

## Hidden in Plain Sight Aargh!

**Aargh!?** *Aargh* is a word that is “used as an expression of anguish, horror, rage, or other strong emotion, often with humorous intent.”<sup>1</sup> In our January-February newsletter we published our article titled “Hidden in Plain Sight” to make it clear that those in the biblical counseling movement (BCM) counsel sinfully by using a psychotherapy format (problem-centered), which supports and elicits evil speaking. The article is somewhat brief, but we thought it was a clear revelation of much of what we have been saying over the years. No matter the number of live or enacted biblical counseling sessions we have exposed, we have found that many of our readers simply have not seen what is hidden in plain sight, i.e., the sin-saturated nature of biblical counseling conversations—**Aargh!**

Based upon correspondence and personal conversations over the years, we have concluded that few Christians, whether biblically learned or not, understand our message, which clearly reveals the sinful nature of both psychological

and biblical counseling. Some see the sinful nature of counseling immediately after reading our examples; but sadly many never see it! **Aargh!**

### UK Response

One of the responses we received was from a reader in the United Kingdom. Her email correspondence reveals that she is an intelligent, learned woman. In her response to the January-February newsletter, she asked our opinion about an article from a leader in the BCM having to do with the “danger of gossiping in counseling” but yet affirming that “counseling is possible for Christians if conversations are kept within the right limits and with the right motivation.” When individuals send us BCM articles and books, we know they have entirely missed our primary concern, because our challenge has to do with their literal live counseling, their enacted ideal counseling videos, and their case studies, all of which reveal the primary problem, which consists of an array of sinful speech and expressions that regu-

larly occur and are further encouraged in counseling.

Even when attempting to curb gossip, the psychologically inspired format invites it and even supports it as the counselor hunts for clues to the source of the problems. It’s their counseling about which we are concerned, not their articles and books, unless they are teaching how to counsel or presenting case studies. Aside from writings about methodology or case studies, leaders and others in the BCM have written some excellent teaching material having to do with aspects of the Christian life. In response to this woman, we said, “If you believe the counseling example we give in the Jan/Feb newsletter is biblical, then you, too, are guilty of missing what is hidden in plain sight!”

### A Pastor’s Response

Another response we received from our January-February newsletter was from a friendly supporter who had given the newsletter to his pastor. We

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## Psychotherapism: The Mother of Wokedom<sup>1</sup> by Bruce W. Davidson

Recently it has become rather obvious that the psychotherapy world often stands ready and willing to create new mental sicknesses and abolish older ones in the service of progressive ideology. After gender ideologues minted the notion of “toxic masculinity,” the American Psychological Association obliged them with the corresponding pathology, stigmatizing a lot of typical, traditional male behavior.

Soon after homosexuality and transgenderism had become trendy causes, these behaviors suddenly lost their APA designation as mental illnesses. Instead,

opponents of gay marriage and transgenderism suddenly found themselves classified as mental defectives in thrall to phobias. None of this should surprise anyone, since the leftist bias in psychology has been well-documented.

The Woke movement is largely the offspring of this unholy alliance of psychotherapism and leftism. It is no exaggeration to say that the father of Wokedom is Marxism and its mother is psychotherapism. The contribution of psychotherapism has been to greatly facilitate the creation of victims and villains for the leftist narrative of oppressed

and oppressors. Psychotherapism now often functions as an instrument for delivering negative judgments against those whose views leftists do not approve of. In a typical instance of this role, last year a psychiatrist at Yale University condemned the current president via *Newsweek* and warned of the possible imminent extinction of the human race. *(continued on page 3)*

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Letters

from



our

Readers

Martin and Deidre,

I was glad to get a copy of your new book, *Christian Response to Mental Illness: Mutual Care in the Body of Christ*.

“We also repeat once more in this perilous, peculiar, and puzzling area of not truly knowing whether or not a mental-emotional-behavioral issue is biological or spiritual, one can nevertheless assume that people are responsible for their behavior and can benefit from biblical ministry” (pg 184).

