- (1) To what degree are the findings of the natural sciences or nature “truth” or a form of general revelation given by God?**
- (2) To what degree are the findings of the “softer” social sciences, personal insights, as well as the theories of personality and psychotherapy “truth” or a form of general revelation given by God?**
- (3) To what degree are the findings of natural science or nature “truth” given by God in order to impact the soul’s saving knowledge of God?**
- (4) To what degree are the findings of the “softer” social sciences, personal insights, as well as the theories of personality and psychotherapy “truth” given by God in order to impact the soul’s saving knowledge of God?**
- (5) To what degree are the spectacles of special revelation plus the illumination of**

the Holy Spirit required for a person to accurately apprehend and apply those “truths” which are regarded as general revelation?

(6) To what degree are the special gifts or skills required for apprehending the “truths” of general revelation? (p. 52)

Deinhardt is especially critical of Christian pastoral counsellors who hold psychotherapy and psychology in high esteem but give little thought to administering Christian doctrine. These counsellors would not consider dispensing psychotherapy without the appropriate education and training but they feel that revelation is natural and easy and no special education is required. In the next chapter I consider Deinhardt’s concerns and those of J. Adams and others; they are questioning the legitimacy of using psychotherapy, as general revelation, with biblical special revelation in counselling. Is there such a concept as compromise with conviction?

Can general revelation be a bridge over which humankind comes to God? Is general revelation an appropriate concept in Christian pastoral counselling? Based on this analysis I believe that the answer must be a qualified and cautious yes. The transformation model supports clients’ belief systems in the journey to truth. When counsellors appreciate the importance of counsellees’ belief systems, counsellors meet counsellees at a very important station of discovery in the journey toward meaning.

chapter 4

SOME SERIOUS CONCERNS

Jesus' comments on wisdom may apply in this chapter. "And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). Is it possible to be so dogmatic, so doctrinally sure that one misses God's truth? I have selected Jay Adams because his writings present an uncompromising pro-biblical stance in counselling. This stance provides a standard to bring other views into sharper contrast. I examine his position for the use of the Bible in Christian counselling and for his opposition to psychotherapy.

Adams is adamant about the use of the Scriptures in Christian pastoral counselling. Adams (1986) states, "Paul pointed him [Timothy] to the Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone: . ." (p.11). The transformation model supports Adams' position as to the importance of Scriptures, but not his position for a narrow scriptural interpretation. The transformation model perceives the transformation process as facilitating clients' desires to change into the image of Christ. The Scriptures record the process. The Scriptures instruct Christian counsellors. The Scriptures are God breathed and administered through his representatives; Christian counsellors have the privilege of experiencing God at work (p. 10). Christian counselling, according to Adams, promotes the business of salvation; Scriptures have the power to make people wise about salvation. Therefore, Christian counsellors must enter into the biblical process for clients' benefit. Jesus modelled Christian teaching, conviction to God's purpose, sensitive correction, and disciplined training in righteousness. Clients, if not saved already, must be before edification begins.

Adams requires Christian counsellors to note the order for transformation to happen; the reverse order will not work. It is essential to evangelize first and to edify second. Adams writes, “You cannot build where there is no foundation” (p. 12).

Adams wants us to know that interpreting the Bible is not a magic act. Paul instructed Timothy to study the Word [Old Testament]. Adams (1986) provides the Greek definition for the Word study that Paul used:

4. The Greek word spoudazo [italics added by author] (II Tim. 2:15) translated “study” in the KJV and “do your best” in CCNT, means “to give Diligence.” It involves the idea of activity, in some contexts even carrying the meaning “to make haste.” Surely biblical [italics added by author] counseling calls for zealous, diligent effort. Understanding of Scriptures is not obtained by mystical means but by diligent study; a successful ministry of the Word does not happen magically but by zealous, careful use of the Scriptures. (p. 46)

For Christian pastoral counsellors this would require that the same diligence be given to both the New and the Old Testament. For example, Jesus said that He had come to fulfil what was written in the Old Testament, [Law and the Prophets] (Mt. 5:17). Clients and counsellors must learn together what that means for daily living. Transformation begins at a moment in time but continues for a lifetime. A Christian pastoral counsellor is not just another person with a different education. He, [or she], is called a person of God. Here is how Adams (1986) expresses this concept:

Again, the human and the divine must be paramount in our thinking. Human counselors addressing human problems tend to adopt humanistic approaches. But

II Timothy 3:16, 17 speaks of a counselor who does not counsel in his own wisdom or strength: he is called a “man of God.” That phrase, which Paul drew from the Old Testament, is used in the pastoral epistles for the minister of the Word. It speaks of him as a representative [italics added by author] of God. (p. 47)

Christian pastoral counsellors do not speak from their own wisdom. As representatives of God they speak His Words. For a Christian these words come from the Bible. Therefore, Adams is demanding that Christian counsellors speak these words to clients. Adams requires Christian counsellors to use Spiritual intelligence and he refers to Paul’s directions to Timothy as quoted above. Being a Christian only, does not qualify a counsellor to speak with biblical authority. The requirement is to be in the Spirit while ministering out of the Bible. Adams writes, “He, [the counsellor], cheats the counselee when he does anything less” (p. 47).

Adams has made the case that for him, The Scriptures are all that are necessary for counselling, but he does not leave it there. He also criticises psychotherapy.

Adams (1986) declares:

What we are talking about as Christians is change that goes far beyond minimal or incidental modifications in a person’s behavior. The superficial change offered by secular counselors will not do. Substantial change requires the Holy Spirit’s alteration of the heart, (one’s inner life known only to God and oneself). Outward changes of any significance must begin there. Anything less is an unbiblical and inadequate view of change. (p. xiii)

Adams’ footnote sharpens his position:

“Change affected by non-Christian counselors . . . dishonors God, either by adopting attitudes or actions contrary to His will or by outwardly, hypocritically conforming to His law without a changed heart [a form of Godliness that denies the power thereof]” (p. xiii).

Adams (1986) comments about these counsellors who dishonour God: “. . . in Rogerian fashion they are empty, with no word from God” (p. 47). Adams criticizes Christian eclectic counsellors who have given up spiritual intelligence for feeling-oriented counselling systems. Christian counsellors who have ascribe to Maslow’s focus on self have taken the focus off God and service to others. As for behaviourist such as “Skinnerians”, they do not differentiate between animals and people. Albert Ellis, Rational Emotive Therapy, comes under criticism for being so naive to believe that merely by making one’s thinking right, right actions will follow. Adams declares that the goal of Rogerian counselling is “autonomy” (p. 80). Adams decries this focus, allying Rogers’ philosophy with that of Eve’s philosophy in the Garden of Eden. Independence from God is precisely what she had in mind. Adams sees Rogers as perpetuating the myth that humankind can be independent of God. A conscious awareness of one’s mortality thwarts a secure sense of independence from God. For counsellors to advocate independence is to embrace a lie. God created humans to be dependent on Him. Adams declares, that if dependence is not on God it will be on other humans and this will not be helpful or healthy. The healthy relationship for humans is interdependence and that occurs when lifestyles include a dependence on God.

Adams gives an example of the difference in contents between psychotherapy and

biblical counselling. Following the theme of his criticism, Adams (1986) provides a satirical name for the client's psychologist in this mock case presentation. Frank, the client is having difficulty finding or keeping a job and so he has come for counselling.

"Frank, you tell me your problem is basic lack of self-esteem?"

"Right, Pastor; that's what my psychologist, Dr. Abe M. Slow, says. I am suffering from low self-esteem because of the way others have put me down over the years. There was my mother. . . ."

"I see. Well, tell me, where in the Bible do you find anything about needing high self-esteem to obey God's commandments to work?"

"Well . . . I don't know; but that's what Dr. Slow told me."

"Let's forget about what Dr. Slow said for a while and look at what God says instead. After all, God not Dr. Slow is the One Who made you; He should know something about what makes you tick, don't you think?"

"Well . . . yeah sure, but. . . ."

"Surely there is something wrong with Dr. Slow's teaching!"

Adams (1986) also is critical of John Dewey:

I am not advocating learning by, (emphasis added by author), doing but learning for, (emphasis added by author), doing; that is, learning for use. John Dewey, who taught learning by doing, was wrong. His optimistic, humanistic theology, which was akin to Carl Rogers, considered man good, and capable of determining the best choices for himself. Dewey did not believe in revelation or authoritative teaching.

The biblical method, learning for doing, requires Counselors and all Christian

teachers to teach “to observe”, (emphasis added by author), that is, to “obey” God’s Holy Word. (p. 84)

Adams (1986) declares, “Counselors of Rogerian and Freudian schools have not thought much about teaching methods, simply because they do not teach. As a result, many counselors who have been trained in those schools of thought know little about teaching aids”(p. 102). On the subject of confession versus acceptance, we continue in Adams’ critical mode: Adams (1986) states:

A failure to deal adequately with the past is the downfall of most counselling. If the people who campaign for unconditional “acceptance” have their way counselors will accept counselees nonjudgmentally, looking only on the positive side. Such an approach implicitly condones the very sin and guilt of which it should dispose. If the Freudians, and those swayed by Freudian views, have their way, catharsis will preempt confession as the way to spell relief from the pressure of guilt. If others prevail, they will stress the need to deal with the offenses toward men, but not toward God. (p. 151)

Adams takes the position that the Scriptures are sufficient for counselling and he lashes out at the complete inadequacy of psychotherapy. He makes his strong case for Scripture, and against psychotherapy. He despises the words “integration” and “eclectic.” For him these words proclaim an interdependence between the Scriptures and psychotherapy. This is anathema. I share Adams’ view to some extent. I note that the Scriptures are not just interested that humans have a philosophy of life; the philosophy was to be God centred. Jesus in Matthew 23 warns leaders of religion and, by implication, Christian counsellors to

get their priorities straight. What is it then that one needs to do to prevent this misrepresentation of God's will occurring in a counselling model? Humans organize their thought patterns into concepts based on their worldview. The Pharisees shaped their worldview on Mosaic law but that worldview seems to fall short of Jesus' perception of God's worldview and therefore what God expected from the religious leaders. The Pharisees seem to believe that the gold was more important than the temple. Jesus, on the other hand, shaped his worldview through His Father's eyes and saw things quite differently. The transformation model facilitates the process of living life on a vertical plain looking to God and on a horizontal plain interacting with others. Therefore, the purpose of this model will be to introduce and facilitate God's worldview as seen through my understanding of the life of Christ.

Adams (1986) makes clear that before any positive change can take place in the client the client must experience positive change toward God, [vertical plain] (p. 3). Dysfunctions in human behaviour originate from a person's disharmony with God. Bring a client into the proper relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, the dysfunction, [the severe deviation from what is considered functional], begins to disappear. This triangle of healthy relationships promotes communication on two plains, a horizontal and vertical plain. The horizontal plain represents, for example, the relationship between husband and wife on a purely human level. This couple could look to themselves for the intelligence and emotional balance, [emotional intelligence-Goleman (1998)], to see them through a crisis. If their own internal resources prove insufficient, they may go for counselling. But the couple still functions on a horizontal plain. For Adams this would include all secular,

[humanistic], schools of psychotherapy. Clients who seek help on the horizontal plain only miss the spiritual impetus that spurs transformation. According to Adams, Christian counsellors must conduct counselling on the vertical as well as the horizontal plain. On the vertical plain God acts within human relationships to bring them in harmony with His created purpose. God's intervention opens the channels of therapeutic communication for the married couple. While the couple interact with each other and the counsellor, God interacts with each person in the counselling session and others who may be involved but external to the session. Christian counsellors facilitate the process to keep open vertically and horizontally the channels of healthy communications

Adams believes that God heals in this manner. Every other attempt to heal is fraudulent. Adams (1986) writes, "External changes that do not follow an internal change of heart toward God always move a person further away from the Lord. So change that is socially good may be religiously evil" (p. 6). Simon the sorcerer (Ac. 8:18) was a new Christian who had received the Holy Spirit, but He had not yet taken the first steps in the transformation process. His encounter with Peter was the beginning of that process. Simon saw that He had to move away from his old thought patterns and, with the help of God, transform his thought patterns to embrace a Holy Spirit-filled life. The implication for Christian counselling requires clients to change their focus from self-absorption to self-sacrificing, in service to God and to others. This becomes possible when God holds relationships together in a healthy balance.

Above, I talked about disharmony with God, [dysfunction], and the importance of the horizontal and vertical plain of communication. Nowhere did I talk about sin,

repentance, forgiveness or restoration. Although not stated as such, it may have been implied, but is that enough exposure to biblical terminology in the counselling process? Would the client become familiar with God's way of salvation and sanctification if the counsellor does not use biblical terms? Adams (1986) states the following:

Expressing conclusions in biblical terminology is important. Few are likely to be convicted by conclusions such as, "Well, your problem seems to be neurosis," or, "At the bottom of these difficulties is a basic emotional problem," or, "You are suffering from a bad case of low self-esteem." None of these unbiblical terms, (which grow out of unbiblical constructs), describe sinful behavior or attitudes over which one should repent. Neither "neurosis" nor "emotional problems" or "low self-esteem" is a cause for conviction. How could you make out a case against one for having "emotional" difficulties? The very thought is absurd. (p. 120)

For Adams, psychological terms or euphemisms soften the significance of sinful behaviour. Effective therapy for sinful behaviour follows an understanding of the sin-nature of clients' dysfunctions. Adams (1986) gives us an example of how he would use the Scriptures in a counselling session:

You have been counseling with Ted, a Christian, who tells you of his "overwhelming desire" to fondle little girls. He claims that he cannot help it and that he has tried to stop, but this "desire, like a power greater than myself," as he puts it, just takes over before he realizes what he has done. And he maintains self-righteously the attitude that "since I can't help myself, it's not my fault."

