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## *The Uniqueness of a Christian Worldview in Counseling*

*Terry & Sandra Lodico*

There are over two hundred personality models in psychology today. The majority of these theories approach counseling from a perspective that says that all that can be known about human behavior is that which can be observed. This approach benefits therapy by profiling emotional and mental health symptoms for diagnosing and giving direction for treatment. In addition, behavioral studies continue to assess the best therapeutic approaches that prove to be effective for resolving unique psychological or behavioral issues. And, scientific technology continues to unlock our understanding of the brain and nervous system giving further insight to our pathologies.

A Christian perspective, though recognizing the appreciably helpful methodology above, looks at a second source of knowledge for insight, the Scripture. God's Word teaches that we have been wonderfully created. Man is made up of not only a material body, but also an immaterial personal-self called the soul or spirit, in the image of God (Ge. 1:26, 2:7)<sup>1</sup>. A Christian worldview, therefore, looks to scripture for the presuppositions to guide our thoughts in how to view the nature of personality and psychological problems.<sup>2</sup> This personality model begins to explain how we approach therapy at Covenant Counseling.

What is unique about a Christian worldview in counseling? The uniqueness is in the understanding of the personality.

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<sup>1</sup> Scripture gives us a great deal of insight into what is meant by the statement we are "created in the image of God." One insight is that we desire intimacy as God desires intimacy. We are like God in that we have jurisdictions of responsibility or dominions of authority. This is important to understand in regards to marriage and the raising of children. In addition, moral laws reflect God's nature and created design, therefore, the means for man's successful living. These laws are a blessing to believers and non-believers alike when they govern a person's conscious. An example would be the effect of internalized moral laws on depression. Some people commit crimes when depressed and others will not commit crimes, based upon the degree of moral fortitude. A developed moral conscious often guides one away from destructive behaviors when emotionally vulnerable. On the other hand, God's goal that we experience "abundant life" (John. 10:10b), requires salvation and sanctification, being set free from the penalty of sin (i.e., death), and free from the power of the sinful nature that drives us to sin and to habits of unhealthy behavior.

<sup>2</sup> Knowledge that we gain by observation of God's creation is called, theologically, general revelation. Behavioral psychology restricts its approach to this revelation. Scripture is classified as special revelation as it reveals what general revelation does not; the wisdom and purpose of God, the nature of man and the means to an intimate relationship with God.