

Against Psychotherapy



For the Bible



Martin and Deidre Bobgan

Against Psychotherapy: For the Bible

Scripture quotations are taken from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise indicated.

Against Psychotherapy / For the Bible

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Published by EastGate Publishers

Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024902754

ISBN 978-0941717-34-2

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Against Psychotherapy / For the Bible is dedicated to those Christians who have full confidence in God's Word and Holy Spirit to transform believers into the image of Christ. They deeply and passionately believe and understand that to be *For the Bible* (Words of God) means that a Christian will be *Against Psychotherapy* (words of fallen and fallible humans) for the trials, tribulations, and troubles of life.

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Preface

Many years ago, we traveled through the dark terrain of psychology hoping to discover the secrets of human nature and how to help people suffering from problems of living. The more we explored the theories and therapies of counseling psychology, the more we saw its fallacies, failures, and false ways. It was not until the bright light of the Gospel shined into our lives that we saw hope for humanity and found God's answer for trials, tribulations, and troubles of life! Our belief in the effectiveness of soul care, previously rooted in psychological approaches, shifted to the biblical way, emphasizing biblical soul care instead of worldly psychotherapy.

After six university degrees between us, with one being a doctorate, the two of us concluded early on that psychotherapy was a **hoax** being perpetrated on the American public. One of us was elected to Phi Beta Kappa "the oldest academic honor society in the United States and the most prestigious."¹ The doctorate from the University of Colorado qualified one of us for the Clinical Psychologist license in California but was never applied for. Some years later the president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, Dr. Lawrence LeShan, said: "Psychotherapy may be known in the future as the greatest hoax of the twentieth century."² **Worse yet, the worldly theories and therapies of counseling psychology (psychotherapy) are two of the greatest heresies in the Church today. They are demonic deceptions that have wreaked havoc with**

many Christians coming under their spell. As soon as we saw the vast difference between the world's psychological theories and therapies and the biblical doctrines of salvation and living the new life in Christ, we were aghast at the very idea of believers turning to the psychological way of understanding themselves and resolving life's difficulties. We were shocked at the confidence Christian leaders placed in these psychological theories and therapies, which had been devised by unbelievers, some of whom were anti-Bible and anti-Christ. Why were these seasoned Christians not able to see what is so very clear to so many discerning Christian leaders, academics, scholars, and us? What could be done?

All we could do was talk about the problem with pastors, church leaders, and fellow Christians. Next, we were given an opportunity to initiate and direct a soul care ministry in a local church. We trained believers in the congregation to minister to fellow believers. Much of the training involved revealing the human-devised nature of psychotherapy and building confidence in the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in believers to deal with life's issues.

Before launching into *Against Psychotherapy: For the Bible*, some disclosure on our part is necessary. We believe and have taught for over 50 years that the Word of God, the cross of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit are sufficient to deal with the **nonorganic soul care issues of life**. Additionally, those suffering from bodily illnesses and disorders can receive spiritual comfort and encouragement to walk with Christ through their terrible trials, tribulations, and troubles. All that is needed for the personal, relational life issues, which many pastors now regularly refer to

psychotherapy, is already available in the Bible. For nearly 2000 years, the Bible has been the sole source of relief for the soul regarding life issues for believers. Christians who believe in God's Word and follow Christ do not need the fallen, fallible theories or sinful conversations of psychotherapy.

Endorsements

We have co-authored 26 books, some for Moody Press, Harvest House Publishers, and Bethany House Publishers. Some of our books have been translated into 12 languages, including Chinese, the world's most-spoken language. We have also written over 300 articles for Christians on a variety of subjects, have ministered to others for over 50 years, and for years headed the soul care ministry at a local church. Throughout this time period, we have monitored the evolving landscape of the theories and therapies of counseling psychology. Specifically, we have identified the rise of what the subtitle of our *PsychoHeresy* book calls *The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*.³ In our first book, *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way*, published in 1979, we chronicled its beginnings and warned about the coming dangers of what we called "the psychological way."⁴ On the cover we ask the question, "Are Christianity and Psychotherapy Compatible?" The rest of the book and our continued research and writing over many years respond with a firm "No!"