Familiar with the words of Peter 4:1,2, you read them to him:

Since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with that thought, because whoever has suffered in the flesh has come to a parting of the ways with sin. As a result, it is now possible to live the remainder of your time in the flesh no longer following human desires, but following the will of God.

Peter's words, when pressed, explained, and applied to Ted's situation, put an end to his excuse making, convict him of sin, and bring him to repentance, including an eagerness to change. You would, therefore, do well to make a note of that passage, recording it this way: 1 Peter 4:1,2: to counter claim that desire is uncontrollable or overwhelming. But what if quoting the pertinent verse does not bring the counsellee to conviction? What if he protests, or argues that he is the exception? You may need to explain more fully the passage in 1 Peter 4 and show how the Holy Spirit intended it to apply to Ted's situation.

Ted: "But Pastor, you don't understand. I have a sort of special problem. This is an overwhelming desire that just takes over. I don't want it to; it just does."

Pastor: "Yes, I know your desire can be strong, especially when you have submitted to it for years. The Scriptures clearly indicate that one can become a slave to his desires: 'At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, and enslaved to various desires and pleasures. . . . but . . .' (Titus 3:3, 4a). Notice the 'but.' What Paul is saying to Titus—that in Christ the Christian has been emancipated from such slavery—Peter likewise is saying to you: through Christ's death you have been freed from the overwhelming power of sin. Christ has made it possible for you to turn away from enslaving desires and to do His will. You must believe that and come to

see that continued indulgence in your sinful desires can in no way be justified.

Sanctification takes place only in faith (Gal. 3:2-4). Perhaps you have tried to quit and failed. There are good reasons for failure other than saying that your case is an exception. God does not lie. He says it is now possible to free yourself from this sinful desire and practices that it entails. You must repent of that sin and call on Him to forgive you and give you the knowledge and power to refrain from it in the future. Once you do that, we will examine in detail why you are failing and what you must do instead to succeed. But first you must acknowledge that your behavior cannot be excused, that it is sin. That's where we must begin.” (p. 128)

In this case study Adams demonstrated how he used the Scriptures to convict a man of sin. Adams did not resort or even refer to psychotherapy. Adams' style of using the Scriptures in counselling seems to me to be too mechanical. Counsellors need only to instruct counselees to identify the sin in their lives, be accountable for that sin, take responsibility for repentance, and commence restorative action. This mechanical process could be handled in a “How-to-Manual.” Following this advice counselees begin the healing process. There would be no need for an I/Thou encounter with counsellors. Many such how-to-books have been written and, like Adams' counselling method, there is no quantitative analysis validating their success or failure. Useful as both methods may be, I believe clients require more. I believe clients want to enter in the transformation process with hope and excitement that manifests in social interaction. Counsellors achieve this environmental influence by sharing the mystery and amazement of God's intervention in the affairs of humanity. Admitting that we know little or nothing about first causes, I

believe we can bring back the mystery that is revealed in healing, in creation, in self-knowledge, in the knowledge of life and the conscious awareness of the process of dying. Jones (1963) explains the mystery. “More than this a man cannot do, for the transition between the statement, ‘I know what it means,’ and the confession, ‘In this truth I believe,’ is the mystery that marks the work of the Holy Spirit”(p. 132). Mystery creates an expectation that something exciting will be revealed. Knowledge about the Holy Spirit can help us appreciate the mystery and an expectation of intervention.

But this knowledge comes from human exposure to God’s Word which for me is the Scriptures. Adams (1986) expresses the point this way: That notion of “something more” must be abandoned, . . . Our problem is not that we do not have what we need in the Bible, but that we do not have enough of the Bible in us, which we need”(p. 32)! But Jones advises counsellors that Christian counselling is more than quoting memory verses from the Bible. Proper scriptural application requires knowledge of that application. If Bible-based counselling is to work, Bible precepts must be an integral part of counsellors’ lifestyle experience. As James tells us, “faith without works is dead (Ja. 2:17).” Notwithstanding, there are thoughtful concerns about the use of Holy Scripture in pastoral counselling. Jones (1963) recognized the dilemma:

Let us now see what is involved in an aesthetic participation in Scripture. As the reader, aware of the human dilemma in which he stands and the questions that permit no rest, attempts in his search for answer to enter into a meaning-relation with Scripture, the immediate problem is the specter of sixty-six separate books written over a long span of time by a plurality of authors on a plurality of themes.

How is it possible for one to enter into the world-view of the Bible? (p. 128)

Jones goes on to say that it is possible. He offers a soft, [versus exegesis], analysis of how this can be accomplished. Jones (1963) presents his worldview of the Scriptures through what he calls “a basic unity of the Bible”(p. 128). Unity embraces faith-orientation. Jones states that biblical writers described personal expressions of their theologies. Their theology demonstrated faith focused on God the creator and protector. Their writings restated their living experiences. This is precisely why the use of the Scriptures in the transformation model requires more than words, even Holy Words. Jesus modelled a “show and tell” of living vital and dynamic faith. Likewise, for Christian pastoral counsellors to be successful, they must tell Scriptures with their lives. John, the Gospel writer, puts it this way: “And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, . . .” It is my proposal that Christian pastoral counsellors are “living documents” of the Word Made Flesh. To explain this concept, Jones (1963) quotes B. W. Anderson’s comments in Rediscovering the Bible:

If we are to hear God’s Word spoken through the Bible to our situation today, our first task is to put ourselves within the world of the Bible. . . . We must live with the Bible until it becomes part of us, just as the actor identifies himself with the role that he plays. It is then, perhaps, that the Holy Spirit, breathing through the ancient words of the sacred page, will lead us to know that the “Word of the Lord” spoken by the prophets and embodied in Jesus Christ is actually the deepest interpretation of our own life situation and our world crisis in the twentieth century. (p. 132)

To be convincing about the validity or appropriateness of the Scriptures in

counselling requires, if not scientific verification, certainly verifiable standards. The philosophy, “any interpretation is as valid as any other” for scriptural interpretation nullifies scriptural use, and causes scriptural practice to be labelled as undisciplined and not suitable for counselling. This observation applies to the use of psychotherapy as well but the use of psychotherapy does not seem as contentious for counselling as the use of the Scriptures. Lack of contention may be because schools of psychotherapy give an academic posture and direction for counselling. Some literature maintained that less confusion occurs when those involved adhere to the scriptural purpose. Use the Scriptures for preaching and psychotherapy for counselling with no cross overs.

Lack of biblical standards in counselling application should cause concern within the Christian community. The divinity college I attended for a Master of Divinity degree did not prepare me adequately to use the Bible in pastoral counselling. In my second master’s degree in pastoral counselling, I learned about schools of psychotherapy but not how to use the Scriptures in counselling. What will it take to bring the study of the Scriptures for use in counselling to the same status as psychotherapy? Collins (1993) put the situation into perspective:

Those who practice psychology know their respective psychological schools and theories better than they do their systematic theology, with the result that they end up “integrating” a Sunday school training in theology with a graduate school training in psychology. No wonder such popular works tilt in favor of psychological concepts and phrases, notwithstanding the abundance of proof texts and Bible words. (p. 19)

For the transformation model to make a difference clients must grow beyond the “milk for food” stage of development. Collins (1993) provides a useful technical presentation:

Table 1.1

BASIC CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Bibliology:	the doctrine of Scripture
Theology Proper:	the doctrine of God
Paterology:	the doctrine of God the Father
Christology:	the doctrine of God the son
Pneumatology:	the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit
Anthropology:	the doctrine of the human beings
Hamartiology:	the doctrine of sin
Soteriology:	the doctrine of salvation
Ecclesiology:	the doctrine of the church
Angelology:	the doctrine of angels
Eschatology:	the doctrine of the future

In Christian counselling where the Scriptures are used, counsellors need to know a systematic theology and its application. For example, in this model systematic theology places Christ, as portrayed in the Gospels as the centre and main focus in the Scriptures. Christ is cofounder of creation and time, sustainer, and the final revelation. This begins the process of getting beyond some version of Sunday school snippets. The nonscientific categories, listed above, help prevent confusion in scriptural interpretation. The

theological classifications serve the same purpose as carefully prepared categories in any discipline. Like other counselling approaches, success in the transformation model depends on counsellors and clients engaging seriously the biblical concepts at psychological, spiritual and physical levels. For some authors in this field, [Adams for example], the Holy Scriptures present a cookbook for Christian counselling. Human beings are certainly mechanical in important physiological systems and subsystems, but they are far more. Humans possess a complex spiritual component; when this spiritual component suffers a mechanical application of the Scriptures, the counselling encounter renders biblical process useless and harmful.

Spiritual Intelligence, [allowing the Holy Spirit to manage intelligence], suggests the type of questions that Larry Crabb provides, Collins (1993):

. . . if God is interested in all of our struggles, maybe we could assume that the questions He [God] has answered in the Bible are the questions we would ask if we had the sense to ask the right questions. It becomes important, therefore, to see what questions God has answered in the Bible. Then we can develop a framework for thinking through the questions that we ask ourselves or that people ask us in counseling. The Bible answers questions like these:

- * What is God really like?**
- * Can God be trusted?**
- * Where did I come from?**
- * How does God guide?**
- * What are human beings really like?**

- * **Is God in control of situations?**
- * **What causes us to sin?**
- * **What makes sin attractive? (p. 33)**

I believe also that the Bible provides answers to relational questions:

- * **What was God's relationship with people - prophets, judges, kings?**
- * **What was Christ's relationship with people - disciples, pharisees, children?**
- * **What was Christ's relationship with His Heavenly Father?**
- * **What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit with people?**

Although one may be able to arrive at these latter questions from within the former, the latter question raises the level of contact from issue to personhood. The important question that draws the two sets of questions together is this: How does God deal with issues through the uniqueness of personhood? When we ask these and similar questions within the framework of a systematic theology, we start a semi-scientific process that lends credibility to pastoral Christian counselling and which also stresses the organic nature of humankind.

With clear biblical categories and a systematic theology counsellors know what questions to ask, but, how will counsellors know they have received the right answers? Counsellors won't know the correct answers, unless they understand the importance of the biblical context along with the effective use of exegesis. This technique, [exegesis], addresses what the writers of Holy Scripture meant. Otherwise, Christian counsellors are left with just an opinion; the technical term for this is eisogesis. When counsellors use Rogerian client-centred therapy, they read, observe and acknowledge the underlying

philosophy behind this kind of therapy. These counsellors require knowledge about how this Rogerian therapy began, why and what changes have been made to it over the years. I was asked recently by the director of a pastoral counselling centre what my thesis was about. In our conversation he explained to me that in his counselling practice he is “an orthodox Rogerian.” This pastoral Christian counsellor knew the Rogerian doctrine - orthodoxy, and how to practice this concept -- orthopraxy. Transformation counsellors exercise the same diligence. Counsellors know that no matter what psychotherapy model they identify with, they need to apply it inside their own context or worldview and knowledge base. Below, Collins (1993) outlines some established rules for meaningful interpretation. The Christian pastoral counsellor starts with Christ. All scriptural interpretation depends on Christ’s explication in the Gospels (Mt. 5:17).

Table 3:1

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLE INTERPRETATION

- 1. Observation: Start by asking what the text says,**
 - a. What does it say?**
 - b. Who was speaking, writing, being spoken to, or being spoken about?**
 - c. Where and when does this take place? (i.e., What are the circumstances?)**
 - d. Does the text tell us why this is reported?**
 - e. What form of speech is being used? (Is this part of a sermon, history, poetry, a parable, a letter, prophecy, a prayer, or some other format?)**
- 2. Interpretation: Continue by asking what the text means.**
 - a. What type of literature is in this text?**

*** Remember that passages that give direct teaching (didactic passages) take precedence over non-didactic passages when we are developing doctrine or life principles.**

b. What is the context of the passage?

*** The literary context: How does this text fit into the sentences, verses, and chapters that surround it?**

*** The historical context: What was going on in history when this was written, and who does this influence [what] was written?**

*** The cultural context: What do we know about the culture and customs at the time when this passage was written?**

*** The geographical context: Do we know where this passage was written or where the events described took place?**

*** The theological context: Assuming that God revealed Himself slowly over the years, where does this passage fit in to the overall flow of Scripture?**

How is this text made clearer by other, parallel biblical texts?

What do Bible commentaries and other resources say that will help clarify the meaning?

