

# A Paradigm Shift From Pastoral Counseling to Nouthetic Counseling in the Southern Baptist Convention: Jay Adams' Approach

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**Abstract:** *The word nouthesia is a Greek word its verb form is noutheteo, which has to do with to admonish, correct or instruct. Nouthetic counseling not a new idea to the Bible, but pastoral counseling has been promoted as the practice of advising and guiding people in the church until recently when some scholars such as Jay Adams begin to advocate the need to go back to the Bible. This article investigates the paradigm shift in history from the pastoral counseling to the nouthetic counseling in the Southern Baptist Convention, which is one of the most prominent Christian denominations in the United States. It is the responsibility of Christian counselors in the twenty-first century, to guide and counsel biblically to advance the course of Christianity in the age of relativism. The article critically addresses that similarities and differences between pastoral counseling and nouthetic counseling. It also submits to the practical and effective use of nouthetic counseling approach that focuses on the change of heart of man by the power of God through his word and the help of the Holy Spirit.*

## 1. Introduction

The emergence of nouthetic counseling in the field of counseling is a remarkable phenomenon in Christian theology today. This field of the counseling that argues for the sufficiency of scripture in addressing every human difficulty including psychological problems is contrary to the pastoral counseling that advocates for the integration of secular psychology, physiotherapy and philosophy with theology. While Lambert advocates for the integration of psychology into biblical counseling because it will enable the Christian counselor to engage an atheistic society and the relativistic culture, Adams believe that a Christian counselor's duty is to evangelize and not to engage people.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Adam believes that the duty of a Christian is to proclaim the Gospel of Christ instead of dialogue. Several scholars have contributed to the discussion of the shift from pastoral counseling to biblical counseling most especially in the Southern Baptist Convention. Although Wayne Oates, a professor in one of the seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, was considered to be one of the pioneers of pastoral counseling into theology, Jay Adams was one of those who advocates for the sufficiency of scripture in the field of Christian counseling.<sup>2</sup> The SBC decided to pass a resolution in its annual session in 2002 in an attempt "to reclaim practical biblical wisdom, Christ-centered counseling, and the restorative ministry of the care and cure of souls."<sup>3</sup>

The resolution of the SBC is fundamental for the purpose of upholding the view that scripture is "sufficient to answer comprehensively the deepest needs of the human heart" which appears to be in line with Adams opinion.<sup>4</sup> This work

will investigate the paradigm shift from pastoral Counseling to biblical counseling in the SBC in order to find out the similarities and differences of Jay Adams' principles of counseling and pastoral counseling. In an attempt to explore this paradigm shift, the first segment of this research will focus on nouthetic Counseling. The second segment will discuss the history of pastoral counseling and Nouthetic Counseling in Southern Baptist Convention and the third segment will address the Contemporary Pastoral Counseling in line with similarities and differences of nouthetic and pastoral counseling.

## 2. What is Nouthetic Counseling?

Nouthetic counseling emerged in the 70s by several scholars; however, Matthew R. Akers in his work upholds that counseling may be institutionalized recently but the practice of advising people is as old as the human race.<sup>5</sup> Jay Adams was one of the founding fathers of this field of counseling. The word nouthetic derives from the Greek word νουθετώ, which connotes admonition, instruction or warning.<sup>6</sup> In his work, *The Christian Counselor's Manual: The Practice of Nouthetic Counseling*, Jay Adams define nouthetic confrontation in terms of counseling as "discernment of wrong doing in another that God wants changed, verbal confrontation of another with the word of God in order to change his attitude and behavior and confrontation another for his benefit."<sup>7</sup> This kind of counseling is grounded in scripture, concentrated on Christ and renounces conventional psychology and psychiatry by seeing it as humanistic and as essentially opposed to Christianity and as radically worldly. The main focus of nouthetic counseling has to do with the art of using the Bible to address the counselee's behavior by using a Christian

<sup>1</sup>Heath Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movements after Adams*. Wheaton Ill, : crossway 2012.

<sup>2</sup>David Winfery, Southern Baptist Reject "pastoral counseling" Biblical Therapy.

<sup>3</sup> Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, One Hundred and Forty –fifth Session, One hundred and Fifty seventh Year, Saint Louis, Missouri, June 11-12, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> David Winfrey, Southern Baptists reject "pastoral counseling" Biblical therapy...24.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew R. Akers, 'Nouthetic Confrontation in 1-2 Samuel: Two Case Studies' in the Journal of Mid American Baptist Theological Seminary, Vol.2, 2015:9-19.