In short compass your book is full of practical reminders and helps for what are believer’s responsibilities in how to minister to fellow believers, much needed cautions, and equipping a witness that challenges our therapeutic culture. Thank You, New York

Dear Brother & Sister Bobgan,

Thank you for including me on your newsletter mailing list. Your ministry is indeed a light in the deep darkness of today’s world. Illinois

Dear Dr. Bobgan,

Thank you so, so, so much for your book *Christian Response to Mental Illness*. Reading this book has given me the tools I needed to help minister to those in prison with me that have mental illnesses. This is an amazing book! Prisoner

The Bobgans,

Thank you so much for writing a book on mental illness. Your book [*Christian Response to Mental Illness*] is a warning to all true Christians that it is just a matter of time before we are labeled mentally ill. Wyoming

To PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries,

Your newsletter and books are much appreciated! It is wonderful to know that there are conscientious and discerning Christians out there. I have gained much insight from reading your material. Thank you both for being “watchmen.” email

Dear Bobgans,

Thank you for your faithfulness in standing upon God’s Word in ministry. Our study in the scriptures only underlines the things you have said for so many years. We have been behind you in prayer, hoping for many more to ‘get the point’ of coming out of what we now know to be apostate. Any time God’s Word is maligned and maltreated, His truth is ignored. Therefore, we have found ourselves alone in the effort. We continue to minister to prison inmates with biblical truth and have found that only a remnant will accept it to the changing of their lives. Missouri

Dear, dear friends,

Much to our chagrin, and as your ministries have been warning, our Churches, especially our elders, are all caught up in sending our troubled congregants to so called Christian Counsellors—even having them paid with Church monies. I receive your newsletter, have read and distributed many of your books—Much appreciate your firm, biblical stance and warnings. Canada

Martin & Deidre,

We pray that God would continue to give you strength to fulfill the mission He has given you to fulfill. We give praise to God for using you as His instruments to build up the Body. Iowa

Dear Bro and Sis Bobgan,

I look forward to your newsletter, which I receive by email. My husband went to Heaven in 2018. He was a pastor

and a missionary to foreign merchant seamen. Back in the early 1970s he preached against psychology, though there were hardly any who understood the danger then. Now that it has engulfed Christianity, even fewer reject this heresy. Thank you for sounding the warning for so many years. No doubt you have faced much persecution for teaching the truth. Please be encouraged to faint not, neither be weary in the battle. Virginia

Virginia

Dear Martin and Deidre,

I am sending this message to you as I felt you were the only ones I could talk to about the deep pain in my heart upon receiving an email from *Daily Bread* stating that October has brought their inaugural mental health month. In doing my daily readings from time to time there was a brief foray into mental illness theories. I was able to cope with that. But to meet it head on is quite different. I am just so disappointed!

In addition to that, a brother in our church told us on Sunday that Elijah was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder when he fled from Jezebel’s threat! As I have only been in the fellowship for a short while I will have to be prudent in what I say! Australia

To PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries,

Thank you so much for your continued loyalty to the truth and allowing that light to expose the gross errors in the Body of Christ. Indiana

*Thank you for writing to us. We read every letter, even though we are not able to answer each one personally.*



## Psychotherapism: The Mother of Wokedom *(continued from page 1)*

Proponents of psychotherapy have a long history of collaboration with leftists. One prominent psychologist and a member of The Frankfurt School, Erich Fromm (1900 — 1980), explicitly synthesized Freudian psychology and Marxism. He believed that Freudianism and Marxism were truly scientific, though the philosopher Karl Popper more accurately described both as pseudosciences that cannot be empirically proven or disproven. Furthermore, Fromm blamed late-stage capitalism for creating authoritarian personalities. Also drawing on the ideas of Freud and Marx, Frankfurt School comrade Theodor Adorno and his collaborators seconded Fromm's views in *The Authoritarian Personality*, which reports on a research study that focused only on the threat of fascism. The book seemed to paint many traditional, conservative people as potential despots. This analysis flies in the face of the obvious fact that the most murderous despots of the last century — Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Zedong — were all socialists.