3. Application: Conclude by asking how the text can be applied.

a. Is there an example here for me to follow?

b. Is there a sin to avoid?

c. Is there a promise that can apply to me?

d. Is there a prayer to repeat?

e. Is there a command to obey?

f. Is there a condition to meet?

g. Is there an error to avoid?

h. Is there a challenge to face?

i. Is there something here that I should memorize? (pp. 45-46)

To these principles, I would emphasise the importance of noting relationships, [those of Jesus and others]. But however it is said, if the Scriptures are to be used in counselling, counsellors must be familiar with the Scriptures. In the next chapter the case study demonstrates how my pre-transformation-model counselling method could be viewed as rigid and insensitive to the clients perceived needs. The counsellor may have known the Scriptures but not how to apply them therapeutically.

chapter 5

CASE STUDY

This case study is a composite and does not represent an actual person or actual event in my counselling experience. It does however represent my previous counselling style and reveals a lack of sensitivity to clients' needs. In this case study, John, [client], believes in God and, from his own testimony, John lives according to the dictates of his beliefs. He knew this because God had truly blessed him, until a recent event destroyed the life he knew. A car accident claimed the lives of his family and left him physically disabled. The use of a wheelchair allows him mobility. I was asked by his friends if I would contact him and invite him for counselling. His friends felt that John's grief process had led to depression.

John accepted my invitation. The following dialogue took place over a period of four weeks. This session took place prior to the development of the "transformation model" that I describe in subsequent chapters.

[Counsellor = Bob = B: Client = John = J]

1ST session.

1B1: Good morning John, I am glad that you decided to see me.

1J1: To be honest with you, Bob, I do not believe I am in need of your help. I am only here at the urging of my friends. You know that a serious car accident robbed me of my family and my health and I am simply grieving.

1B2: Thank you for being up front with me. I respect the need and your right to grieve. Would you share with me what you have been experiencing since the tragedy? It

has been how long now?

- 1J2: As of yesterday it was one year. I feel the loss greater now than I did at the time of the accident. I am angry that I have been robbed by God and for no reason.**
- 1B3: So you are angry at God?**
- 1J3: Yes, I am. I have always believed, as a Christian, that God blesses those who walk in obedience to the teachings of Christ. I have done this all of my life.**
- 1B4: You are still in obedience to God and I sense that you do not know why God has allowed this to happen to you.**
- 1J4: Yes. Not only that, I believe God takes great pleasure in rubbing salt into my wound.**
- 1B5: How is God doing that?**
- 1J5: He does this by allowing me to live, and to live disabled so that I will always be reminded of His unwarranted punishment.**
- 1B6: Do I understand that you feel you are a victim of God's sadistic humour?**
- 1J6: Yes, you have put that well. You have captured my feelings accurately; nevertheless, I sense that you are mocking me.**
- 1B7: In what way?**
- 1J7: I was told by my friends that you would never agree with my thoughts about God. You believe God is too loving, too merciful, and compassionate to visit harm upon His children.**
- 1B8: I do have my own theology but if you don't mind I would prefer to listen to you without forming any judgments.**

1J8: We will see how long that will last.

1B9: John, I feel your anger. Would you share what is behind that anger?

1J9: Yes, I am angry. My theology conditioned me to have expectations about my relationship with God. Quite frankly, those expectations were dashed.

I am lonely and bitter. I am also fearful that I lack understanding about who God is and what kind of relationship with Him is possible.

1B10: Do I hear you saying that because of what has happened to you, your theology, which is very important to your identity, is now in doubt? Are you questioning your purpose in life?

1J10: Yes, but I want to make it perfectly clear that I still consider myself Christian and not a heretic.

1B11: I am not clear; what is Christian about blaming God for your situation?

1J11: Would you rather I blame Satan?

1B12: I suppose that is what I mean.

1J12: Would you not agree that even Satan is not allowed to hurt God's children unless God allows it?

1B13: Do I understand you to say that it could have been Satan, but nothing is done without God's knowledge?

1J13: Yes, but I would prefer not to talk about my theology. I am grieving and I would like you to pay me the courtesy of listening.

1B14: I can do that.

1J14: I do not feel that there is any purpose for me in life. All that I lived for and valued

is dead. My health has deteriorated and my friends would rather refer me to a therapist than empathize.

1B15: Please go on.

1J15: I am not ashamed, nor do I consider it prideful to profess my innocence. To be sure, this punishment is not for my sins but is out of malice. I have every right to be angry and I will not be pacified by a psalm or verses of Scripture.

1B16: Our time is up. Will you come back next Tuesday at this same time?

1J16: Yes I will.

1B17: Thank you.

2nd session.

2B1: Good morning John.

2J1: Good morning Bob.

2B2: How have you been since we last met?

2J2: I would like to say that my lot in life has improved, but I would be lying.

2B3: John, today I want to just listen to you. I sense that you have not come to this emotional state easily. I feel that God means a great deal to you and for you to say the things you have I suspect would be difficult.

2J3: I apologize for my attitude last week. My own issue is so much on my mind that I did not guard my tongue.

2B4: I accept your apology.

2J4: Thank you. You spoke about it not being easy for me to blame God. In one sense you are right; I never thought that those words would ever enter my mind let alone

come from my lips. In another sense, however, you are mistaken. I have examined my life and reflected on how I have treated others. I have reflected on how generous I have been with my funds. In all of this I have not sinned against God and for him to exercise His great power to mistreat me is just too much for me to understand and accept.

2B5: Am I to understand John that you feel God is not justified in what He has done or at least what He has allowed to take place?

2J5: Yes. If it was possible to add an insult to injury, God has done that to me. For in treating me like this He has taken my theology and shot it full of holes.

2B6: Could you explain?

2J6: My reading of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament reveals to me that God honours those who honour Him. God's covenants with the Children of Israel always stressed that if people would obey His teachings they would be blessed and find their peace in Him. Tell me Bob, do I look as if I am blessed? Do I look to you to be at peace?

2B7: No.

2J7: For fifty-five years I have been faithful to God and He has blessed me. I cannot understand what is going on now. If I believed that suicide was acceptable to God I would be dead right now. What good is there in only being partially alive?

2B8: Then, you still believe in God?

2J8: Yes I do, but I cannot seem to get out of my mind what I consider to be this great injustice. It would be so much easier to be dead; then I could dialogue with God

face to face.

2B9: If you could dialogue with God face to face as you put it, what would this accomplish?

2J9: Well, it would certainly strengthen my faith, and I could bring the evidence of my life before Him. Then, unless I missed something, He would be obliged to apologize and to reinstate my deserved blessings.

2B10: Is it my understanding John, that the success you experienced in life was deserved by you because of your righteousness?

2J10: Just by the way you say that I can't help but feel you see me as arrogant. Is it arrogant to expect God to fulfil His promises? Is it arrogant to explain how I determinedly sacrificed my life in obedience to God? Is it arrogant to expect God to be fair? Is it arrogant to expect someone just to listen to me? Is it arrogant for me to expect someone to feel some sympathy for me, maybe even to empathize a little?

2B11: John, how are you feeling right now?

2J11: I am feeling hurt; I am feeling angry and I am feeling frustrated with you because I sense that you are arrogant. I sense that you are just waiting for an appropriate time-lapse before you fix me with your superior theology. Bob, I am not stupid.

2B12: Thank you for being honest with me. You have shared your feelings about this process. Now can I explain my position?

2J12: Go ahead.

2B13: I do not believe that your theology is the only right theology or that it is right at all. If there were part of your speech that I find arrogant, it is what seems to be your

perfect fix on whom God is. You know exactly how He should act. How anyone can be this sure about God is beyond me. What I would like to do, John, is to challenge your theology. I do not believe my theology is superior, just different. Perhaps by discussing our respective theologies in more detail we can help each other. In our next session would you be agreeable to this?

2J13: Yes I agree; my theology can stand any challenge. Perhaps God will speak through you to give me great insight!

2B14: Okay next week then. . .

3RD session.

3B1: Come in John it's good to see you again.

3J1: Same here.

3B2: What has this week been like for you?

3J2: In a way it has been different.

3B3: How?

3J3: Well, since coming to you I have had to take my mind off of my own problems and focus on you. You and your "I will fix you attitude," provoked me and I am more determined than ever to defend my faith in God.

3B4: I am not here to challenge your faith in God. I merely want to explore another perspective on faith with you. I cannot believe mortals can think that they have the market cornered on faith.

3J4: I did not say I had the market cornered on faith. What I said was that this faith that I have held on to for all of my life has not failed me. I have internalized its

precepts as I understand them from Scripture. Is this wrong?

3B5: You mean until now?

3J5: It has not failed me now either. I am hurt. I have lost by fortune and my family. I, myself, am severely injured. I have been clobbered by the Lord and I don't understand. Oh sure, I could say, "My life is in the Lord's hands and He can do what He likes and it will be all right." I am sorry but that is not good enough for me. God is a rational being. He believes in cause and effect. This is obvious or we would not exist.

3B6: Can I ask you a question?

3J6: Yes.

3B7: Why do bad things happen to good people?

3J7: How do you know that bad things happen to good people? How do you know what constitutes good in God's eyes?

3B8: Well, John, you came to me complaining that God has done you great harm; you confessed your innocence; you queried how such a tragedy could happen to someone who has never offended God. To suggest that you are innocent is to admit that you know what God knows. Is that not so?

3J8: Yes. I am sorry. I have suffered such a tragedy and I just wanted to vent.

But you did not let me sour in my own milk and I appreciate that. Where can I go from here?

3B9: I don't have an easy answer. Please allow me to pray about it. We can discuss it next time we meet.

3J9: I will do the same and I look forward to that. I have a feeling it will be the last time that we will need to meet.

3B10: I am of the same mind. It has been a great honour to have had this opportunity to dialogue with you. I look forward to our last visit.

4TH session.

4B1: Good morning John.

4J1: Good morning Bob.

4B2: I must admit that I feel chastised; I arrogantly pushed my own agenda because I honestly believed that my spiritual model of counselling would achieve great therapeutic results. I felt that you were stuck in a rut of self-pity and needed to be jolted into the happy reality of the Holy Spirit.

4J2: I appreciate your attempt to make God front and centre of your psychotherapy; I do not fault your model; if I have a criticism, it is that you did not seem to reach out to the pain I was feeling. I had an immediate need. I felt that you allowed your cultural framework of what it means to be a man to get in the way. Bob, men do have feelings and real men do cry.

4B3: It would seem so. There is more. In retrospect, I believe that I was not so interested in where you are, as to where I wanted you to go: mourn yes, but then move on. Live life in the present to be ready for the future. Don't waste the present by constantly revisiting the past. This serves to ruin the present and the future. I had, I guess, already decided that you had mourned your loss long enough. So I imposed my agenda and I was not present for you. I apologize.

4J3: You did help. It is true I am still in mourning and may be for a long time. It is true that I got to the point where I was losing control. My self-pity was making me bitter and this, in turn, was driving away my friends. Getting me to come to you, I believe, was their last ditch effort to help me.

4B4: It is a privilege to have such friends.

4J4: Yes it is.

4B5: Thank you for coming and if you need someone to listen to you, and I mean it this time, please give me a call.

4J5: Thanks Bob.

Review of Case Study

The next chapter discusses the transformation model and how it might have helped me in the counselling sessions I had with John. But now, I analyse my style of counselling.

I started the counselling session by giving John permission to grieve [1B2].

I acknowledged to myself that John had a right to grieve but I had also determined that John should get on with his life. Therefore, in our dialogue, I did not treat him as a person who was grieving. What do I mean by that? I have learned since that case study that some people who grieve are not able to respond in the manner I expect. Even though I knew John had been referred to me because he was perceived by his friends to be stalled in the grieving process, I wanted to conduct the counselling sessions rationally; think through the problem, and together with the client start the healing process. I have learned that when some people grieve their minds and emotions have been turned dramatically in on themselves. They become self-centred; hurt and personal losses dominate their focus; all other situations and discussions are filtered through this emotional mine-field.

In the case study I seemed insensitive to John's sensibilities. For me, [the counsellor], grieving seemed a weakness that had to be overcome. John attempted to bring me on side but with little success. John shared his feelings with me but I perceived these feelings as a nuisance, something to come to grips with quickly. I wanted to appear to be using the Rogerian approach, i.e., reflective listening [1B3], and it seemed to be going well. In review, I may have accomplished more by being attentive to John's story and by not interrupting him. Not too far into the session I switched from a Rogerian reflective listening to directive counselling, even arguing with the client over his statement about still

being Christian while doubting God's actions [1B11]. I replied, "I am not clear; what is Christian about blaming God for your situation?" I seemed to have a need to defend God or Christianity; finally, John begged me to stop the theology debate and just listen [1J13]. I closed the session soon after that because I sensed there would be no benefit in continuing.

In the second session John apologized for his attitude in the previous session [2J3]. He had been angry and had directed that anger at me. In retrospect, he had reason to be angry. I frustrated John's attempt to share his grief. I prevented John's opportunity for self-expression at the point when John needed to justify his feelings about God and Christianity. I began, [perhaps in technique but not in motive], being client-centred and soon became issue centred, forgetting John as a person. I reverted to my dominant counselling style, in spite of an effort to do otherwise. I saw John through the issue rather than seeing the issue with John.

I was not aware just how this counselling style precluded therapy. I viewed everything from building a house to counselling a person as a project to be finished. There was no apparent differentiation. John needed the counsellor to listen to his feelings. John had just expressed to me that he felt so emotionally low at the time that suicide seemed a good alternative to living [2J7]. John continued that he then wanted to face God and demand a fair hearing. John was telling me about his feelings of depression and I totally ignored his feelings; instead, I selected the words from John's monologue that fitted into my agenda for the session. I reverted to my theology agenda: [2B8] "Then you still believe in God?"