<sup>6</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of the Biblical Language with Semantic Domain: Greek*, Oak Harbor: 1997.

<sup>7</sup>Jay E. Adams, *The Christian counselor's manual: the practice of Nouthetic Counseling*. Zondervan, 1986:14.

approach especially in a manner related to the biblical concept of sin. Andre Ernest Godsey declares "The targets of nouthetic counseling, a Bible-based therapeutic technique, are those counselee behaviors that are related to the Christian concept of sin. Hence, the controlling criteria for treatment, the diagnostic model, and the prescription for a psychosocial illness among believing Christians are held by nouthetic counselors to have been formulated some two millennia ago, and these principles are embodied within the Holy Bible."<sup>8</sup> According to MacArthur and Mack Nouthetic counseling is the "primary agent of constructive change in the lives of counselee as fostered by the Holy Spirit"<sup>9</sup> Ed Bulkley notes concerning the biblical counseling's view of the sufficiency of scripture:

A necessary presupposition of biblical counseling is that God has indeed provided every essential truth the believer needs for a happy, fulfilling life in Christ Jesus. It is the belief that God has not left us lacking in any sense. The apostle Peter states it emphatically in his second epistle: "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness" (2Pet.1:3). Note the word everything. God has provided absolutely everything man needs for physical and spiritual life. This is a primary consideration. If Peter is correct, then God has given us all the information we need to function successfully in this life. Every essential truth, every essential principle, every essential technique for solving human problems has been delivered in God's Word.<sup>10</sup>

Wayne Grudem, a systematic theologian, supports Bulkley concerning the sufficiency of scripture by saying "Scripture [contains] all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly."<sup>11</sup> There is no doubt about the fact that nouthetic counseling is very important for ministry most especially in the age of a post-Christian culture. The principles of nouthetic counseling and confrontation were used even in the Old Testament when Nathan confronted David with his sinful acts concerning the case of Uriah's wife and Samuel also confronted Saul about his disobedience of God's command. Jay Adams accentuates that personal qualification to confront people men nouthetically must be accompanied by doctrinal prowess in preparing the minister of God for ministry as this is also reflected in Titus and I Timothy.<sup>12</sup> The resolution of the Southern Baptist Convention in her annual session in 2002 reflects the weakness of

incorporating secular psychology into theology. The report affirms that "physicians and counselors often ignore human sin and its effects, neglect our most fundamental human and spiritual needs, and therefore misunderstand our condition, mistreat our problems, and sometimes unintentionally do more harm than good."<sup>13</sup> The decision of the SBC eventually informs the reason why the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary took the leading by changing its pastoral counseling program into a biblical counseling program in 2005.<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that the decision is not only necessary but also important for the purpose of restoring biblical principles and wisdom into the theological education of the seminary and the denomination in bringing about of care and healing for the souls of men. The description of the resolution and the emphasis of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary clearly indicate that the SBC is in favor of the nouthetic counseling in line with Jay Adams instead of Wayne Oates.

Several authors have attempted to analyze the thought and views of Jay Adams on nouthetic counseling and biblical counseling. If one looks at scripture carefully, one will find out that the mode of instruction and guidance used by the Holy Spirit is the word of God. It is interesting to note that scripture calls the word of God the sword of the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the triune God. The Holy Spirit in his counseling function at conversion convicts, converts and conforms sinners who accept Jesus into their lives into the image of Jesus Christ. In addition it is important to note that the same word of God was quoted by Jesus Christ to overcome the temptation by the devil in Matthew 4:1-11, which buttresses the authenticity and efficacy of the word of God. In his work, *Know the Truth: A Handbook of Christian Belief*, Milne Bruce affirms the sufficiency and efficacy of Scripture as he asserts, "the Bible teaches that it is directly and sovereignly inspired by God and is therefore to be submitted to as his living word addressed directly to us."<sup>15</sup> It is on account of this that one may say that nouthetic counseling propounded and promoted by Jay Adams and the attempt of SBC to refocus modalities of pastoral counseling to biblical counseling support its belief in the sufficiency of scripture to address and handle every problem and difficulty of life that may confront a person.