In later years, the acclaimed humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow showed a decidedly leftist orientation. In her book about the history and problems of humanistic psychology, Joyce Milton remarks that Maslow's list of self-actualized, model human beings "tilts heavily to the left of the political spectrum" and includes few religious figures. He lauded Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson as probably a self-actualized person but rejected Dwight Eisenhower. Milton wryly observes, "Thus, an unsuccessful politician who made speeches about world government ranked above a United States President who in his role as general merely organized the defeat of Adolf Hitler." Time and again, conservative politicians have suffered from the hostile judgments of psychologists and psychiatrists, while the bizarre behavior of their opponents has received

far less attention. In 1964, Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater was judged mentally unfit by over 1000 psychiatrists, which later led to the "Goldwater Rule" forbidding psychiatrists from diagnosing a person they have never met. Nevertheless, Donald Trump has been plagued by similar psychiatric abuse. Actually, rather than a crazy conservative president, we probably have more to fear from what psychiatrist Thomas Szasz calls *The Therapeutic State*, supervised by psychiatrists and psychologists with coercive power over the behavior and beliefs of citizens.

**Now almost anyone can lay claim to victim status simply on the basis of wounded feelings.**

In line with leftism's obsession with victimization, psychotherapism has vastly expanded the scope of victimhood claims. Now almost anyone can lay claim to victim status simply on the basis of wounded feelings. In the eyes of many these days, even hearing an unwelcome expression of contrary opinion qualifies as victimization. In her book, *Manufacturing Victims: What the Psychology Industry Is Doing to People*, former psychologist Tana Dineen comments that although many real victims have chosen not to identify themselves primarily that way, the psychotherapy industry aggressively encourages people to take on this identity and then profits from them.

Likewise, the world of traditional Christianity has been infected by this mentality. An essential requirement of Christianity has always been identifying oneself as a sinner with individual responsibility for personal guilt in the eyes of God. That stance makes possible real repentance and the forgiveness of sins. In contrast, some Southern Bap-

tist institutions and the American Bible Society are promoting a novel malady named "post traumatic slave syndrome," which somehow afflicts the descendants of people who were slaves a century and a half ago. In this scheme, the road to healing for those sufferers is for other people to repent of their "original sin" of slavery.

Certainly there are psychologists and psychiatrists who dissent from such thinking. Jordan Peterson, a clinical psychologist, is a notable example. However, his insights appear to stem more from his commitment to common-sense rationality and objective truth over feelings and current psychological orthodoxy.

Peterson clearly understands something that many psychotherapists these days evidently do not: The worst forms of authoritarianism usually come from ideology, not personality. Claiming to be curing us of our authoritarianism, psychologists like Erich Fromm have actually been promoting malevolent forms of it. Psychotherapism has often joined with leftism in fabricating politically useful victims and villains. This destructive marriage of psychotherapism and leftism definitely poses a serious threat to everyone's sanity and freedom.

### Endnote

- 1 "Woke" is "the latest version of political correctness. A 'woke person' is someone who has the proper level of hypersensitivity to the subtle, semi-hidden prejudice and discrimination that supposedly pervades Western societies." "Wokedom" is a term made up like "kingdom." It means "the realm in which 'woke' thinking holds sway nowadays, which includes most academia, the mainstream mass media, and leftist politics."

Bruce W. Davidson is a professor at Hokusei Gakuen University in Sapporo, Japan and a contributor to the *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*.



## Ψ Psych Notes

Psych Notes are selected from numerous articles from professional journals and other publications. The ones used are chosen for their possible interest to readers, but not necessarily because this ministry recommends them.

### Q&A on Electrolyte Influence on Brain

**Q** My husband has been experiencing confusion and memory loss. His doctor attributed his cognitive problems to an electrolyte imbalance and, after treatment for kidney problems, he is now back to normal. What causes electrolyte imbalance, and how does it affect the brain?