Why did I do that? It seemed that my agenda, consciously or unconsciously, required that John have his relationship with Christ restored so healing could commence. I prejudged sad feelings as wallowing in self-pity. I, and John's friends, thought John had already been grieving too long. I wanted a "fix" on John's grief stage to be able to move him out of it. I was impatient with John's progress. I needed to learn that people are not robots that can be switched on to fast-forward. I needed to learn that all people, including those who request counselling, need validation in their journey. They need to know that where they are is okay. When they are ready to move on, they need to know that the counsellor will be happy to facilitate that process. In review, I believe I was attempting to push John to health. John helped me with this truth; this may be an understatement when you review his remark at [2Jll], "I am feeling hurt: I am feeling angry and I am feeling frustrated with you because I sense your arrogance. I sense that you are just waiting for an appropriate time to elapse before you fix me with your superior theology. Bob, I am not stupid." To make matters worse, I attempted to justify my position. Once again, the session ended on an unhappy note. I intentionally set up the third session, it appears to replicate my mistakes.

In the third session, after some "feel at home" talk, I got right into it again. John's response [3J8] suggests that my objective to get him out of his grief-rut paid off. This session was short but served to bring closure. We agreed to pray about this situation[3B9 & 3J9]. This is probably the closest I came to what John wanted to achieve. In the fourth session John and I levelled with each other. In [4B2] I talked about presenting a spirit focussed counselling model. Instead, I argued theology. As far as seeing John as a valued

person with a hurting spirit, I missed my opportunity. My intentions were to jolt John back into the reality of the living, a full life in the Holy Spirit; presumably, I would do this without the help of the Holy Spirit. In [4J2], John recognizes my attempt; he points out that my cultural bias that strong men don't cry or feel sorry for themselves overshadowed my desire to be present with him in his feelings. In [4B3] I shared with John my perspective on grief. My message was clear; no matter the loss experienced, the client should be able to get over sad feelings and get on with being happy. This message sounded harsh and probably was. What I believe to be behind such an approach to counselling is my core belief that is both cultural and theological. I believe that one should grieve for a short period and then turn it over to God for healing. Periodically, one may relapse, but the prevailing behavioural pattern points to well-being. I believe the sorrow should dissipate, but I have learned that sensitivity and patience determine the process.

John, in [4J3], states that he presented as being out of control in his grief and that the first three counselling sessions helped. He informs me that he is still grieving and will be for some time but that he needed to revisit his situation from a different perspective. If the counselling accomplished anything, maybe that was it. But I believe much more may have been accomplished. I feel that I missed an opportunity to share with John at a very personal level. At no time did I ask John about his wife, his children, or even his own injury. Even as John poured out his litany of woes I seemed to have no interest in exploring John's memories of his family. I demonstrated a lack of interest in exploring John's feelings about the permanent injuries John had sustained. I did not discuss with John how he was adjusting to all the unwanted, [and unwarranted], changes that had

suddenly overtaken him. This was said before but needs repeating. I did not seem interested in John, the person. Some would agree, to my credit, that I did not quote Scriptures at the client, at least overtly. However, the Scriptures were certainly foundational in my thought process. Therefore, whether the counsellor quoted Scripture or just implied it matters little. I had a responsibility to make sure, to the best of my ability, that the Scriptures were used correctly. In the next chapter I discuss the model under development. Within the transformation model there will be safeguards to prevent misapplication of Scripture and a conscious effort toward a spirit-filled sensitivity in the healing process.

chapter 6

TOWARD A TRANSFORMATION MODEL

The case study occurred before I began the developmental process toward a transformation model. Now that I have spent time with the model, I will compare the less structured counselling method with the model in progress. This model demonstrates Christ's love for clients so that they may garner hope for their lives. The objective is to define a moment in time when clients realize they are not alone in their difficulties. God does not expect them to address the issues of life without His help. With God the Creator, clients become creative in restoring order to their chaos. Jones (1963) makes the point:

Love is the motive for existence and action; beauty is its goal and completion. . . .

Love is the yearning for the completion of all things; beauty is its realization.

Creation is through love for love; love is through Creation for Incarnation; and

Incarnation is through love for transfiguration. . . . putting off the old nature and

putting on the new . . . Man by nature is a creator, and in his Divinely intended

craving to create he will either elevate himself to self-defeating divinity, or serve in

loving response the God of Creation who calls him to copartnership. –Francois

Fenelon [1651-1715] (pp. 253-254)

Those persons baptised into Christ by the Holy Spirit are becoming Christlike through the work of the Holy Spirit. This process allows Christians to grow into their spiritual birthright, the birthright presented to believers by Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. The transformation model becomes the framework and substance for encouraging creativity within clients toward restoration. God the Creator plants the seed

of holistic creativity within humans so humans can become the light that penetrates the darkness of sin: low self-esteem, depression and other maladaptive behaviour. This kind of Christian engages in the creativity of his creator. This creative energy motivates and empowers humans to transcend themselves: “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isa 40:31).

Walsh (1993) provides an overview of therapeutic models used in family therapy that will also guide the transformation process. The models suggest standards for normal family functioning. Normalcy remains an elusive concept; culture, religion, and family of origin all contribute to the dynamic of living. Models therefore cannot be mechanical; flexible family functioning defines normalcy. Functional normalcy varies with each family so that standards must be able to accommodate that reality. The transformation model theorizes that Christians’ psychological and physical well-being functions adaptively within spiritual health. This model maintains that Christian living is a process of becoming our potential in Christ. This likeness to Christ refers to a spiritual awareness of God’s will and the desire to transform human behaviour so that life is consciously experienced in relation to God.

As process, the picture of normality changes over time. For example, new Christians respond to life differently than more mature Christians. Therefore, normalcy depends on when the snapshot displays the social functioning of individuals. In the transformation model, the Bible helps with the assessment of the stages within the functioning lifestyle of clients. Family therapy models promote therapeutic goals. Goals of

therapy seek to help individuals and families to better function. Goals can be set by counsellors, by clients, or in agreement between counsellors and clients. The content of the goals and the process of achieving the goals varies with the needs of the individual who is seeking help. The goal of the transformation model helps Christians to understand how to live the Christian life in and through life's difficulties. For example, a new Christian in a non-Christian family may be a major contributor to disruption in the historical functioning norm of the family. The role-change of a family member does not cause dysfunctional behaviour in a family; dysfunctions result from an inflexible response to change. A severely affected response to disruption causes individuals and families to malfunction. Prolonged malfunctioning may contribute to family breakup or serious psychological and physical wounds. The transformation model endeavours to assess the effects of disruption from within a scriptural context:

"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies will be the members of his own household'" (Mt. 10:34-36). The transformation model expects the possibility of this kind of family disruption and employs a method for counsellors to work therapeutically with the affected response. Therefore, the hypothesis states that if an occurrence agrees with a biblical prophecy then this reality becomes part of the healing process. The following scriptural precepts form the protocol for the transformation model.

Protocol.

(a) Theory:

Even, everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him/[her] for My glory, I have formed him/[her]; Yea. I have made him/[her] (Isa. 43:7).

The transformation model acknowledges God as Creator of all that exists. The hypothetical imperative states that Holy Scriptures describe lifestyles that harmonize with God's purpose for humanity. The Bible also describes lifestyles that thwart God's purpose to bring glory to Himself. The sense of well-being for humans comes when they identify with God's purpose for their lives. Counsellors using the transformation model empower clients to experience God's purpose and to expect to experience peace of mind.

Counsellors help clients adapt to a life that brings glory to God. In the case study in chapter 5, the counsellor lacked the vision to accomplish this objective. It is God who has declared each person's purpose, not the counsellor. John shared that he had been blessed; the blessing seemed more temporal, [material] than spiritual, more a reward for good living than an experience of spiritual maturity. Blessings come as clients sense an eternal relationship with God, when they feel the felt presence of God's Grace. Jones (1963) presents Augustine's position: "O Lord, Thou has made us for Thyself, and we are restless until we find our rest in Thee" (p. 170).

(b) Objective:

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint (Isa. 40:31).

Christians wait upon the Lord by placing themselves in meditative discipline where

they train to hear God's words. For those who are doers, it may be difficult to wait patiently for God's answer. When the waiting is done well, strength and vision are renewed. In the case study in chapter 5, John and the counsellor needed to wait upon the Lord. The Bible encourages us to do this through prayer and meditation. This combination serves two purposes at least: (a) God knows clients' needs and how to meet those needs; (b) answered prayer depends on God's timing. Clients and counsellors who wait meditatively upon the Lord recognize the answer when they receive it because God has prepared them to hear and understand the requirements that meet their needs.

Human beings are aware of feelings and the processing of their thoughts but seldom are they aware of God's answer. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit prays on our behalf for we know not what to pray for (Rom. 8:26). Two pray when a person prays: the person and the Holy Spirit. Waiting upon the Lord, clients and counsellors receive the right answers in the fulness of God's time. With John, [case client], the counsellor alluded to praying but apparently did not understand the significance of this concept and therefore was unable to instruct John as to what can be expected from prayer. The counsellor prevented an atmosphere where bathing each other in prayer could take place. This resulted in neither the counsellor nor client benefiting from renewed strength. John observed that the counsellor came to the counselling session with his version of "right" theology. This arrogance precluded sharing God's infinite grace.

(c) Attitude:

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of

righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa. 61:10)

Our world's social system thrives on relationships. Healthy relationships create feelings of well-being. Attitude, manifested through behaviour, determines the health of relationships, with God and with others. Individuals' attitudes change in response to other's attitudes towards them. This includes their perception of God's attitude to them. Other's response to our attitude serves to monitor the relational qualities of that attitude. Counsellors must be aware of their own attitudes, the attributes and the negative elements. Clients too may need help understanding the attitudes that have brought them to counsellors. Often clients and counsellors are on "automatic pilot," with a programmed response to communication directed at them. The transformation model advocates that clients learn to develop and maintain constructive attitudes: constructive for oneself and others. John experienced, by his own testimony, the counsellor's attitude as self-righteous and legalistic. Whether or not the counsellor believed this about himself mattered little in the client's perception. The issue revolves around the client's perception. In the case study, communications broke down because the client perceived the counsellor's attitude to be hostile.

The transformation model encourages counsellors to be comfortable in their faith so that they can be present for the client. The counsellor, in the case study, was not present for John. The Bible tells us that in Heaven the children of God rejoiced in His presence (Rv. 4:11). Spirit-filled Christians feel God's presence at all times. An attitude of rejoicing, a happy optimistic spirit, not meaningless joking, refresh the counselling atmosphere. The

spirit of rejoicing reminds both the client and counsellor that they are not alone in this healing process. In the case study the counsellor's attitude with John did not allow for the creation of an environment of rejoicing. The counsellor's strategy ignored God's presence. John's counsellor seemed inhospitable to John and their unseen Guest.

(d) Motivation:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (Jn. 3:16).

The Bible says much about love as a motivator. When love no longer exists in relationships, healthy relationships no longer exist. The absence of a self-love, [the Bible's suggestion to love others as you love yourself (Mt. 22:39)], manifests, in the client's behaviour, the lack of motivational stimuli to empower a healing process; this carries over into relationships. The transforming model is built on the need to know, understand and to do therapeutic, sacrificial love. The model suggests that once this kind of love is appropriated and internalized, it becomes strong motivation in lives to propel them to fulness of life.

God's love for humanity motivated His creativity to full measure; He held nothing back in His efforts to redeem humankind. Christ modelled this sacrificial giving by becoming the lamb for the slaughter following the principle that where there is no shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin (Heb.9:22). The only love that will give to this extent is unconditional love. In the transformation model counsellors demonstrate this by focussing on a client's potential and not on the pathology; these counsellors focus on the god-person across from them and not a machine to be fixed; these counsellors come along

side clients, to accompany clients so they will not have to walk alone. The counsellor, in the case study, needs to share with John the motivational power of “agape” love.

(e) Invitation:

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

(Mt. 11:28-30)

The transformation model requires clients to accept Christ’s invitation. The model operates on the principle that a person cannot have a harmonized relationship with God outside of Christ. The process of becoming what is possible must begin by learning what that means. I used the King James’ version of the Bible to bring out the idea of a yoke. The metaphor denotes two oxen plowing in a field. The yoke,[a piece of wood shaped to go over the necks of two oxen to equalize the pull-weight of the plow], is well made and, with the oxen properly teamed, they will pull together, sharing the burden and making the load lighter. When clients invite Christ to join them in sharing the burden, they become “unequally yoked”, with a much greater power. Nevertheless, Christ is always in step with clients while sharing proportionately more of the client’s difficulties. This concept of invitation provides an atmosphere of hospitality. Transformation counsellors extend the right hand of fellowship. They invite clients to tell their story. Transformation counsellors help clients accept and understand God’s spiritual gifts. These counsellors help clients to apprehend the Spirit’s power to make the burdens lighter. John, the client in the case study, did not experience the counsellor’s office as hospitable. The counsellor offered John

an argument when he should have provided an open invitation for both himself and John to discover together how the Holy Spirit intervenes to lighten very heavy burdens. Both the counsellor and client needed to understand what it means to accept Christ's invitation. The transformation model reminds counsellors of that focus.

(f) The contact:

And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. (Mt. 9:20-21)

Few words described this healing. Yet such a miracle required much preparation.