There is no doubt about the fact that nouthetic/ biblical counseling has been criticized by several scholars especially those who are not conservative because of their various misconceptions about it. Angel Hand writes that "rather than refuting this broad generalization with a second generalization that nouthetic /biblical counseling are unsympathetic, rigid or callous, it is conceded that most likely, a few nouthetic /biblical counselors fully illustrate

<sup>8</sup> Andre Ernest Godsey, *Nouthetic Counseling and Its Usage in the Pastorate of Black American Baptist Pastors of the Baltimore Baptist Association Located in Baltimore, Maryland*, PhD. Diss. Capella University, 2004:

<sup>9</sup> Mac Arthur Jr. J.F and Mack W.A. 1994- introduction to biblical counseling: A basic guide to the principles and practice of counseling Nashville Tennessee. W. publishing group

<sup>10</sup> Ed Bulkley, *Why Christians Can't Trust Psychology* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1993:268.

<sup>11</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994,127.

<sup>12</sup> Jay Adams, *The Christian counselor's manual: the practice of Nouthetic Counseling...14.*

<sup>13</sup> Annual of the 2002 Southern Baptist Convention held at St Louis Missouri, in June 11-12 2002,78.

<sup>14</sup> Winfrey, David. "Biblical therapy: Southern Baptists reject "pastoral counseling." *Christian Century* 124, no. 2 (2007): 24-27.

<sup>15</sup> Milne, Bruce. *Know the Truth: A handbook of Christian Belief*, Downers Grove, IL, Intervarsity press, 2012:39.

these negative characteristics.”<sup>16</sup>Contrary to this opinion of those who criticize nouthetic and biblical counseling, the nouthetic/biblical counseling promoted by the SBC shows the opposite of these negative characteristics. In addition, one of the critical issues is the discussion of the relationship between nouthetic counseling and psychology especially in line with those who raise the issue that has to do with nouthetic counseling’s denial of benefits from psychology. Angela Hand’s opinion draws a fundamental line in this discussion as she make one realize that “when psychology moves from a descriptive function to offering prescriptive answers, it oversteps the bounds of its effectiveness.”<sup>17</sup>

### 3. Pastoral counseling and Nouthetic Counseling in the SBC

It is interesting to note that the pioneer of pastoral counseling that incorporates psychology into theology was a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary whose name was Wayne Oates. Oates was a professor in the same school from 1948-1974 and died in 1999. He taught many students and raised disciples such as Wade Rowatt. Rowatt argued contrary to the decision of the SBC resolution about biblical counseling for the need to be “informed about understanding persons through personality theory, and understanding families through family systems theory, and understanding groups of people, understanding society, and then integrate [these understandings] with sound biblical theological scholarship in constructing a theory for the pastoral shepherding of persons. That has been the collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to preparing ministers to walk with persons in a time of crisis.”<sup>18</sup> The opinion of Rowatt was vehemently opposed by Russell Moore who was then the dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary but currently the President of Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the SBC as he pointed out the failure of an idea of bringing such into the field of counseling in Southern Baptist life and ministry. Russell Moore pointed out that the idea of incorporating psychology into theology is naive. Moore asserts: “because it is so naive about the pre-suppositions behind secular psychologies. You can’t simply say you’re going to integrate the science of psychotherapy with scripture because there are only sciences and theories of psychotherapy that are contradictory and incoherent.”<sup>19</sup>

### 4. History of Nouthetic Counseling

“Prior to the twentieth century Christian counseling occurred through the church and other believers.”<sup>20</sup> The

clergy attained projecting word to speak to people problems, during this period mental health started taking the upper hand in addressing people’s difficulties through the expansion of systematic principles and counseling schemes. Secular psychotherapy began to gain the upper hand through the use of the scientific method for counseling with pastors. Biblical counseling history led to the reformation of Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF). Adam argues for nouthetic confrontation through the power of Holy Spirit. “According to him nouthetic counseling is confrontation that is done out of concern for the purposes of changing something God wants to change.”<sup>21</sup> Adams’ nouthetic counseling claims “feelings are not the most profound level of human relationship with which one must be concerned in counseling.”<sup>22</sup> The counselor pays more attention to the client’s behavior to compare to how the client feels.<sup>23</sup> To the nouthetic counselor bad feelings pour out as a result of people’s actions. The view of man as one made and created in the image of God is significant to the nouthetic-counseling concept. In his discussion about the biblical counseling movements after Adams, Heath Lambert pointed out that two groups have been guilty of separating theological foundations from counseling, namely psychotherapists and ironically some conservative Christians. The psychotherapists want to help people in solving their problems but ignore Jesus Christ and his word (the Bible) in an attempt to do so.<sup>24</sup> The psychotherapists attempt to move in the direction of ignoring the word of God by placing an emphasis on secular psychological diagnosis. It must be noted here that the only instrument that can bring lasting solutions to the problems of man is the word of God, which is why psychotherapists have the wrong focus. The integrationists follow the same procedure in their attempt to promote counseling in Christian circles but eventually ignore the core issues of Christian doctrine, such as redemption and the sufficiency of scripture by focusing on the emphasis of secular psychologists. One of the misunderstandings in the circles of some conservative Christians is the failure of some people to understand that counseling is an important part of ministry and this eventually causes them to separate theology from counseling. Lambert proclaims that although he himself has fall into misunderstanding about the importance of the relationship that counseling has with theology, it is highly important to “understand the intrinsic connection that counseling has with ministry and theology.”<sup>25</sup> One thing that stands out in tracing the history of nouthetic counseling and Christian counseling is that there is no general agreement about the historical origin of Christian counseling. In tracing the history of biblical counseling, Donald Capps divided the history of Christian counseling into four stages, which includes the emergence of the modern pastoral care movement, which extended from the 1930s to 60s. In the