Many respected Christians, academics, and scholars in psychology and psychiatry have endorsed our position on psychotherapy. At the time of publishing the original edition

of *PsychoHeresy* (1987),⁵ trustworthy Christians gave written endorsements for the book, including the following:

Dr. Jay E. Adams, Professor of Practical Theology, Westminster Theological Seminary, author of over 100 books, wrote:

Some people will say the Bobgans are hitting too hard—naming names and all that—but I don't think so. Whenever someone writes for the Christian public, he sets forth his views to the scrutiny of others, but if others think what he says is dangerous to the church, they, like Paul (who named names too), have an obligation to say so. The chapter "Amalgamania" is the best. Indeed, it should be enlarged and made into an entire book!⁶

Dave Hunt, the author of numerous books including *Beyond Seduction* and coauthor of *The Seduction of Christianity*, wrote:

Experts in the secular world are increasingly expressing their disillusionment with psychotherapy and exposing both its impotence to help and its power to harm. At the same time, growing numbers of Christians are awakening to the staggering fact that many church leaders, though well-intentioned, are feeding psychotherapy's deadly poison to the Body of Christ. Alarmed by the accelerating psychologizing of Christianity, a larger segment of the church than most leaders realize is looking for definite answers to specific questions.

In my travels I am repeatedly confronted by those who want to know exactly where and why the

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teachings and practices of specified Christian psychologists are not Biblical. No one is better qualified to provide such answers than Martin and Deidre Bobgan, and this is exactly what they have done in the following pages. In so doing, they have rendered a great service to the church.⁷

W. Phillip Keller, author of more than thirty-five books, including *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, wrote:

The modern church is being inundated with human philosophy. It has been deluded into believing that psychology and psychiatry can be used to replace the eternal verities of God's Word in the redemption of mankind. Martin and Deidre Bobgan warn God's people of this great peril.⁸

Dr. J. Vernon McGee, pastor and Bible teacher on "Thru the Bible Radio," wrote:

This is a book that should have been written ten years ago, and the message should be gotten to every conservative pastor in this nation today. It has a very important message for this hour.⁹

Ed Payne, M. D., Professor of Family Medicine, Medical College of Georgia, and author of *Biblical/Medical Ethics*, wrote:

This book is devastating to those who would choose the "psychological way." Its research is extensive, thorough, and well-documented. There are many insightful, often profound statements that point out the discrepancy between biblical counseling and psychotherapy. If Christians who practice

psychotherapy read this book, they will have to increase the complexity of their mental gymnastics to justify their position. It is difficult to see how they can refute the precise biblical analysis contained in this book.¹⁰

Leonard Ravenhill, evangelist, conference speaker, and author, wrote:

This psychoheresy is a menace and threatening to become a plague in the pulpit. Your trumpet voice is needed against what I think is nothing less than heresy.¹¹

One of the most distinguished scholars is psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz.¹² The theme of his book *The Myth of Psychotherapy: Mental Healing as Religion, Rhetoric, and Repression* is similar to our first book, *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way*, published after his book.

Szasz was a university professor who wrote numerous books and articles. His writings were controversial, and he became one of the best-known psychiatrists of the 20th century. One of his many statements that rankled psychotherapists was given in his discussion of mental health care. Szasz recommended that the responsibility for mental health care should be taken away from the mental health professions and given to voluntary associations such as churches. He said: “I would turn this whole business [mental health] back to the ministers and priests and rabbis.”¹³

In endorsing our book *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way* (1979), Szasz said:

The way we now conceive of psychotherapy may be as important morally and politically, as had been the way eighteenth-century Americans conceived of Blacks. Then, Blacks were classified as chattel rather than as people; now various human encounters are classified as psychotherapies rather than religions. Although I do not share the Bobgans' particular religious views, I do share their conviction that the human relations we now call "psychotherapy" are, in fact, matters of religion—and that we mislabel them as "therapeutic" at great risk to our spiritual well-being. This is an important book.¹⁴

Dr. E. Fuller Torrey, clinical and research psychiatrist, internationally known for his research on schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and author of numerous books, including *Witchdoctors and Psychiatrists*, endorsed *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way* by saying:

The Bobgans have produced a unique and helpful book which puts "psychotherapy" back where it belongs. Spiritual counseling is as valid and effective a way to assist people who have problems of living and is in fact more honest ... than most. For people with problems of living who share the Bobgans' spiritual worldview, their approach would be the most effective. *The Psychological Way/ The Spiritual Way* is incisive, well-reasoned, well written, and an important addition to literature on counseling and psychotherapy.¹⁵

In endorsing the original edition of our book *PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, Szasz says:

Traditionally, people sought counsel for problems in living in religion. Today, for the most part, they seek it in psychiatry and psychology. We are in grave danger of ignoring the competition and conflict between these two approaches, or worse, declaring the religious approach unscientific and therefore illegitimate. Deidre and Martin Bobgan are exceptionally able and wise protagonists and protectors of the religious—explicitly Christian—approach to counseling. Their work is important, and I recommend it highly.¹⁶

Hidden in Plain Sight

In addition to our background and endorsements, we have viewed numerous psychotherapy sessions and read many of the psychotherapy cases and academic treatises. As a result, we are opposed to psychotherapy for all Christians, because God:

According as his divine power, hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:3-4.)