(1) The recognition that healing is required. Her need was obvious. Sometimes in cases of spiritual and psychological wounds, clients may not be able to interpret the symptoms.

Therefore, the first step to the cure is the recognition of the need for healing.

(2) I want to be healed. Healing will not commence until clients make this decision. Clients exercise the will power to seek healing. The question may be asked, Why would a person not want to seek healing? Often the pathology meets a need in clients' lives and without it clients may think they will be unable to cope with life. The question that needs answering is this; How will the healing meet the need that a malady serves? One patient blamed her attention deficit disorder for all her problems. To be healed meant that she take ownership of her life and accept responsibility for her behaviour. It also meant separation from the familiar comfort of her disability, the grieving implied in the "letting go", and the search for and acceptance of new, replacement behaviours. She refused to do this. She perceived difficulty exchanging dependency on others for interdependency. She convinced herself

that her coping preference for playing the role of victim met her needs.

(3) I know who can heal me. Only God heals. Often He heals without receiving thanks.

The model suggests that the obvious malady may be healed but this is the first step to wholeness. The wholeness process begins when Christ responds to the clients' invitations to come into their hearts to begin the spiritual pilgrimage. Christ healing is a process; to know this is essential to wholeness: spiritual, emotional and physical.

(4) I will go to Him. The client moves toward the health objective. What does it mean to go to Christ for healing? Like the woman with the issue of blood, the client needs to go where healing can be found: Christian support groups, church, or "where two or three are gathered together in My Name I will be with them." (Mt. 18:20)

(5) She comes into the presence of Christ. How do clients go where Jesus is before they die? Clients require Christ's presence if they reach out and touch the hem of His garment. But how is that done? Christ is Spirit and absent physically. It is done in spirit. Our spirit reaches out to His Spirit to touch the fringe of His spiritual garment. The model teaches that prayer and meditation provide a pathway.

(6) The woman with the blood issue prays specifically. It is at this point where we see how important clients' belief systems are. The transformation model requires counsellors to identify with clients' belief systems. Affirmation of the clients' faith empowers clients to follow through with their intentions. Belief systems tell clients things about God, and to the extent clients believe, they act on it. This woman told herself and God that if she could only get close enough to touch Jesus' garment she would be healed. What she told herself about God and her relationship with God, she believed. "I know He will heal me."

(7) She receives her answer. “Daughter, be of good comfort, your faith has made you whole.” Contact occurs when clients feel that counsellors hear the meta-message, which is to say, when counsellors reflect back feelings and an understanding that underlays the clients’ narratives. Contact takes place when counsellors hear clients on many levels, verbal and nonverbal. John, the client in the case study, and the counsellor never made contact at a therapeutic level. The counsellor conducted the counselling sessions as if they were sparring sessions. The transformation model helps counsellors make appropriate contact with a constant reminder of the purpose of their special relationship in the Spirit.

(g) Assurance:

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses (Mt. 8:17).

Does Jesus always heal? The model answers “yes” to that question. The belief that undergirds the transformation model states that all healing took place on the cross. Sickness, death and sin no longer have victory over human beings. The supreme price was paid one time, for all time, and for all people. How that event is perceived has everything to do with the human’s perception of God. This raises the question: Can humans grasp that assurance through a nurtured faith to fortify them in the healing process?

What does this mean for counsellors working with the transformation model in the area of assurance? Counsellors will come humbly to the session knowing that God’s assurance is received and unmerited. This assurance provides peace of mind. Clients and counsellors discover together what that means. Counsellors seek to share God’s gift with clients. Clients need to know that no matter how horrendous their stories sound, they will

be accepted and valued and provided the assurance that God has promised forgiveness, [healing]. John, the client in the case study, felt angry, disappointed and rejected by God. John needed to hear that it is okay to be angry with God. God made us. He understands that emotion. Counsellors who embrace the transformation model would assume that God can look after Himself, [no need for counsellor's defence]. Counsellors function to help clients restore their sense of assurance that God looks after their needs. Christian counsellors possess a wonderful opportunity to help clients feel God's presence in the time of their difficulties. John's counsellor may have been more helpful had he facilitated the process of discovering the meaning of this assurance that Christ took on our infirmities.

(h) Healing:

... Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole (Mt. 9:22).

What does it mean to be healed? The model supports the idea that healing is a process; therefore, it is not a one-time event. Nevertheless, the healing transaction that begins this important process is significant. The process begins with Christ, through his work on the cross. He departed this earth so that the Holy Spirit would be present in this world in a new way. The Spirit on invitation dwells within each person. The person of the Holy Spirit helps humans realize the potential within them for new beginnings toward an abundant life. Her faith in God started the process to make her whole. She had the faith before she came to Jesus. Likewise, Christian clients are wrapped in this faith when they come for counselling. The healing process waits to be released. The transformation model provides the opportunity for healing to commence at the time of the initial counselling session. Both clients and counsellors in this model come to the counselling session expecting God to heal.

The process of discovery seeks to understand God's intervention. The counsellor in the case study inadequately prepared for the experience of God's healing process. It seemed to John, the case study client, that the counsellor experienced John broken, and would fix him. The counsellor did not support the client's faith in playing a part in the healing. The counsellor appeared to feel himself capable of healing John. Instead of helping John unwrap his faith in a safe environment, the counsellor openly challenged John. John was gracious in suggesting that the counsellor's aggressive challenge stimulated his own determination to hold firm in his faith in God. The transformation model uses extreme caution in the exercise of confrontation as a therapeutic stimulant.

(i) Transformation:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

(Rom. 12:1&2)

Another name for this model is the transforming model. The process begins when clients consciously return to the Creator, the power source that facilitates the clients' movement toward their potential. Transforming is a lifetime pursuit. At this stage the guidelines for life are laid out. Clients sense a "felt sense" of energy and freedom to move beyond the limitation of previous responses to life's experience. Tapping their potential creates new patterns for functioning. Paul expands Jesus' idea that spiritual birth begins a process paralleling physical growth. Paul, in other verses, describes how the child of God,

[all ages], requires the milk of the Spirit, but maturity requires the meat of the Spirit (1st Co. 3:2). Transformation counsellors need an awareness of a client's growing edge.

John's counsellor seemed not to recognize John's growing edge in his spiritual journey.

I have mentioned how balanced tension works toward healthy development.

Tension pulls between our human nature, the nature of the flesh, and our Spirit-filled nature. Jesus modelled the Spirit filled nature. Paul and others modelled the polarity of the two natures with each nature seeking to be dominant in life's decisions. In Rom. 7:14, Paul tells us that the law is spiritual but that he is carnal and even though he knows what is right, he has a great deal of difficulty at times doing what he knows God approves. It is the striving within these polarities that strengthens our moral resolve. John's counsellor may have missed the significance of this experience in John's life. The transformation model identifies the struggle within the polarization as a significant part of the healing process.

(j) Evidence:

But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: . . . (Gal. 22:23).

The question often asked: Can the results of an applied school of therapy be measured? This model supports evidence-base results. Practical model presentation requires measures and standards. The transforming model measures the results by what the Bible calls, "The Fruit of the Spirit." These are, "joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: . . ." If the process to facilitate these proofs is not evident, then there is a flaw in the model or in the counselling process itself. Either the model has not been built to achieve this result, or the counsellors/clients have refused to be

agents of change. The model's success depends on counsellors' commitment to the model's objective.

In Matthew 7:18, Jesus tells us that a good tree grows good fruit. He was using this metaphor to teach about the difference between false teachers and genuine teachers. You can tell them by their fruit. The emphasis is on behavioural patterns and not on moral slips. The evidence is produced when permanent change begins to take place in behavioural patterns. The transformation process actually changes the client's mental constructs. The changed pattern affects the decisions clients make. Consider the client's use of money, for example. Before the transformation process began, the use of money dominated the client's decision making. In church the client placed two dollars on the offering plate; the client felt satisfied with this contribution to the church. The counsellor helps the client understand that everything he or she possesses comes from the Lord. What the client gives back to the church symbolizes the client's heart condition in relationship with God. Change in relationship begins when the client realizes that ownership of all possessions belongs to God. The client begins to understand this spiritual principle and the client's tithe becomes a love offering. Evidence of attitude change occurs when the client believes that giving 10 percent of gross income is a beginning. The fruit of the Spirit appears not as offering but as the change in attitude about money and possessions.

The guiding question paramount to this transforming process that clients and counsellors must continually ask is this: Do my thoughts and actions bring glory to God or to me? If the answer is "to me", the evidence of change will not be present because this

attitude reflects the tarnished human nature. If the answer is “God”, then positive change occurs toward meeting God’s expectation for the client. John, the client in the case study, did not condone self-focused behaviour; yet at this stage of his grieving it would be easy to suggest that self-focus was his customary behaviour. Clients’ grief will give a false reading of their dominant behaviour pattern. John’s counsellor may have mis-diagnosed the significance of the grieving process. The missed diagnosis led to inappropriate therapy. The counsellor centred on the pathology instead of on the core strength within John. Had the transformation model been in development at the time of the counselling sessions, the counsellor could have helped John identify the fruit of the Spirit in the grief stages.

(k) Freedom:

... Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (Jn. 8:34 & 36)

When clients and counsellors release control of their lives by adopting vices, they become slaves in the process of their own destruction. Vices in the early stages present the illusion of freedom. It is only when vices tighten their grip that it is realized that life is being wrung out. The die is cast. Clients face hopelessness: What can be done? The transformation model always embraces the power of God through the Holy Spirit.

Counsellors help clients understand that even though the die appears to be cast, God can and will break the behaviour mold and begin again. Clients will be encouraged to give up false hopes and flimsy substitutes and replace them with the spiritual freedom that comes by God’s grace. Clients’ choices take on a therapeutic reality because the choices reflect God’s purpose for their lives. Persons created by God develop personalities and

behaviours through nature and nurture. These unique personalities are like a fabric with complex designs woven into them using many fibres. There is no longer a way of separating the fibres without ruining the quilt. Unlike the quilt, human personality responds to change. But only God can make the required changes without damaging the personality. It is the responsibility of counsellors who use the transformation model to prepare themselves adequately in spiritual, academic and clinical skills so that they can be used by the Lord to facilitate the transformation process. John, the client in the case study, was not helped by his counsellor to feel that experience of spiritual freedom. The counsellor focussed on the malady and by doing so reinforced the bars of John's jail. For Christian counsellors, freedom means that the faith they have in God's transforming love frees them from doing the transforming to accompanying the client in transformation.

chapter 7

TRANSFORMATION MODEL'S FRAMEWORK

Psychotherapies serve to frame the transformation model. This chapter demonstrates how three psychotherapies facilitate the use of the transformation model.

Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy

Freud as a medical doctor used the medical model of focusing on the pathology of the client. Psychological pathology as Freud knew it seemed beyond a cure. Instead, the analyst helps the patient handle the problem with less subjective stress. Wolitzky (1995) in Essential Psychotherapies writes “It should be clear that the resolution of conflict is far from an all-or-none, once-and-for-all matter. In this sense, analysts do not expect to ‘cure’ their patients”(p. 25). However, when considered together, psychoanalysis leads to insight and the related therapy stimulates the healing process.

Wolitzky (1995) explains:

Becoming aware of one’s patterns of maladaptive living in the context of the transference, recalling their similarity to childhood reactions and modes of relating to significant others, and realizing the unconscious fantasies on which they are based rarely in and of themselves lead to rapid changes in behaviour. (p. 33)

The healing process begins with the exploration of awareness. The transformation model adapts the analytical approach to the transformation purpose. As well as making the associated connections, the transformation model looks for connection with and within clients belief systems.

Although the techniques are neutral, counsellors administered techniques with a

collaborative philosophy or belief system. I define belief system as that which forms the core influence on all thoughts and actions generated. In other words, belief systems affirm action and reaction. It happens as simply as infants believing that when they cry their mothers will satisfy their needs, or as complexly as believing there is a need for a systematic theology. Belief systems respond from a core level generating both conscious and unconscious thought patterns and emotions. Clients and counsellors operate out of their belief systems, systems in formation while possibly still in the womb. Therefore, Freud the Doctor, Freud, nurtured by family and society, and Freud a genetic component, responded from within his complex grid called personality. The transformation hypothesis claims the idea that Freud and all of humankind respond to life from within a control system. To understand Freud's approach to psychoanalysis one must seek to understand Freud's belief system. A neo-Freudian psychoanalytical focus interprets that belief system. I will use the case illustration in Essential Psychotherapies as representative of these two psychological approaches.

The client presents a difficulty with time structures. Wolitzky (1993) explains the diagnosis:

obsessive-compulsive character structure, with narcissistic, depressive, and passive aggressive features. Dynamically, his core conflicts centered on (1) his passive wishes for symbiotic union with his mother and his guilt over such wishes, as well as his autonomous strivings to free himself from enmeshment with his mother: (2) his rage at, and desire to defy, parental authority and his feeling that he should obediently yield to it in order to be a good boy; and (3) his Oedipal rivalry with his

father, contributing to his grandiose wishes to be mother's favorite with some great achievement, along with his love for his father and desire not to hurt him. . . . It should be noted, however, that the three conflicts listed above, originating, respectively, from the oral, anal, and phallic stages of psychosexual development, interact synergistically. (p. 48)

The prognosis envisioned better behaviour adaptation over several years. The therapy process focussed on the interpretation of transference and the patient's maladaptive manifestations. Therapy promoted the idea that self-understanding and self-acceptance would free the patient from reliance on maladaptive defences and facilitate more effective functioning in work, in love, and in play (p. 49). The therapist presents as the doctor and acknowledges the client as the patient. This medical model attempts to isolate the pathology (maladaptive behaviour) for specific focus. The analyst diagnosed the cause of the problem as an improper response to dynamic stimuli during the Freudian traditional childhood stages of psychosexual development: oral, anal and phallic. Sexual energy improperly channelled during the growing up period continued into adulthood. By revisiting the patient's family of origin history, the patient may be helped by the psychoanalyst to understand why and how this energy was improperly channelled, how it continues to be, and how this energy might be rechannelled to promote better behavioural adaptation.