<sup>16</sup>Hand, Angela Kay. "An exploration of the use of Nouthetic/Biblical Counseling with international Missionaries." PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000:88.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 90.

<sup>18</sup> David Winfery, Southern Baptist Reject “pastoral counseling” Biblical Therapy. Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, One Hundred and Forty –fifth Session, One hundred and Fifty seventh Year, Saint Louis, Missouri, June 11-12, 2002. 24

<sup>19</sup>Mac Arthur and Mack introduction to biblical counseling (Dallas word 1993).

<sup>20</sup>Hand, Angela Kay. 2000. An exploration of the use of nouthetic/biblical counseling with international missionaries. n.p.:

2000., 2000. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed January 1, 2018).69

<sup>21</sup>Ibid 70.

<sup>22</sup> Adams, J. Competent to counsel. Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and reformed, 1970, 92.

<sup>23</sup> Adams, J. Competent to counsel. Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and reformed, 1970, 93.

<sup>24</sup>Heath Lambert, The Biblical Counseling Movement After Adams, Wheaton Illinois, Crossway, 2012:21-22.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.,22.



stage of the pastoral care movement Capps argued that "attention was never given to the possibility that the Bible might actually contain goals of counseling and inform its processes."<sup>26</sup> The second stage of counseling history could be traced to the 1970s when integrationists emerged in the field of counseling. At the integrationist stage of counseling, Andre Ernest Godsey affirms that "Thurney took the Bible as the essential nucleus of any genuine Christian approach to the psychological treatment of Christians."<sup>27</sup> The third face of counseling is that of the contribution of Jay Adams that actually builds significantly on Thurney's model, who proclaims that "Christian counseling comes from the word of God and must lead to God's word."<sup>28</sup> It was at the emergence of nouthetic counseling led by Adams that the counseling field began to experience a considerable paradigm shift that eventually resulted into biblical counseling. Adams' major work entitled *Competent to Counsel* pointed out that psychological problems that exclude that of physiological causes such as brain damage come as a result of sin and rebellion against God and his word. Andre Ernest Godsay supports that on account of Jay Adams' familiarity with the Bible, he eventually "formulated nouthetic counseling and found like-minded believers who were deeply unsatisfied with the predominance of Rogerian and other secular Theraphines among Christian counselors."<sup>29</sup> By 1997, nouthetic counseling had developed considerably to the point that a school of biblical counseling began to emerge that eventually replaced Jay Adams' nouthetic counseling model. Although the nouthetic counseling model can be traced to Adams, he had earlier explained that he was not the alpha and omega of biblical counseling even if he had contributed significantly to its beginning. Adams asserts, "constructing a biblical methodology takes critical care: it is going to take much time and much effort to build that foundation adequately. No one has a foundation and methodology that is totally scriptural. Such work has only begun"<sup>30</sup> If the offshoot of nouthetic counseling can be traced to Jay Adams, several scholars and writers such as Powlison, Capps and MacArthur set forth the methodologies and premises of biblical counseling. On the same discussion of history of nouthetic counseling, Angela Hand proclaims, "Biblical/nouthetic counseling history is that of reclamation and formalization rather than innovation."<sup>31</sup> This observation establishes the fact that biblical counseling is not an innovation of any recent scholars and that it can be traced to scripture even in the Old Testament. Around the 1960s Christian counseling was conversant in larger circles of secular psychology and liberal theology, which embraced