**A** Electrolytes are substances such as sodium, chloride, potassium, magnesium, and calcium that help regulate the electric charge and flow of water molecules across cell membranes. Optimal electrolyte balance helps ensure proper functioning of the brain, heart muscle and other organs, as well as regulating oxygen delivery and maintaining fluid balance.

“Abnormal electrolyte levels in the blood can cause a variety of adverse effects, and even lead to severe outcomes such as cardiac problems, organ failure, coma, or death. An imbalance can also cause mental symptoms that include confusion, short-term memory problems, irritability, disorientation, depression, and inability to concentrate. Electrolyte imbalances may be caused by disease, parathyroid disorders, diet, medications (e.g., excessive use of over-the-counter drugs, such as antacids and calcium supplements) or other factors. Loss of body fluids or dehydration is one common cause of electrolyte imbalance. Individuals who have suffered fluid loss from impaired kidney function, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, or chronic laxative abuse—or who have become dehydrated

because of hot, dry weather, or inadequate water intake—are at greater risk for electrolyte imbalances” (excerpted from “Ask the Doctor,” *Mind, Mood & Memory*, Vol. 13, No 3, p. 8).

### Bipolar Is Brain Disorder

“Millions of Americans who suffer from bipolar disorder depend on lithium. The medication has been prescribed for half a century to help stabilize patients’ moods and prevent manic or depressive episodes. Yet what it does in the brain—and why it does not work for some people—has remained largely mysterious.

“But last year San Diego-based researchers uncovered new details about how lithium may alter moods, thanks to an approach recently championed by a small number of scientists studying mental illness: The San Diego team used established lab techniques to reprogram patients’ skin cells into stem cells capable of becoming any other kind—and then chemically coaxed them into becoming brain cells.

“This process is now providing the first real stand-ins for brain cells from mentally ill humans, allowing for unprecedented direct experiments....

“With these lab-grown models, Snyder and his team were able to compare how neurons matured in the two bipolar groups.... They ultimately found that a protein called CRMP2, which regulates neural networks and is found inside of cells, appears to play an outsize role in influencing whether or not lithium helps patients.

“Lithium, they concluded, makes CRMP2 act normally.... This makes lithium-responsive bipolar disease the first confirmed mental health disorder fueled not by a genetic mutation but rather by hiccups in the ‘post-translational modification’ of a protein...” (Dina Fine Maron, “Getting to the Root of the Problem: Stem Cells Are Revealing New Secrets about Mental

Illness,” *Scientific American* article posted 2/27/2018,

### Artificially Sweetened Beverages, Stroke, and Dementia

“Take-Home Message: The association between sugar- and artificially sweetened drink intake and risk for stroke or dementia was evaluated in the Framingham Heart Study Offspring cohort. After adjusting for multiple confounders, both recent intake and cumulative intake of artificially sweetened drinks were associated with significantly greater risks for ischemic stroke and dementia. Similar associations were not found for sugar-sweetened drinks. (excerpted from *Stroke: A Journal of Cerebral Circulation*, <https://www.practiceupdate.com/ages-stroke-and-dementia/52314>).

### DSM Problems

“No two people are exactly alike. Therefore, attempting to classify each unique individual’s mental health issues into neat categories just doesn’t work....

“Researchers performed a detailed analysis on five of the most important chapters in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (DSM)*....

“Researchers came to a number of troubling conclusions. First, the study’s authors assert that there is a significant amount of overlap in symptoms between disorder diagnoses, despite the fact that each diagnosis utilizes different decision rules. Additionally, these diagnoses completely ignore the role of trauma or other unique adverse events a person may encounter in their life.

“Perhaps most concerning of all, researchers say that these diagnoses tell us little to nothing about the individual patient and what type of treatments they will need. The authors ultimately conclude that this diagnostic labeling approach is ‘a disingenuous categorical

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system.’... ‘Although diagnostic labels create the illusion of an explanation they are scientifically meaningless and can create stigma and prejudice.’