The transformation model also examines family of origin material. Actual events and relationships are monitored through clients' emotional expression as they review past events. For example, when clients speak about their mothers, do their demeanor change?

This may indicate how affected clients feel in their current behaviour patterns. Freudian psychology suggests that understanding how this energy is mis-directed will point to the cause of the pathology. The transformation model delves into why individuals may have responded a certain way when they were children. It attempts to do this within an understanding of clients' value-belief systems. The transformation model operates on the basic assumption that maladaptive behaviour stems from an improper relationship with God. This may seem a huge jump in logic; but often children in a disruptive home setting project their experience of parents unto God [Our Father]. As often, this image of God becomes part of the adult belief system. This results is that clients fear God and are unable to reach out to God for help. Changing clients' perspectives to empower them to appreciate God is the emphasizes of the transformation model. This may include uncovering the belief system from within the subconscious area of the mind. A critical path analysis may reveal clients' expectation of family of origin experiences, and how clients conversed with themselves about failed expectations. Counsellors help clients to understand how belief systems impact them positively or negatively. Counsellors discover, with clients, the spiritual journey that parallels the physical journey. Counsellors and clients probe life from spiritual and psychological dimensions and make the necessary connections for well-being.

Person - Centred Psychotherapy

The framework would not be complete for the transformation model without the therapeutic strategy of person-centred psychotherapies. Literature suggests psychoanalytical psychology focuses on the pathology whereas person-centred psychology

focuses on the person. Person-centred therapy shares a high view, or optimistic view, of human nature; people want to make healthy choices. With a little help in determining right choices, clients will gladly embrace such choices. The chapter on human nature elaborated on this humanistic philosophy. Here I examine the theoretic construct. Bohart in Essential Psychotherapies (1995) clarifies the goal:

Rogers included an emphasis on creativity and potential, the aim of therapy as acceptance of the self as unique and self-reliant, the belief that the client must be the central figure in the therapeutic process and that the client is his/her own therapist, and an emphasis on present experience in therapy. (p. 85)

Dysfunctionality occurs if we fail to learn from feedback therefore remain stuck in our misperceptions or inadequate behavior. Dysfunctionality is really a failure to learn and change. There are three interrelated explanations in the person-centred literature for how this occurs: incongruence, failure to be in process, and difficulties in information processing. (p. 94)

Incongruity.

A Person-centred perspective views abnormal behaviour as arising from an inability to function within the self-concept; clients perceive life experiences as conflicting with their self-concept. Congruent behaviour emanates from a certain comfort level within self-concept. For example, clients may believe and accept a felt sense of their ability and capability. This acceptance includes, within their self-concept, the imposed conditions of culture, society, and biology. Clients may have been told that they were stupid and that not much could be expected from them. Clients may experience gratification when they exceed

this expectation but accept it as normal when they fall short. In the latter case, their self-concept is congruent with their experience, i.e., they expect to fail and they do. If clients refuse to accept their equivalent experiences as confirmation, the resulting behaviour rejects the experience in favour of an isolated positive self-concept. Religion can also impact the self-image. The self-concept of persons who take their religious beliefs seriously may include a self-judgmental component. The disparity between believing what you feel to be right, e.g. what God expects, and the habit of doing right, compounds the anxiety level, consciously and subconsciously. The Apostle Paul seemed tormented by his inability to live according to his perception of God's requirements. As a Pharisee, a murderer of Christians, a person who met the Spirit-Christ after the resurrection, an Apostle, evangelist, church founder and mentor, Paul had great expectations of himself. He wanted desperately to walk in righteousness, but his experience did not always meet those expectations, thus the disparity. Paul explains his situation: "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate that do I. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Ro. 7:19 & 24)? Having recognized this disparity, Paul reached beyond his own inconsistencies and limited capacity to the One who was not limited.

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made me free from the law of sin and death. (Ro.7:25-8:1)

Paul tells us that although he could not meet his own expectations, Christ freed Paul from the penalty of sin and guilt, but not disappointment in himself. Paul's awareness of the disparity between his self-concept and his shortfall experiences caused incongruity to be present in his mental processes. Nevertheless, he did not negate his mission because of self-hindering judgment. Embracing Christ allowed Paul to respond therapeutically to the disparity. Paul's faith brought the emotional and physical disparities into spiritual congruity. Paul's faith caused his spirit to be congruent with his expectations of God's grace through Christ. The transformation model translates this struggle as the transformation process.

The reverse situation occurs when clients allow religion to mask an accurate interpretation of experiences to achieve a superficial congruency. A pseudo-spirituality delays growth in spiritual, physical and emotional well-being. In John 8:1-11, Jesus discusses with the Jewish religious leaders the incongruity of their perceived congruity. They appear to have convinced themselves that their behaviour affirms their religious beliefs. Their behaviour mirrored their religiosity. Therefore, in their eyes there was no disparity. This plays out in the following example: The religious leaders brought an adulterous woman to Jesus for judgment. They knew Jesus practised forgiveness but if He chose to in this situation He would be contravening the law of Moses. This law declared that an adulterous woman should be put to death by stoning (Jn. 8:5). Although these religious leaders were not prepared, perhaps, to admit disparity or to even see it, Jesus was ready to help them see more clearly. Jesus invited the religious leaders to stone her, but only if they could demonstrate that they themselves were without sin. None of the religious

leaders measured up to Jesus' scrutiny and the woman was not killed. In this case, the Pharisees' behaviour toward Jesus and to the woman revealed a deep disparity between their self-concept and what Jesus knew to be God's way of meeting the law's requirements. It is likely, however, that the Pharisees saw congruency in their own behaviour, for as far as they knew they were following the Law.

Bohart (1995) explains this theory:

People learn to hold parts of their self-concept rigidly when parents, teachers, or culture imposes conditions of worth on them. That is, they are made to feel that they are worthwhile only when they conform to others' standards and values. This leads to the adoption of rigid 'shoulds' about how they are supposed to be. When incongruence between rigid shoulds and experience occurs they are unable to challenge their shoulds and so may respond by trying to ignore their experience by misinterpreting it. Being unable to listen to their own experience, they disempower themselves. They then must rely exclusively on the rigid shoulds to guide their choices. And when that does not resolve anxiety and incongruence they feel helplessness and may become depressed. (p. 95)

This may be the case, unless, of course, the authority attached to the office provides the opportunity to manifest this dysfunctional dichotomy. The Pharisees used their authority to affirm their behaviour which the Bible records as being incongruent with God's expectation of them as religious leaders.

Paul revealed his functional congruity as defined by Bohart (1995) in quoting Lietaer (1991)).

“Congruence is precisely this inner openness.” Congruence does not always mean inner harmony. An inner sense of harmony comes and goes. However, if one is being congruent – open and receptive to all inner voices – the creative synthesizing process of the individual can move forward. (p. 91)

Some Christians manifest behavioural dysfunction out of the fear of losing their hold on an eternal life with God. If clients believe that failure to adhere to church affiliation will cause them to be excommunicated and lose their places in Heaven, they may refuse to accept any new input or different interpretation. Even though rigidity results in maladaptive behaviour clients will not risk the possibility of loss. This results in an unhelpful and unhealthy spirituality. A transformation objective is to empower clients to embrace a spirituality that is active and powerful in their journey toward congruency. Clients will learn that spirituality does not need to be a shadowy figure of judgment. Clients will begin to understand that many of life’s difficulties stem from a misunderstanding of God and his role in the lives of humans.

Failure to process.

Person-centered psychotherapy views highly functioning persons as those in the process of becoming their potential. These persons listen intently to what they tell themselves about their experiences. These persons creatively engage psychological problems rather than harshly criticizing themselves. They create an opportunity to deal with and move beyond the problem. Jesus assesses the religious leaders, mentioned above, as not highly functioning. They had permitted their spirituality to stagnate. In other words, they appeared to hold their religious beliefs rigidly and robbed themselves of the life

instilling power that was available to them. These leaders rejected experience that disagreed with their religious beliefs.

The transformation model encourages clients to reduce the negative energy and embrace the positive energy that is part of the creative process. The paradox remains that creativity includes death. The analogy of the deciduous tree demonstrates this paradox: leaves die annually but the tree blossoms again in the spring. The transformation model helps clients to recognize that there is a grief process associated with giving up maladaptive behaviour. Counsellors encourage clients to, [metaphorically], grow new leaves or adopt different behaviour that permits their lives to take on new vitality. Clients must decide if they want to be part of that creativity.

Information processing.

This process allows persons to grow and mature. When I was a child, I thought as a child, but when I became an adult, I put away childish things (1st Co. 13:11). This is what Paul said when addressing persons who continue to practise spiritual immaturity long after he thought they should. These individuals presented as developmentally challenged in their understanding of the Holy Spirit. Belief systems in the process of change often prove resistant to the acceptance of new information. The transformation model works from the theory that for individuals to change permanently they need to practise the change until it becomes habit. This can best be done in association with others of like mind: churches, support groups, or with a mentor. Accountability without fear of criticism is necessary for development. Person-centred psychotherapy provides that environmental attribute for the transformation model. However, differences exist with the transformation model. Person-

centred therapy stresses autonomy for individuals; the transformation model emphasizes dependence on God. The transformation model maintains that persons' value derives from their relationship to God. Humans are finite. They die. They know intuitively that they are dependent on a Higher Power. When this fact is acknowledged and internalized, clients empower themselves to seek the potential that God provides them to live life more fully. The transformation model teaches that dependence on God creates and nurtures healthy interdependence with others.

Cognitive-Behaviourism

What is cognitive-behaviourism and how might it be used to frame the transformation process? In Essential Psychotherapies (1995) Freeman and Reinecke (1995) gives this definition:

George Kelly (1955) who, in proposing his 'personality construct theory' of emotional disorders, explicitly recognized the importance of subjective perceptions in human behavior. He proposed that individuals actively perceive or 'construe' their behaviour and generate abstractions about themselves, their world, and their future. An individual's 'constructs,' as such, can be quite idiosyncratic or personal and represent the ways in which they systematically categorize their experiences. These constructs, in turn, determine how the individual will respond to events. From this perspective, a goal of therapy is to understand patients' subjective interpretation or judgments about their experiences and to assist patients to construe them in a more adaptive manner. . . . Ellis developed a typology of common cognitive distortions or errors, as well as a number of directive therapeutic techniques for changing them. His model assumes that by clients

identifying and replacing unrealistic or irrational beliefs, they can alter behavioral or emotional reactions to events. As irrational beliefs are often tightly held and long-standing in nature, highly focused and, at time, confrontationally expressed, interventions are necessary to dispute them. His therapeutic approach is active and pragmatic.(p.185) How can this psychotherapy complement the transformation model? Proverbs, talks about the mental processes: “for as he thinketh in his heart so is he”(Prov. 23:7). Proverbs’ metaphor of the heart signals a significance beyond random thought. Behaviour originates from thought patterns. Thought patterns originate from a contextual base. The Bible emphasizes heart as the centre where the thought processes construct behavioural patterns. This process involves more than the mechanical process of mind to behaviour transference. The transformation model suggests that the spirit of clients determine what building blocks they use in construction of thought patterns. For example, if clients present an unforgiving attitude, it is clear to me that their contextual construct is blocking the biblical teachings on forgiveness. Spiritual poverty or natural order prevents clients from following this biblical precept. In Essential Psychotherapies Freeman and Reinecke (1993) are quoted for this explanation:

The way individuals construe or interpret events and situations mediates how they subsequently feel and behave. . . . As such, human functioning is the product of an ongoing interaction between specific, related ‘person variables (beliefs and cognitive processes, emotions, and behavior) and environmental variables. (p. 187)

Clients and therapists produce and receive stimuli. How they process or interpret those stimuli are determined by programmed receptors. This produces a felt response that

is the nucleus of their idiosyncratic construct. For example, if a client, when a child, broke the household rules and was punished on each occasion, the child may conclude that punishment resulted from not obeying the rules. This perceived cause and effect relationship may become part of the child's mental construct. When the client experiences a situation whereby something or someone has broken her rules, [her felt sense of what is right or wrong], she may desire retribution. The biblical idea of forgiveness may be understood in her belief system as preferred, but forgiveness associated with breaking rules has never been part of her experience. Therefore, it is likely, as an adult, that it will not be part of the client's felt sense of justice. The transformation model demonstrates that when a client claims agency in the healing process, religious beliefs become enabling rather than disruptive.