psychology and influenced all facets of pastoral counseling.<sup>32</sup> The Christian counseling and educational foundation CCEF in 1968 was founded as the first nouthetic institute issue of professionalism and the competent of pastor in counseling led to CCEF in 1976 when "the national association of Nouthetic counselors NANC grew out of CCEF IN 1976 and offers certification for biblical counselors."<sup>33</sup> Several people today including those who are Christians face the herculean task of differentiating between biblical counseling and pastoral counseling. David P. Murray argued that biblical counseling which he called his family was courageous in "boldly reclaiming pastoral care, so much of which has been usurped by secular counseling" today.<sup>34</sup> The opinion of Murray in his perspective gives one the understanding that biblical counseling is a way of restoring Christians who want to stay in the circumference of scripture in guiding them about the issues, which is the exact roles that genuine pastoral counseling ought to play.

## 5. Pastoral counseling

Denominations divided into liberal and conservative around 1920. By 1940, John Carter affirmed that "during 1940s, a new influence came into American psychology movements and was soon heartily endorsed by the liberal pastoral counseling movements. This was called non-directive or client center counseling introduced by Carl Rogers."<sup>35</sup> Pastoral counseling dated back to the 1920s. It must also be noted that Protestant movements split in to liberal and conservative movements in the 1920s according to John Cater.<sup>36</sup> Liberal approaches to counseling address the social needs of the counselee while conservative approaches address sin, salvation and advocate for the inerrancy of scripture.<sup>37</sup> Starting from the 1950s and 1980s the SEWARD Hiltner Rogerian counseling method in addition with Freudian methods came to be practiced by mainline protestant clergy.<sup>38</sup> Daniel A. Powlison claims that pastors should be involved in short term counseling and should direct congregations to emotional and mental health that involve professional mental health.<sup>39</sup> Gary R. Collings defines pastoral counseling as a special part of pastoral care

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>34</sup> David Murray P., How Biblical is Biblical Counseling, *Puritan Reformed Journal* 5, no.2, July 2013:204. 204-208.

<sup>35</sup> Carter, John D., & Narramore, Bruce The integration of psychology and Theology: An introduction. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979:35.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Peters, Clay E. Religion and mental health: What are Virginia minister's perceptions of counseling and psychology? PhD. Diss., University of Sarasota, 1999, .

<sup>38</sup> Greenwald, Carole Anne. "In the Eyes of the Beholder: The Obstacles to the Marketing of Pastoral Counseling." Order No. 3089104, Loyola College in Maryland, 2003, <http://aaron.swbts.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.aaron.swbts.edu/docview/305230799?accountid=7073> (accessed December 28, 2017).2-3

<sup>39</sup> Powlison, Daniel A. (1996). *Competent to counsel? The history of a conservative Protestant anti-psychiatry movement* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania). University Microfilms International, 9712988. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/305230799?accountid=7073>

<sup>26</sup> Capps D. The Bible's Role in Pastoral care and Counseling, *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 3, 1984:6.

<sup>27</sup> Andre Ernest Godsey, *Nouthetic Counseling and Its Usage in the Pastorate of Black American Baptist Pastors of the Baltimore Baptist Association Located in Baltimore, Maryland*, PhD. Diss. Capella University, 2004:29.

<sup>28</sup> Capps, The Bible's Role in Pastoral care and Counseling, 6.

<sup>29</sup> Andre Ernest Godsey, *Nouthetic Counseling and Its Usage in the Pastorate of Black American Baptist Pastors of the Baltimore Baptist Association Located in Baltimore, Maryland*,... 31.

<sup>30</sup> Adams, Jay E. *The Christian Counselor's Manual: The Practice of Nouthetic Counseling*. Zondervan, 2010:92.

<sup>31</sup> Hand, Angela Kay. An exploration of the use of nouthetic/biblical counseling with international missionaries. 2000, 69.

