A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN NATURE AND EFFECTIVE COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

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Integration of Christian Faith and Psychology: Five Views (E. L. Johnson, 2010)

1. Levels-of-Explanation (Scientific) View (psychology and theology are viewed as separate but equally important disciplines);

2. Integration View (psychology is taken seriously while subjecting it ultimately to Scriptural or biblical truth properly interpreted);

3. Christian Psychology View (psychology is grounded in Scripture and in biblical and historical theology);

4. Transformational Psychology View (psychology is grounded in spiritual formation as psychology in the Spirit); and

5. Biblical Counseling View (the Bible is used as the foundational and essential basis for counseling).

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Assumptions in "Embodied Integration" (Neff & McMinn, 2020, pg. 22)

1. Integration happens between people…Integration happens in conversation.

2. Integration is lived out in real lives, embodied in the person of the psychotherapist, which means it is more desirable to train integrators than to attempt mastering, articulating, or communicating a discipline known as 'integration.'

3. Integration is embedded in social and cultural contexts and therefore will have some variation to it.

4. All truth is God's truth. This is not to say that everything is true, but rather that every true thing comes from God. Christianity and psychology both belong in the conversation, and each can help transform our understanding of the other.

5. Ideas are important. Ideas explored in interaction with particular contexts are particularly meaningful.

A Basic View of Human Nature from a Biblical Perspective (Tan, 1991, pp. 50-51)

1. Basic psychological and spiritual needs include needs for security (love), significance (meaning/impact), and hope (forgiveness).

2. Basic problem is sin – but not all emotional suffering is due to personal sin. Ultimate goal of humanity is to know God and have spiritual health.

3. Ultimate goal of humanity is to know God and have spiritual health.

4. Problem feelings are usually due to problem behavior and, more fundamentally, problem thinking – however, biological and demonic factors should also be considered.

5. Holistic view of persons – all have physical, mental/emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions.

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Basic Principles of Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Biblical and Evidence-Based Perspective (Tan & Scalise, 2016, pp. 62-63; see also Tan, 2022)

1. The Holy Spirit's ministry as counselor is crucial: depend on him (John 14:16-17; Eph. 5:18).

2. The Bible is a basic and comprehensive (not exhaustive) guide for counseling (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

3. Prayer is an integral part of biblical counseling (James 5:16).

4. The ultimate goal of counseling is maturity in Christ (Rom 8:29; 2 Pet. 3:18) and fulfilling the Great Commission.

5. The personal qualities of the counselor are important, especially spiritual ones (Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16; Rom. 12:8; Gal. 6:1-2; Gal. 5:22-23).

6. The client's attitudes, motivations, and desire for help are important.

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7. The relationship between counselor and client is significant.

8. Effective counseling is a process involving exploration, understanding, and action phases, with a focus on changing problem thinking.

9. The style or approach in counseling should be flexible (1 Thess. 5:14).

10. Specific techniques or methods in counseling should be consistent with Scripture (1 Thess. 5:21); cognitive-behavioral ones may be especially helpful, with qualifications.

11. Cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural counseling skills are required.

12. Outreach and prevention skills in the context of a caring community are important.

13. Crisis counseling is important.

14. Awareness of limitations and referral skills are also important.

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