The following research suggest that most, if not all, schools of psychotherapy have some degree of success. This success emanates from common sense initiatives. I agree with this observation but at the same time I want the spiritual component of life to be part of this common sense package of good ideas for counselling. It is not that a focus on healthy spirituality could not be achieved through some humanistic psychotherapy models currently practised. Rather, it is that my interpretation of spirituality, [relationship with God through Christ], is not a significant element of humanistic philosophy. Therefore the transformation model facilitates an activation of spiritual awareness within the understanding of counselling shared by Miller, et al. (1995). The article states that research gives evidence of psychotherapy effectiveness but emphasizes that no particular school of psychotherapy outshines the other. The same article reveals that the proliferation of

therapy models has jumped from 60 to 400 since the mid 1960's (p. 53). The author notes that they seem different because they sound different. The originators of these therapies use a language suited to their therapy models. In addition, they claim great results without the corresponding verification of the results. So, what is it that I hope to accomplish with yet one more model? I am interested in developing a model that best suits my worldview, including my Christian belief system. I would expect counsellors who embrace the transformation model would do so because it met with their sense of purpose. My sense of purpose desires to reach clients with the healing power that comes from the Holy Spirit. In a counselling context this means introducing clients to the possibility of them having and understanding an I/thou relationship with God.

The same article criticizes certain psychotherapies because their authors neither explain effective therapy, nor do they document and circulate their clinical progress. I would expect that the counsellors who employ the transformation model would be able to explain and document their progress or lack thereof so that other therapists may benefit. I have no interest in a veneer or facade. If the transformation model serves no therapeutic purpose, I want to know the reasons. This article points out that their criticism is not meant to depreciate the value of psychotherapy because benefits have been proven. They criticised the supernatural claims made for particular psychotherapies. Miller, et al. (1995), explain that the similarities in psychotherapies provided benefits to clients and not the differences highlighted by the creators. This is precisely what the transformation model would seek to do; use what works. But for a model to work effectively, two important factors must be in play. The first factor is that the model needs to be well

constructed around the focus for client health. The second factor, and just as important, is the ability of the counsellors to apply the knowledge in the healing process. When these factors are missing in the counselling practice, superficial substitution may occur. For example, this same article believes that the success of a psychotherapy model depends on the advocate's charisma and marketing skills. If the sales pitch to therapists is catchy and unique and it coincides with therapists' lack of success, the "new kid on the block", [psychotherapy], gets the attention. Success is calculated on how many therapists accept the new school of psychotherapy, [purchase the model], and not on how many patients were helped. Miller et al. (1995) write, "As H.L. Mencken once observed, "the problem with truth is that it is mainly uncomfortable, and often dull. The human mind seeks something more amusing, and often caressing"(p. 55).

Yet, the article explains that the factors common to all forms of therapy really decide the success story for clients:

(a) Therapeutic technique. The research done by Michael Lambert of Brigham Young University estimates that technique alone contributes 15 percent to the impact of psychotherapy. The same research suggested that clients mentioned the nonmechanical elements in psychotherapy as being helpful. Clients are simply not impressed with technique. What they want is a sense of feeling related to. The transformation model would use technique not as end in itself but as a way of discovering the best route to insight in relationships.

(b) Expectancy and placebo. Clients' first impression determine if they want to work at forming a relationship with counsellors. Clients engage the healing process more easily

when the counselling environment encourages hope. Clients who chose therapy come because at some level they are hopeful for positive change. They have already begun the journey of hope by entering the counselling office. The hope-expectancy must be nurtured by the therapist. The transformation model creates a hope-environment based on the belief that God is interested and desires to see healing take place. When therapists stress the pessimistic aspects, e.g., focus on the pathology, they block the Holy Spirit's healing process.

(c) Therapeutic relationship. The research referred to above suggest that therapeutic relationship contributes 30 percent to the outcome of therapy. So far, technique and relationship add 45 percent to the psychotherapeutic impact. Miller et al. (1995) “. . . the latest thinking and research indicate that strong alliances are formed when clients, [emphasis added by author], perceive the therapist as warm, trustworthy, nonjudgmental and empathic” (p. 56). This certainly makes sense if therapists acknowledge clients as agents of their own healing. A case study taken from the Bible reveals that Jesus did not focus on the spiritual pathology. Nevertheless, the focus on sin seems a very real temptation for some Christian pastoral counsellors. According to Adams, the sin focus works because it is from the Bible. In this situation it is probably where this article differentiates between technique and relationship. In the case of Adams, where he is counselling clients from his congregation, there may be an expectation on the part his clients that their relationship with Adams would be this way. If so, clients could still have hope that the pastor would be able to help. Here's how Miller et al. (1995) explain: “The most helpful alliance will develop when the therapist establishes a therapeutic environment

that matches the client's definition of empathy, genuineness and respect"(p. 57).

(d) Client factor. How important are clients as agents in their healing process? The research suggests that this component adds 40 percent to the impact of psychotherapy. The client is the best physician, not the therapy, technique or therapist. This should not be surprising when it is realized that clients' lives possess the raw materials required for therapy to work. The transformation model empowers clients to begin their healing process.

Miller et al. (1995) ask an important question. What extent do therapists' models "draw on the strengths, resources and worldview of clients to help them achieve their goals? Do counsellors consider clients' environment and existing support network? Do you expand on the spontaneous changes that clients experience outside of therapy"(p. 57). This continues the author's focus on maximising clients' inherent capacity to aid their own healing. Research used by the authors suggests that the "majority of clients do not experience empathy from the therapist as a nurturing, warm-and-fuzzy focus on their feelings, but rather as discerning and thoughtful appreciation of their situation"(p. 58). Clients want therapists to be attentive, not sympathetic or demonstrating "I know how you feel, feelings." When therapists' emotions are shown, it could mean that therapists are working their own issues and not listening to clients.

In order to empower agencies in clients, therapists must talk the client's language and not the technical jargon attached to psychotherapy. The transformation model counsellors need to be watchful in the use of terminology. Christian terminology, used by Christian ministers or theologians, is just as foreign to many clients as any other technical

language. A safeguard against presuming client understanding is to ask them what they feel took place in the session. This is not as easy as it sounds however. There are egos on the line of fire whenever feedback is requested. An article by McCollum and Beer (1995) shared the results of a research experiment where client feedback was sought and listened to, over a period of twenty-five weeks. The clients, a married couple, shared their disappointment about some of the therapy sessions when the therapist performed in the following way: (a) The therapist did not know what to do but was afraid to admit this to the clients; the clients did not understand what was going on with the therapist but they felt uncomfortable. The clients expressed the need to feel that the therapist felt their sense of the complexity and seriousness of their problem. This would have been a good time for the therapist to state empathically just that. (b) The therapist felt a need to congratulate the clients on their progress when in fact they felt no progress was being made. The clients shared with the therapist that because he was able to congratulate them on their progress, he really did not understand the seriousness of the problem. (c) The therapist, after a few sessions, gave the clients homework. They felt the therapist minored in the majors and majored in the minors (p. 59-62). The tasks proved that the therapist lacked understanding in his perception of the problem.

The therapist in this example was waiting impatiently for enough information to fix the problem. The clients sensed this and were annoyed. They had been trying to work through their problems for years and now in a magic moment the therapist offers a cure. The therapist was not really present for them. They wanted him to understand, or at least hear, their turmoil. The therapist was interested not in their struggle but in his cure. I

have done the same thing in my counselling of clients. I heard what I wanted to hear. I put together a purposeful task. I went over it and over it and until the clients agreed they understood what was required. Later their feedback to me was, "After leaving your place, we discussed the task you gave us; we did not have a clue about what you wanted us to do." They told me they understood the task, because they felt I would not let them go until they did. I thought, as the therapist had in this article, that my task hit the mark. I really had neither grasped the seriousness of the problem nor the effort they expended trying to resolve it. I so much wanted to help that I actually hindered the process.

My hope for the transformation model is that it will empower agencies within clients to provide feedback to the therapist; this assumes that the therapist can differentiate between transference and constructive feedback. The therapy process serves no useful purpose when it detours joyously to the wrong destination. There is more involved, however, in the practice of the transformation model of psychotherapy. In the next chapter I explore these essential components.

chapter 8

INTEGRATION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE SCRIPTURES

Adams demonstrated one way to use the Scriptures in counselling. In the case study that follows, I illustrate how the transformation model intends to use the Scriptures in a holistic way. I believe that this can only be done by allowing Christ to reveal, from the record of His experience, how this may work. Does Jesus' approach vary with the person He communicates with? My reading of Adams suggests that if he had counselled thirty clients his counselling style would remain static; if all his clients were reluctant to assume responsibility for their sin, Adams may have preached the same message to each of them. Adams' case study of Ted, [discussed in ch. 4], is an example. Could Adams have been more sensitive to Ted as a person, a person who is struggling with sinful behaviour? Perhaps the counselling process could have included more time to help Ted identify his responsibility for his sin. Perhaps more could have been done by finding out the role Ted played in his family of origin, or some attempt made to determine what part religion played in Ted's life. Perhaps, as well, more could be accomplished with Ted if the counsellor had been sensitive to Ted's personality traits. Is there only one way to handle truth, truthfully? Is it possible that too much of Adams' own personality was represented in the case study? It is useful to observe the different approaches that Christ used in communicating or counselling with others. It is the objective of the transformation model to emulate Jesus' counselling style in applying the biblical precepts.

The Scriptures tell us that Jesus knew the heart of man (Jn. 2:24)—not only the potential for sin, but also, the personhood. Jesus knew what approach would be most

effective with the person He counselled, because He knew the essence of the person.

Johnson (1959) describes it this way:

It is in such meetings of I and Thou that man attains his most distinctively human characteristics. . . To recognize what another man is at this moment wishing, feeling, and thinking is to grasp him as more than a component but a self-being in existence as I am. So a person confirms what he is and may become in relation to another person who is affirmed as independent yet related to him. (pp. 68-69)

Relationship closes between I and thou, if “I” is accepted for whom “I” is. This does not mean conditional acceptance: accepted, if the client meets the counsellor’s expectations, accepted, if the counsellor sees the client’s potential for change. Unconditional acceptance is required for an I/thou relationship. This does not mean that the counsellor accepts everything the client does or accepts all behaviour manifestations. This means that the counsellor meets the person as an equal in receiving God’s love and mercy. I believe Jesus built relationships with others in this manner. Johnson (1959) tells us that “Truth means that men communicate themselves to one another as what they are” (p. 69). Jesus communicated truth through love, justice through compassion and discipline through mercy. Jesus also communicated what His Father felt about those religious leaders who misrepresented God and Holy Scriptures. Jesus chastised those who mistreated the poor and the widows while giving mock reverence to God. Jesus not only accepted people for whom they were, but He also met them where they were at. For example, there is quite a difference in his treatment of common folk who were trying to please God and those who were self-righteous. We may say that Jesus demonstrated the inadequacy of just one

approach to counselling. Because of the requirement to be sensitive, meaningful, idiosyncratic counselling prevailed.

I examine one biblical situation that I look at as a case study:

Case Study - Jesus and the woman at the well - (KJV OB: John 4:3-26)

Introduction.

Jesus left Judea for Galilee by way of Samaria; in those days most Jews when travelling to and from Jerusalem bypassed Samaria, but Jesus purposed to go through Samaria. Jesus entered a city called Sychar and sat near Jacob's well. This is near the parcel of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. While He was there, a Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water and Jesus engaged her in a conversation. Jesus' disciples had gone into town to get food so Jesus was left alone with the woman.

[Counsellor = Jesus = J: Client = Woman = S: Disciples = D: Townspeople = T:]

Dialogue:

J1: [When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her,] Will you give me a drink?

S1: You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink? For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.

J2: If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

S2: You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?

- J3: Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**
- S3: Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.**
- J4: Go, call your husband and come back.**
- S4: I have no husband.**
- J5: You are right when you say you have no husband.**
The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.
- S5: Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.**
- J6: Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.**
- S6: I know that Messiah" (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.**

J7: I who speak to you am he.

[Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"]

S7: [Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,] Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ? [They came out of the town and made their way toward Jesus.]

D1: [Meanwhile Jesus' disciples urged him,] Rabbi, eat something.

J8: I have food to eat that you know nothing about.

D2: [Then his disciples said to each other,] Could someone have brought him food?

J9: My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.

[Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed

two days. And because of his words many more became believers.]

T1: [They said to the woman,] We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.

Analysis of biblical case study.

- (1) Jesus engages a Samaritan woman in conversation, something a Jew would never do as the Samaritans were of a mixed bloodline.**
- (2) She puzzles about this situation probably wondering about Jesus' motives.**
- (3) Immediately, Jesus takes the conversation out of the physical realm and introduces spiritual truth.**
- (4) Jesus does not speak of the Jews practice of separation. Instead He brings her focus back to His person and His message.**
- (5) He speaks to her about "living water," water that prevents a person from ever thirsting again.**
- (6) He tells her that once having had a drink of this living water she would become a spring of flowing water for others to quench their thirst. [for example, when she went to the men of the town and told them of the man who told her everything she had done. They came, listened and believed. She became living, flowing water (Spiritual Health) to them forever].**
- (7) In [W3] she asks for this living water but again she misunderstands His answer, as she concludes that if she had this living water, [never to thirst again], that she would not have to draw again from Jacob's well.**

(8) Jesus does not acknowledge neither her confusion, nor lectures her with a treatise on the secular-physical versus the soul-Spirit connection.