that deals with helping people to cope with the pressures and crises of life.<sup>40</sup> Wayne Oates was one of the primary leaders in pastoral counseling.<sup>41</sup> Pastoral counseling focuses on using various healing approaches to solve people's difficulties based on theological instructions and a sound biblical approach. Gary notes that "the ultimate goal of pastoral counseling is to help the counsees experience healing, learn coping and relational skills, and grow both personally and spiritually."<sup>42</sup> John Carter states that the counseling methods of Rogers focus on providing therapeutic counseling without creating any judgmental atmosphere. This was considered by several people to be contrary to the nouthetic counseling/biblical counseling of Jay Adams. Carter upholds the method of Rogers when he upholds that neither such a method of "psychoanalytic nor client centered therapy had much room for biblical insight or directive counsel."<sup>43</sup> He added that such counseling that focuses on a scriptural approach and biblical teachings faces the criticism of being "unscientific" and seriously suspect.<sup>44</sup> Biblical counseling is unequal and stands against every other type of counseling by critical examination of its foundation, sources of authority and objective. Ed Bulkley noted, "there is growing confusion in today's Christian community about the best way to help people overcome their personal problems of living. Some believe that Christians should submit only to biblical counseling, while others passionately support psychological counseling so long as it is integrated with the Scriptures."<sup>45</sup> However, one must be aware of the possible danger that is embedded in integrating secular methodology and ideology into scriptural counseling principles because "an unbiblical view of man leads one to unbiblical solutions with unexpected results."<sup>46</sup> Perhaps one of the differences between biblical counseling and pastoral counseling was noted by a scholar who pointed out that "the integrationist also surmises that Scripture does not provide us all that we need in order to understand human beings fully, and that there is a legitimate and strategic role for psychology as a science and as a profession in giving us intellectual and practical tools for understanding and improving the human condition."<sup>47</sup> The integrationists in the evaluation and observation of man believe that man is good and this gave the biblical counselor an upper hand because scripture provides a better diagnosis of the problem and situation of man than integrationists can. The integrationists

do not represent Christian faith and doctrine in its full scope like biblical counseling does on account of doubting the sufficiency of the scripture to solve all human problems. Powlison noted another weakness of integrating psychology into theology as he accentuates, "proponents of the integrationist view have used an epistemological argument (the usefulness of science of studying what it is) as if it also implicitly justifies professional psychotherapy (interventions to change what is)."<sup>48</sup> In the midst of rapid growth of such pastoral counseling that are therapeutic in nature, which promote physchotherapy, O. Hobbat raised some critical questions that challenge evangelicals. One of those questions is whether the "evangelical sold its birthright for a mess of psychological pottage."<sup>49</sup> This question became serious on account of the fact that many churches and denominations began to lose their focus to secular psychological methodology in counseling rather than concentrating on the scripture as the basis of Christian counseling.

## 6. Contemporary Pastoral Counseling

Eugene Weitzel claims that pastoral counseling today developed within the structure of a general movement in counseling and clinical psychology.<sup>50</sup> Comparing pastoral counseling in the past with today Weitzel noted that pastoral counseling in the past "was not only primarily spiritual, but almost exclusively spiritual."<sup>51</sup> Pastoral counseling is a liberating and healing ministry of the faith community that is based on the relationship between a pastor (or pastoral team) with counseling skills and a family or person who come together to engage in conversation and interaction.<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Maynard and Gill Snodgrass explain that the American Association of Pastoral Counselors formed and offers a standard that specifies who are pastoral counselors and what they do and what is their role in their work.<sup>53</sup> Maynard asserts, "pastoral counselors position themselves alongside an increasingly diverse role of mental health and professionals."<sup>54</sup> In addition, she also argues that pastoral counseling emerged "as an approach to mental health treatment and a specialized ministry predominately offered by clergy in the Judeo-Christian tradition."<sup>55</sup> Maynard and Snodgrass definition captures pastoral counseling from a contemporary perspective because their definition was given a from physiological perspective. Roger Vaughn argues in his work that pastoral counseling is gradually neglecting theology in reflection and the practice of soul care but focuses on best practices, which are largely determined by efficiency and render the counselor a tool of production

<sup>40</sup>Collins, Gary R. *Christian counseling : a comprehensive guide*. Nashville, Tenn. : Thomas Nelson, 2007. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed December 29, 2017). 36.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 33

<sup>42</sup>Collins, Gary R. 2007. *Christian counseling : a comprehensive guide*. n.p.: Nashville, Tenn. : Thomas Nelson, c2007., 2007. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed December 29, 2017). 36

<sup>43</sup> Carter, John D., & Narramore, Bruce *The integration of psychology and Theology: An introduction*. 35.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 36.

<sup>45</sup>Ed Bulkley, *Why Christians Can't Trust Psychology* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1993), 23.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 188.

<sup>47</sup>Stanton L. Jones, An Intergration View in Collins, Gary R., Eric L. Johnson, and Stanton L. Jones, eds. *Psychology & Christianity: With Contributions by Gary R. Collins...[Et Al.]*. InterVarsity Press, 2000.