“According to the study’s authors, the traditional diagnostic system being used today wrongly assumes that any and all mental distress is caused by a disorder, and relies far too heavily on subjective ideas about what is considered ‘normal’” (excerpted from John Anderer, “Study: Psychiatric Diagnoses Are ‘Scientifically Meaningless’ in Treating Mental Health,” Study Finds: Research in a Nutshell, <https://www.studyfinds.org/study-psychiatric-diagnoses-are-scientifically-meaningless/>).

## Marriage & Brain Health

“Being married may lower your risks for dementia, according to a study that compared dementia risk among four groups of people: married couples, widowed individuals, people who were living together, and people who never married. Married people were less likely to experience dementia as they got older, while divorcees (especially men) were about twice as likely as married people to develop dementia. Factors that helped explain the findings included generally greater financial security and healthier behaviors (having someone remind you to see a doctor or eat healthier) among married couples compared with divorcees. Health-related factors didn’t seem to be as important among cohabiters and people who never married. The findings were published in the *Journals of Gerontology*” (“Marriage May Help Stave Off Dementia,” *Mind, Mood & Memory*, Vol 15, No. 12, p. 2).

## Reversing the Effects of Dementia

“A groundbreaking new study that has seen scientists successfully reverse the effects of dementia is changing the way the scientific world once viewed the disease.

“The majority of dementia treatments have focused on trying to remove amyloid plaque from the brain, however, the latest study published in *Science Translational Medicine* [<https://stm.sciencemag.org>] suggest that targeting brain inflammation is the silver-bullet for curing dementia.

“New evidence suggests that the cause of Alzheimer’s – which is the most common form of dementia – is actually the result of leakage from the brains ‘filtration system’ known as the blood-brain barrier.

“The blood-brain barrier is a border within the brain that separates circulating blood from a variety of different fluids in the central nervous system.

“Previous MRI scans have found that the blood-brain barrier breaks down in nearly 60% of people by the age of 70, and it is believed that this allows harmful chemicals to seep through which is triggering inflammation and fog throughout the brain.

“Experiments that were conducted on mice showed that this fog alters brain rhythms which leads to momentary lapses in the area of the brain that controls memory....

“Experts are optimistic that this approach will have the same effect on humans and possibly lead to a cure for dementia, and there is also hope the same strategy could help people mentally recover from strokes, concussions and brain injuries.

“Leaking blood-brain barriers and abnormal brain rhythms are detectable by a number of scans, and this new discovery could be used to accurately diagnose dementia and signal the time to intervene and use a drug to stop the disease (excerpted from Jakob Neeland, “Scientists Reverse the Effects of Dementia for the First Time Ever, 12/9/2019, <https://hellocaremail.com.au/scientists-reverse-effects-dementia-first-time/>).



## Hidden in Plain Sight Aargh!

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We hope and pray that our friendly supporter, his pastor, and many others will read the original article, as well as this current one, and see what should be obvious. In spite of all our efforts to expose the clearly sinful nature of counseling conversations, it appears that many, especially counselors and counselees, remain blind to what is hidden in plain sight. Thus we lament: **Aaarrgh!**

## Endnotes

- 1 “Aargh,” <https://www.oxforddictionaries.com>.
- 2 Jay E. Adams. *The Case of the “Hopeless” Marriage: A Nouthetic Counseling Case from Beginning to End*. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2006.
- 3 David Powlison, “Cure of Souls (and the Modern Psychotherapies),” [www.ccef.org/cure-souls-and-modern-psychotherapies](http://www.ccef.org/cure-souls-and-modern-psychotherapies).
- 4 We use the female gender, because women make up the majority of those who come to the Catholic confessional, psychotherapy, or biblical counseling.
- 5 Lawrence LeShan, *Association for Humanistic Psychology*, October, 1984, p. 4.



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Unless otherwise indicated, articles are written by Martin and Deidre Bobgan.