(9) What Jesus does then is to develop her faith: he gives her information about herself that no stranger could possibly know. At this point she senses something different about Jesus and concludes that Jesus is a prophet. She then attempts to engage Jesus in the theological question as to what place is the best to worship. But Jesus uses the question to bring her back to His focus, the Messiah.

(10) The information about her lifestyle is not the focus but it is the key to unlocking her faith. Notice first that the information reveals her secret life of promiscuity. We have Jesus, the Son of God, revealing this woman's sin and yet she in no way feels offended. Nor is there any evidence whatsoever that she is made to feel shame or guilt. There is no evidence that Jesus dwells on the sin. Again the sin becomes the key to open her soul to God rather than a club that beats her into an evangelical submission.

(11) Jesus did not judge her lifestyle; his very words on another occasion were these: "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (John 8:15-16).

On the contrary, Jesus sought to heal her and the townspeople.

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. (John 12:47-48)

Style of counselling.

I find Jesus' counselling focus revealing. It seems to me to create an atmosphere of encouragement to give this woman a sense of well-being. It appears that she felt communicated to on an I/Thou basis, not spoken down to [i.e., from racial, education, or gender dominance]. What she caught from that encounter, she shared with others. Jesus focussed on her as a person in the Kingdom God. There was no highlighting of the sin and no judgmental attitude displayed toward the woman. The sin became key to healing--not the focus of remorse. The woman was also honest and open. She was not trying to hide the fact of her lifestyle, nor was she personally in denial about her relationships. Jesus counselled this woman with love and compassion. Jesus avoids using the word sin in His dialogue with the woman. His counselling both reflected compassion and respect for this Samaritan woman. Johnson (1959) discusses what happens when this is the case:

To exploit another person is to meet him as It, and treating him as a thing to serve as means to my ends, such a relationship declines in value. To reverence another person is to meet him as Thou with honest appreciation of his worth and dignity as a creative center of valuing experience. Such a relationship has creative potentialities for mutual growth and discovery of what it means to be a person in a giving and receiving of value. (p. 50)

Jesus seemed always to see persons in relation to their God-created purpose.

Psychotherapy method.

What school of psychotherapy would best configure the counselling session that Jesus had with the Samaritan woman? Adams would say that they cannot be equated for what Jesus did was far superior to any school of psychotherapy. But is there some

likelihood that psychotherapy informs us about Jesus counselling style? Jesus knew, of course, but I am left to surmise and analyse the situation to determine what may have occurred in this counselling session. I am an outside observer who cannot discuss this counselling session with the counsellor or the counsellee. I must therefore take my observation and attempt to discover if there is a systematic way that I might comprehend the dynamics of this interrelationship. This is what Johnson (1959) calls the marriage of religion and psychology disciplines; he believes they inform each other without the danger of the decimation of either.

The mystery of the personality is not to be captured in verbal abstractions or facile generalizations. The complexities of human nature are involved in dynamic and conflictual motivations that invite the research of psychology. Not that psychologists have the answers to the questions theologians ask, but they are aware of the profounder depths in man and join in the search for truer understanding.

(p. 13)

In the previous chapter I commented on three schools of psychotherapy; now I will explore what they might look like as an analytical tool to comprehend this case study.

Psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

For the purpose of this analysis, I define psychoanalyses as analysing the presenting problem and the history of origin to determine the source contributing to the pathology. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy will be the application of therapy to heal the pathology. The first procedure is to learn a psychoanalytic formula for the formation of symptoms: In Essential Psychotherapies (1995) Wolitzky (1995) helps me clarify a formula for presenting

symptoms.

The psychoanalytic formula for the formation of symptoms is that there is a wish that is too strong and/or defenses that are too weak to contain it in sufficiently disguised form. In this drive-defense model, symptoms appear as a second line of defense to help ward off the awareness and/or expression of wishes (drive derivatives) that are deemed too threatening and /or unacceptable. . . . (p. 20)

As I observe this Samaritan woman, I recognize immediately that this formula of symptoms fits her situation. It would seem logical therefore to pursue this apparent natural fit. In [J5], Jesus reveals her maladaptive, immoral behaviour. In psychological terms this woman is unable to commit to a long term relationship. This woman has had five husbands and the man she is living with is not her husband. However, if I chose to pursue this approach to this case study, I believe that I would be majoring in the minor aspects even though this maladaptive behaviour is serious. Jesus neither dwelt on the pathology, nor did He commence therapy from that point. That is to say, Jesus did not make repentance a condition for the living water. The revelation concerning her lifestyle served to make her aware that Jesus knew what He was talking about. An awareness of this formula is important. Holistic healing does not always begin with the pathology especially when the malady is psychological or spiritual. The transformation model needs to be able to identify the maladaptive behaviour and the correspondence between that behaviour and her psychological perspective or worldview. The therapy would embrace the wider aspects of God's mercy as Jesus demonstrated. The transformation model expects cognitive and behaviour changes, when the counselling emphasis shifts from the

negative human aspects to an optimistic view of a person's potential. Change occurs when clients perceive adaptive behaviours as more beneficial to their well-being.

Personal-centred psychotherapies.

Carl Rogers, well known person-centre therapist, is quoted in Essential Psychotherapy by Bohart (1995) "that it is the client, [emphasis added by author], who knows what hurts, what directions to go in, what problems are crucial (Rogers, 1961a, pp. 11-12)." Add to this the subtle shift from person-centred to persons in relationship (p. 86) and this will give us some idea about how this psychotherapy may be helpful to our analysis of this case study. The recognized dynamic factor in this theory is that people over a long period of time change, therefore people change in relationship. Person-centered psychotherapy begins with an optimistic worldview of persons. It gives this therapy the thrust of hope that people come to therapy wanting to change and will, when taught how to make better choices. The Samaritan woman responded positively to a relational approach. She had a living sense of agency. Bohart (1995) stresses Roger's concept of the agency, [emphasis added by author], of personality:

Rogers emphasis is on autonomy, a sense that one can confront challenge. A sense of ableness or effectance may be more important than a sense of self-sufficiency. Because a sense of challenge is inherent in doing most things worthwhile in life (careers, relationships, childrearing). By acquiring a sense of ableness, clients can confront and cope with challenges. This is fundamental to effective functioning (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). An orientation toward confronting challenges leads to a focus on the outcome and means that failure is viewed as information to learn from

rather than as information about one's inadequacies. (pp. 90-91)

The Samaritan woman accepted her experiences in life as part of a learning process. She admitted the truth about her lifestyle without self-incrimination. Jesus seems to comprehend this strength in the Samaritan woman and directs his counselling with that insight. The results provided by this case study strongly suggest that this woman learned from her encounter with Christ and utilized her strength of character to enact positive change. The transformation model closely allies to this concept of the high value of personhood. Bohart (1995) explains: "Person-centered therapists value both intellectual, rational thinking and feelings and experience as important sources of information about how to deal with the world creatively"(p. 91). The person-centred transformation therapist would extend this to the agency of Christian spirituality. In other words, the message implicit in transformation therapy is that God through Christ sees the person as the victor not the victim. This view is contagious and it is the objective of transformation therapy to permeate the healing context with this agency—I can and I will with God's help.

Cognitive-behaviourism.

Cognitive behaviourism, if administered within the context and value of the personhood of the individual, can be closely allied with person-centred therapy and the transformation model. The following depicts one way to explain Jesus' role as the counsellor. In Essential Psychotherapies Freeman and Reinecke (1995) highlights what I observed:

It is proposed that the therapeutic relationship should be collaborative. The term "therapeutic collaboration" is used frequently in cognitive therapy and refers to a

specific form of patient-therapist relationship. The therapist is viewed as a “coinvestigator”—working with patients to make sense of their experiences and emotions by exploring their thoughts, images, and feelings with them. . . . The cognitive therapist does not serve as blank screen onto which the patient’s impulses and wishes are projected through the transferential relationship. . . The cognitive therapist does not unquestionably accept the objectivity of the patient’s views and perspectives. Recognizing that cognitive and perceptual distortions may be at play, the cognitive therapist encourages patients to view their thoughts as an objective and to rationally evaluate their validity and adaptiveness. Dysfunctional or maladaptive thoughts are viewed as “hypotheses” that require empirical testing.

(p. 194)

In this case study, Jesus explored with the Samaritan woman her view concerning lifestyles, [stable relationships], worship, [where to pray], religious expectations, [coming of the Messiah]. He rationally evaluated her thoughts with her, and proceeded to direct her. She accepted this extension of her own thought process and went on to actively pursuing and validating the newly acquired knowledge. This is how the transformation model would frame this counselling session.

Representative Stances in Literature

In the literature I reviewed I wanted to discover whether or not the Scriptures were considered appropriate in Christian pastoral counselling. The short answer is yes, maybe and no. These three broad categories can be subdivided for explanation.

Based on research for the thesis.

There are authors who hold strong positions against the use of psychotherapy in Christian counselling, authors who hold strong views against the use of Scriptures in counselling, and authors who hold strong positions on compromise using both.

Based on formal education.

Authors' positions on the use of Scriptures also depended on their formal education: If they were disciples of humanistic psychology [Rogarian], Scriptures enter into the counselling session only if the client introduces them. In these cases the client's belief system may be contributing to maladaptive functioning. Some authors in this category were strongly against Scriptures as they considered them totally inappropriate in counselling. Stephen Pattison (1988) A Critique of Pastoral Care, fits well here. He raises issue that are not new but which are in the arsenal of those who refute the positions held by "biblicists." Some authors, who are fundamentalists and trained in seminary, could not see any productive use for psychotherapy except as a platform to jump from-from the pit to solid ground. Jay Adams (1986) How to Help People Change, exemplifies this category. Authors who are seminarians, but more open in their religious stance and Christians trained in psychology, were more open to an eclectic approach that would at least include Christian principles. Edgar Jackson (1975) Parish Counselling, represented this category.

This latter category was very broad. Authors ranged from treating psychotherapy as foundational to those who had Scripture as their base.

Based on church doctrine and tradition.

In this category were authors who held church doctrine and tradition important to counselling. Other authors believed that the sacraments were important and only the ordained clergy had this special influence. Kathleen Heasman (1969) An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling was among those who supported this counselling approach.

Based on where the author was employed.

Authors' place of employment also influences their counselling philosophy. For example, if the thrust of the counselling centre was cognitive-behaviourism, the allegiance would be to that school of psychotherapy. If from a seminary or church clinic, the counselling position follows the faith creed of the church or seminary. An example of this is C. L. Deinhardt's (1995) article entitled "General Revelation as an Important Theological Consideration for Christian Counselling and Therapy." He writes from a position that is acceptable to Providence Theological Seminary and, of course, from his own belief system. If authors write from a private practice, their counselling philosophy will be personal and wide ranging over the various schools of psychotherapies including Bible-based theologies.

Based on what works.

Some literature in the field claimed that techniques, schools of psychotherapy, [religious or otherwise], contribute a small percentage to the benefits of psychotherapy. Clients rated relationships and atmosphere as important contributors to therapy. Scott

Miller et al. (Mar. Apr. 1995) in the article "No More Bells and Whistles" and Messrs. McCollum and Beer (1995) in "The View From the Other Chair", positioned themselves in this category.

Based on integration.

Raymond Kiser, (1993) "An Approach to Theological Integration" maintains that psychology and theology are parallel journeys to the same destination. Both need to be considered in counselling.

Based on historical perspective.

My observations of the counselling literature revealed an old and continuing debate over the use or nonuse of the Scriptures in psychological counselling. In North America, the focus became more concentrated with Anton Boisen in the 1920's, but from my perspective it is the same discussion that took place in the Garden of Eden between the snake and Eve. "Did God say? Can He be trusted?" I felt that the literature as presented was not so much a search for truth as an explanation of biases. This paper mentions that the worldview of humans [authors], how they make sense out of life, without doubt dictates their perspectives and how they choose to present those perspectives. Christ's relational presentation also showed this pattern; His Father's will for humankind was front and centre in Jesus' focus. The gospel of literature speaks from its own biases. The question presenting is this, What gospel will the human soul be prepared to commit to?

Conclusion

Development of the transformation model continues. I have made a start by describing my expectations for the model. These expectation constructs incorporated an analysis of humanistic psychology and Judaic-Christian theologies as related to the study of human nature. I concluded that counsellors require a working theory about human nature for therapy to engage the healing process. This paper combines the tools of psychotherapy with a Scriptural-based philosophy. I considered general revelation as the means for bridging a perceived gulf between the use of psychotherapy and Scriptures in Christian pastoral counselling. I illustrated this union by explaining a biblical situation by the use of three schools of psychotherapy.

I begin the research for this paper around the question of why the use of the Scriptures was not more prominent in pastoral counselling centres. I confess to having misinterpreted the mission of the centres. I assumed the centres presented a Christian posture; it appears that interfaith may mean Christian but it may not. Nevertheless, I still wanted to pursue the possibility of providing a focus on the Scriptures in counselling therapy.

In the category of where do I go from here, I plan, in my doctoral thesis to flesh out the theory of the transformation model through clinical application.

Balm of Gilead.

Jeremiah's question, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered"(Jer. 8:22) is the same question I have asked regarding the use of the Scripture in pastoral counselling. For

Jeremiah and for me it is a rhetorical question. Nevertheless, the answer must be worked out in relationship with God. It becomes my task to discover what that means for me as the transformation model continues in its development.

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