<sup>48</sup>Powlison David, *A Biblical Counseling Response to Integration in Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, 2nd ed., ed. Eric L. Johnson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 143.

<sup>49</sup>O.H. Mowrer, *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion*, Princeton, NJ, D.VanNostland, 1961:60.

<sup>50</sup>Weitzel, Eugene J. *Contemporary pastoral counseling : New York* : Bruce Pub. Co., 1969. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed December 29, 2017). 4

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.,5.

<sup>52</sup> David W. Augsburger. *Pastoral counseling across cultures* 13.

<sup>53</sup> Elizabeth A. Maynard and Gill Snodgrass *Understanding pastoral counseling*. xiv

<sup>54</sup>Ibid. xiv

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

more than a spiritual companion.<sup>56</sup> Pastoral counseling should be at the very heart of pastoral care and clinical ministry; however, the clinic model of counseling that has been adapted by pastoral counselors has made counseling into a specialized activity that bears little relationship to other pastoral activities and responsibility.<sup>57</sup> One of the shifts in pastoral counseling is that it is more or less authoritarian now compared to the past. Weitzel notes that "pastoral care in ages past reserved largely to an ordained clergy shared the authoritarian structure and attitudes of the clergy."<sup>58</sup> Contemporary pastoral counseling has "grown on alongside general physiological counseling."<sup>59</sup> The reason is because David Bennar argues that pastoral counseling and psychological counseling are the fruit of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which Rieff called the "triumph of therapeutic" in the field of counseling.<sup>60</sup> Bennar claims that pastors must fit within the context of soul care ministry in his definition. He also tries to differentiate between pastoral counsel and he argues that a pastor is much more than a Christian counselor because a pastor relates with those they counsel in various ways. This definition gives the impression that a pastor as a counselor does not have restriction in his counseling ministry.

## 7. Similarities and differences of Nouthetic and pastoral counseling

Focusing on different writers in the counseling field, one will find that scholars have developed different approaches. For instance, Gary Collins avows

Some counselors and writers have attempted to develop definitive, theological and biblically based approaches to counseling; others have started with secular theories and proposed "Christianized versions" of transactional analysis, behavior modification, psychoanalysis, rational-emotive therapy and other contemporary psychologies. A few Christian approaches and their developers have attracted bands of enthusiastic followers; most others have had limited acceptance and application. It is of little comfort to realize that the secular counseling world is even more diversified and disrupted.<sup>61</sup>

Collins' opinion here reveals that in Christian circles, there is more than one Christian approach to counseling. Some advocates of several possible approaches believe that no one approach to counseling speaks to every problem and works for every human being equally. However, Roger Clayton White who even criticized nouthetic counseling in his work upholds the fact that "when nouthetic counseling was

introduced by Jay Adams, it enjoyed phenomenal acceptance among Bible believing Christians." And even today many people benefit and engage in nouthetic counseling.<sup>62</sup> The disagreement between the nouthetic/biblical counseling and pastoral counseling approaches that incorporate the psychology and clinical methodologies into theology is an old one. The majority of liberal Christians did not only subscribe to the idea of incorporating psychological and secular methodologies to theology of counseling but some of them actually "disagree that the Bible should be used to help us solve our counseling-related problems."<sup>63</sup> In his attempt to point out some similarities and dissimilarities of biblical counseling and pastoral/Christian counseling, Heath Lambert pointed out some areas where biblical and Christian counselors agree as well as some areas of disagreements. Some of the areas of agreement include the belief in creation, caring for hurting people, that secular psychology often gets things wrong because not all the problems are counseling problems, and lastly they both also agree that sometimes "psychologists make true observations that are often helpful."<sup>64</sup>

Stanton Jones and Richard Butman buttress the reality of the flaws in his discussion of destructive and constructive modes of integration in counseling. Jones and Butman assert: "our commitment to biblical truth demands that we sort bad science from or antichristian philosophy masquerading a science from the good science."<sup>65</sup> In addition, Jones and his co-author also added:

There are times when the best response of the Christian is to "demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:5). But we contend that the appropriate time for such apologetic efforts is when the views actually are raised up against God. In other words, when the views of romantic humanist Carl Rogers, for instance, are presented as ultimately satisfying answers to the major questions of life, the right Christian response is to point out critical flaws in the approach and to reject his views. This is what we appreciate about the critics of psychotherapy- They take matters of faith so seriously that they are zealous to protect it from distortion or perversion.<sup>66</sup>

No conservative and evangelical Christian can doubt the fact that it is good to have such serious concern and defend biblical counseling. Jay Adams affirms the possibility of psychologists to sometimes make true observation as he stated, "I do not wish to disregard science, but rather I

<sup>56</sup> Roger Vaughn pastoral counseling in new liberal age: hello best practice good bye theology sacred place: the journal of America pastoral counselor 2013 ,5. 5-45.