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## Hidden in Plain Sight Aargh! *(continued from page 1)*

checked his pastor's church website and also went to another site with the pastor's name as part of the website name. We briefly examined both websites and concluded that this is a church we could possibly attend if it were nearby. We also concluded that we could benefit from this pastor's online teachings. Nevertheless this supporter's pastor missed what is hidden in plain sight, for he responded as follows:

I'm no fan of psychology...but after reading the main article, I was troubled by all of the assertions without any documentation. Especially in light of the commandment not to bear false witness, the authors called out other men by name without showing where these other men have sinned. Even their example of counseling was invented. No doubt such a marriage "counseling" session could & likely does happen, but it's a stretch to go from the imaginary session to an indictment of anyone and everyone involved in biblical counseling....

A major concern of this pastor was that we made "assertions without documentation." Hidden in plain sight to this pastor was the fact that, according to The Institute for Nouthetic Studies, "Dr. Adams is the founder of the modern biblical counseling movement and is the author of the groundbreaking book *Competent to Counsel*." As we noted in the article, Adams was influenced by "Dr. O. Hobart Mowrer, who was a research professor of psychology." Adams clearly admitted that his experience with Dr. Mowrer, was "a turning point in my thinking."

### The Gold Standard

We often explain how Adams' counseling model becomes sinful as follows: Adams's pre- and post-Mowrer experiences led him to retrofit psychological

problem-centered counseling conversations, which depend on data gathering, prying, and probing, which provoke sinful speaking, into what he named "nouthetic counseling." It is important to note, as we said in the article, the turning point in Adams' thinking resulted in the adaptation of the psychological counseling model in which sinful, problem-centered conversations become the means of cure.

**The sinful content of biblical counseling arises from Adams' exposure to the kind of counseling that calls for transparency.**

Adams' psychological counseling model then became the gold standard for all the biblical counseling that followed. All of the biblical counseling videos and written case studies we have seen and read follow the Adams' gold standard of the psychological format of transparency. The sinful content of biblical counseling arises from Adams' exposure to the kind of counseling that calls for transparency. Self-exposure during counseling is a psychotherapeutic necessity.

A transparent object is one that can be seen through. Metaphorically speaking, transparency in counseling means being personally open about oneself and one's life so that the counselor can try to figure out how to help. Transparency may sound good, but no one is truly transparent in counseling and, worse yet, this openness results in sinful conversations in the counseling office as stories are told and enlarged by the counselors' probing questions.

Both the counselee and the counselor are guilty of violating Scripture. Both the counselee and the counselor come into the conversation expecting that the

counselee will transparently reveal the sins he perceives to have been committed by others. Then the counselor will typically seek for details and descriptions to determine how the sins of others have contributed to the counselee's problems. Thus the means of help ends up being a sinful conversation as the result of expectations and excursions into areas that are prohibited in Scripture.

### The Case

In the January-February article we include a marital counseling example by Adams. We say: The following example is of a couple in contention, who need instruction and perhaps discipline rather than a platform for complaining and demeaning each other. This example is from Adams' book *The Case of the "Hopeless" Marriage: A Nouthetic Counseling Case from Beginning to End* (hereafter *The Case*) in which he demonstrates how to counsel.<sup>2</sup>

Keep in mind that Adams fathered the Nouthetic counseling approach, which is, as we said, the gold standard for all the biblical counseling that followed. Adams wrote *The Case* to demonstrate how counseling should ideally be done by all biblical counselors. *The Case* is more revealing than a literal, live case, because it shows the very best possible biblical counseling according to Adams, who, by fathering the movement, is the best possible counselor to construct the best possible biblical counseling case for all biblical counselors to follow. All the counseling we have seen from the leaders of the BCM essentially follow Adams' prototype, illustrated in *The Case*.

Our full critical review of Adams' counseling case of Bert and Sue (counselees) and Pastor Greg (counselor) can be found in our book *Biblical Counseling Review (BCR)*, which includes six other counseling cases. All

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six leaders of the BCM will tell you these are live or enacted model cases, which we reveal are actually filled with sinful conversations. All six follow the Adams' Nouthetic counseling format as showcased in *The Case* as the ideal way to counsel.

## **Invented or Quoted?**

The pastor quoted earlier critically says that the Bobgans' "example of counseling was invented," and refers to it as "an imaginary session." We did not invent the counseling quoted from Adams' book *The Case*, nor imagine it. We merely quoted this ideal case according to Adams, which he set up for others to emulate. And they have emulated him, as one will see reading the six cases in *BCR*, which can be downloaded free at our website.