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A paramount concern about psychotherapy is clearly hidden in plain sight. Therefore, we will be describing what is hidden in plain sight and why we are *Against Psychotherapy* for Christians.

Use of Terms

Throughout this book, we use the terms *psychotherapist*, *therapist*, *client*, *counselor*, *counselee*, and *counseling* when what we say is related to psychotherapy. We use the terms *psychotherapist* and *counselor* to designate the person who counsels. Also, we use the terms *psychotherapy* and *counseling* to indicate the process. Because counseling is essentially a female-friendly activity and because women comprise the large majority of the counselors and counselees, we use the feminine gender when referring to the counselors and counselees, as is the common practice today and as in all the literature.

Each state licenses psychotherapists to provide psychotherapy (talk) that is limited to the education received to obtain the license and their professional association's standards. These are the persons to whom pastors refer their congregants for guidance and help regarding personal, marital, and family problems of living **for which the Bible already provides God's perfect guidance and help.**

Most Important

From our first book, *The Psychological Way/ The Spiritual Way*, published in 1979, a major theme of our research and writing has been the title of this current book, *Against Psychotherapy: For the Bible*. By reading this book, one will see what is hidden in plain sight for many

Christians. In this book, we simplify as much as possible what needs to be understood to be *Against Psychotherapy* and *For the Bible*.

In this current book, we reveal briefly and as simply as possible the academic case against psychotherapy. We have written both books and articles about **psychoheresy**, which includes **psychotherapy**. In this book, **our primary focus is on psychotherapy**. The first eight chapters comprise just a brief glimpse into the great array of research that debunks the use of psychotherapy. We have a multitude of references to substantial and significant research that entirely discredits psychotherapy. The endnotes in our books *PsychoHeresy: Revised & Expanded* (over 700 endnotes) and *The End of "Christian Psychology"* (over 600 endnotes), plus numerous endnotes in many of our other books, should open eyes to the errors, failures, fallacies, and spiritual dangers of psychotherapy for Christians. We also have over 300 articles on our website, many of which discredit psychotherapy.

In Chapter 5 we state the obvious: Both psychotherapy and the Bible itself have solely and only words to offer the listener. There is a spiritual battle between the words of fallen and fallible humans (psychotherapy) and the words of God (Bible) regarding the soul. Chapter 6 may be the most difficult to comprehend. In it, we show that because psychotherapy is predicated upon problem-centered conversations, counselees and counselors end up sinning because of the open-ended way problems are discussed. In Chapter 7, we expose the fact that biblical counselors are, in fact, psychological integrationists. In Chapter 8 we elaborate on why we are *Against Psychotherapy*. Our concluding

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Chapter 9, “For the Bible,” gives a brief glimpse into the Bible's vast resources for believers.

We pray that, after reading this entire book and understanding its contents, you will be empowered to know what is hidden in plain sight to Christians across the entire spectrum of the Church. The Bible provides deep and abiding riches for living the life God created for humans both now and forever. As God’s Word is trusted, applied by the Holy Spirit, and followed, believers are transformed into the image of Christ and enabled to walk by His life in them.

Endnotes

- ¹ “Phi Beta Kappa,” Wikipedia.
- ² Lawrence Le Shan, Association for Humanistic Psychology, 1984, p. 4.
- ³ Martin & Deidre Bobgan. *PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, Revised and expanded. Santa Barbara, CA: EastGate Publishers, 2012.
- ⁴ Martin and Deidre Bobgan. *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1979, republished by EastGate Publishers, 2023, and posted as a free ebook on <https://pamweb.org>.
- ⁵ Martin & Deidre Bobgan. *PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity*, Santa Barbara, CA: EastGate Publishers, 1987.
- ⁶ Jay E. Adams endorsement of the original edition of *Psychoheresy*, *ibid.*
- ⁷ Dave Hunt, “Foreword,” *Psychoheresy*, *ibid.*
- ⁸ W. Phillip Keller endorsement of original edition of *Psychoheresy*, *ibid.*
- ⁹ J. Version McGee endorsement of *ibid.*
- ¹⁰ Ed Payne endorsement of *ibid.*
- ¹¹ Leonard Ravenhill endorsement of *ibid.*
- ¹² “Thomas Szasz,” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Szasz.
- ¹³ “Nobody Should Decide Who Goes to the Mental Hospital,” *Co-Evolution Quarterly*, Summer, 1978, p. 60.
- ¹⁴ Thomas Szasz endorsement of. *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way* by Martin and Deidre Bobgan, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1979, back cover.
- ¹⁵ E. Fuller Torry endorsement of *The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way*, op. cit. back cover.
- ¹⁶ Thomas Szasz endorsement of *PsychoHeresy*, op. cit. 1987 edition.