The pastor himself also lays some charges against biblical counselors, which are only sometimes true. However, he misses seeing what is uniformly true, but hidden in plain sight. Always following the psychological counseling gold-standard format, the biblical counselors are often into sin-saturated counseling, as we have demonstrated clearly, but the pastor did not see it.

Based upon his misunderstanding and misrepresentation of our "Hidden in Plain Sight" article, the critical pastor claims that we have made "an indictment of anyone and everyone involved in biblical counseling" and that we "group all biblical counselors into one lump general category, and publicly state accusations of others without documentation." The present-day BCM has known and recognized leaders in the movement. All of the biblical counseling we have seen follows the Adams' format as seen in *The Case*.

Because the most sinful counseling those in the BCM do is marriage counseling, we note in the article that, in viewing or reading over 50 biblical

counseling cases conducted by leaders in the BCM, we found numerous violations of Ephesians 5:22-33. These leaders, in all these more than 50 biblical counseling cases, follow the Adams' gold standard demonstrated in *The Case*. It is appropriate to lump them into one category of doing sinful counseling, because that is what they are doing by following Adams' lead, but this pastor does not see what is hidden in plain sight. Furthermore, all of these cases with their multiplicity of sessions are set up as ideal examples to follow and are seen by a multitude of counselors in training and numerous others worldwide, all of which reveals the extent of the spiritual damage that has been done.

**The problem we have with counseling is that it is problem-centered and inevitably leads to sinful speaking.**

## **Hypothetical or Literal?**

Contrary to what we have shown, the supporter mentioned earlier said of his pastor, "He makes some good points." He also said that we "used a hypothetical for [our] Scriptural critique." One can hardly call using Adams' ideal example of biblical counseling as hypothetical, since he based his book on his past counseling experience and since he fathered the movement that all the leaders of the movement follow. Hypothetical? No. Ideal of what counseling is at Adams' best? Yes.

Those who see what is hidden in plain sight will see Adams' *The Case* as an excellent counseling case example, which exposes how sinful modern-day biblical counseling is because it has followed the psychotherapy transparency format. However, many will see nothing wrong in *The Case* or with the other live, literal counseling cases, in spite of all we have written biblically exposing the sinful conversations of counseling.

## **Latter Day Invention**

Keep in mind the following: the first of the 50 States to issue a clinical psychologist's license was 1958 in California, followed by the Marriage and Family Therapy license issued in 1963. The other States followed suit years later. Think about the fact that the modern-day BCM began in 1970 with the publication of *Competent to Counsel* by Adams. That book initiated the BCM promoting the copy-cat, psychological format of counseling learned from the psychotherapist O. Hobart Mowrer. A little over 60 years ago there were no licensed psychotherapists and less than 50 years ago there was not a BCM. According to Dr. David Powlison, a leader in the BCM, biblical counseling as conducted in the BCM is newly arrived in the church.<sup>3</sup>

Once upon a time there was no licensed problem-centered counseling as we know it today, except for psychoanalysis. There were no degreed and licensed counselors who charged money for ongoing conversations about the issues of life. That was sixty years ago. Now this sinful problem-centered counseling has become so much a part of our culture that speaking out against it, as we do, raises eyebrows and hackles. However, the problem we have with counseling is that it is problem-centered and inevitably leads to sinful speaking.

## **Problem-Centered Counseling**

Problem-centered counseling is made up of conversations about the kinds of personal and relational troubles, difficulties, and dilemmas normally taken to a psychological or biblical counselor and discussed in detail and at length with the counselor. They are the mental-emotional-behavioral problems of living that are normally surfaced in counseling and constitute the center of the conversation. Although the counselees generally come in with a problem-centered mind-

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set, the counselors are the ones who are primarily responsible for the corrupt conversations that follow, through their questions and responses.

Problem-centered counseling is **not** the same as confession. We are not Roman Catholics, but give the following as an example. Problem-centered counseling is **not** like a Catholic confessional in which a person comes alone as a penitent, sorrowful about some sin or wrongdoing on her part and seeking forgiveness.<sup>4</sup> Note the person (penitent) is confessing her own sin and not those of others.

Contrary to the Catholic confessional, problem-centered counseling generally flows in the opposite direction in that the counselee is typically confessing sins of others who are usually not present, thus making public to a third party what was formerly private and at the same time violating biblical admonitions to the contrary. The Catholic confessional does not consist of repeated meetings about problems with on-going discussions comprised of confessing the sins of others, unbiblically accusing and blaming them, and publicizing their personal and private lives.

The repentant sinner who confesses her own sins rather than those of others is unique in biblical counseling. While in many instances it would be beneficial if the one in need would first confess her own sins before discussing the reason for seeking help, it is unlikely to happen because we live in a 2 Timothy 3, last-days era. At least it has not happened in all the biblical counseling we have seen, heard, and read. And, it has not happened in almost forty years of our own ministry to others.

The theories and therapies and the current practice of biblical counseling have become so embedded in the minds of Christians that they have difficulty

understanding that there is anything amiss with this kind of counseling. The definition of *psyche* is “the human soul, mind, or spirit.” In other words, the theories and therapies of psychology do not apply to the body, but rather to the immaterial part of the person, which is the realm of the soul, mind, or spirit. This is the very area of life that the Bible addresses. People come to psychotherapy because they desire help with their lives. The help they need is related to trials, tribulations, and troubles they are experiencing and for which they are in need. The Bible is sufficient to deal with such issues without the kind of transparency that is brought forth in counseling with its sinful conversations, which tend to impede spiritual growth.

**“Psychotherapy may be known  
in the future as the greatest  
hoax of the twentieth century.”**

**Dr. Lawrence LeShan**

### The World, the Flesh, and the Devil

The conversational approach of biblical counselors follows the conversational approach of psychological counselors, which is problem-centered. These psychological conversations are worldly verbal interchanges between a psychotherapist and a client. All of the many literal or portrayed as perfect biblical counseling cases we have observed include this worldly, problem-centered conversational approach. After a person comes into the Christian faith, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (Gal. 5:17). Problem-centered conversations open one up to all kinds of fleshly, sinful talk on the part of the counselee and unrestricted questions and responses on the part of the counselor that appeal to the flesh.

Those Christians who do not see what is hidden in plain sight are missing the answers already given in Scripture and thereby turning to the world, the flesh and the devil. The devil is pleased

with those believers who do not see what should be obvious in Scripture regarding the answers to life’s problems. Satan is pleased when they turn to the arm of the flesh, whereby he can feed subtle lies about the sufficiency of Scripture, about themselves, and about others. There is much self-deception in counseling as counsees believe and tell their biased stories and as counselors enable sinful conversations.

Though naively or ignorantly done, those practitioners and participants in either psychological or current-day biblical counseling are by their very words following the world and the flesh and pleasing the devil! That applies to pastors, churches, Christian schools, bible colleges, seminaries, universities, denominations, and mission agencies. As we said in a prior newsletter, the president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, Dr. Lawrence LeShan, once said: “Psychotherapy may be known in the future as the greatest hoax of the twentieth century.”<sup>5</sup> It may eventually be recognized as one of the greatest heresies of modern-day Christianity.

We repeat the challenge of many years: To Christians who support, promote, or practice either psychological or biblical counseling, we continue to offer the following challenge: “Provide one live, literal (not enacted) psychological or biblical counseling session that does not violate Scripture.” To date no one has been able to provide one for us! Please keep in mind that every word, every sentence, every expression in counseling must conform to Scripture. If contrary to the admonitions, prohibitions, and restrictions of Scripture, the counseling is sinful. Those who see what is hidden in plain sight, even with a minimal knowledge of Scripture, can win a debate with those who are most biblically knowledgeable—**provided** that the sole subject of the debate is centered on actual counseling conversations. (continued on page 5)