<sup>57</sup> David G. Bennar strategic pastoral counseling: a short terms structure mode 2003 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

<sup>58</sup> Eugene J Weitzel, Contemporary pastoral counseling. New York : Bruce Pub. Co., 1969. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed January 6, 2018).10-11

<sup>59</sup> David G. Bennar Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short Terms Structure Mode 2003 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

<sup>60</sup> Rieff 1966

<sup>61</sup> Gary R. Collins, Helping People Grow, California, Vision House, 1980:17.

<sup>62</sup> White, Roger Clayton. "A critique of the Nouthetic Counseling Technique of Jay E. Adams." MA Thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1985:112.

<sup>63</sup> Heath Lambert, A Theology of Biblical Counseling, Biblical Counseling vs. Christian Counseling: What's the Difference? In [https://courses.zondervanacademic.com/theology-biblical-counseling?utm\\_source=za\\_blog&utm\\_medium=blog&utm\\_campaign=tbc\\_cm&utm\\_content=text\\_link](https://courses.zondervanacademic.com/theology-biblical-counseling?utm_source=za_blog&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=tbc_cm&utm_content=text_link)

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Jones, Stanton L., and Richard E. Butman. *Modern psychotherapies: A comprehensive Christian appraisal*. Inter Varsity Press, 2011:40.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 41.



welcome it as a useful adjunct for the purposes of illustrating, filling in generalizations with specifics, and challenging wrong human interpretations of Scripture, thereby forcing the student to restudy the Scriptures. However, in the area of psychiatry, science largely has given way to humanistic philosophy and gross speculation.”<sup>67</sup> The observation of Adams shows that while he did not believe in the incorporation of psychological methodology into biblical counseling, he did not deny the fact that sometimes they get some things right and most of them they step out of the boundary. Adams also pointed out some concerns he has for psychiatry, which does not mean that he totally and out rightly rejects the findings of science and psychology in counseling. Jay Adams started a new biblical movement with the intention for conservative protestant pastors to counsel people instead of directing them to psychiatric professionals. Nouthetic counseling places emphasis on the power of God. Adam proposed a way to address mental health problems in the Christian field with his introduction on biblically based counseling. Welch and Polison argue that biblical counseling is a movement “that aims to be Biblical, in that it is committed to building counseling models explicitly from scripture, rather than ‘integrationist’ or ‘eclectic’ in merging or synthesizing models.”<sup>68</sup> Nouthetic counseling is scripturally based with the presupposition that every human problem has its solution in the word of God.

## 8. Conclusion

Jay Adams must be commended as one of the scholars and counselors that strongly built upon the foundation of biblical counseling truths and principles that were already established in the scripture. There is no better time that counseling should be based, focused and measured by the authority of the word of God than now. To deemphasize scripture and the authority of the word of God is to take God himself out of the equation in counseling. SBC and her theological seminaries such as Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary on the basis of the Convention resolution in 2002 have taken the bold step to defend the sufficiency and inerrancy of the scripture in addressing psychological and diverse problems of man. Contemporary counseling without theological integrity that base on inerrancy of the scripture is an offense to the gospel of Christ and the ministry of church. It must be noted that counseling that contradict sound biblical theology cannot produce a better and lasting solution to the problem of man. The goal and aspiration of the counselor and counselee in the church and Christian society today must be to know the word of God and be diligent in putting the word into practice to guide one’s lifestyle by bringing the word to bear in every situation. It is only when this takes place that one will say biblical counseling is biblical and must replace pastoral counseling. In order for every individual Christian counselor to be faithful to scripture, and effectively carry out the role of counseling in ministry, it is highly important to embrace the inerrancy and sufficiency of the scripture. Such a positive attitude to the scripture will help Christian

counselors to produce new believers who are faithful to scripture in the midst of the challenges and problems of life. In addition it will also help believers to have a better regard for scripture, so that there is no other opinion, psychology, physiotherapy or writing to be put on the same level as scripture in authority. Counseling that will provide lasting solution to the problem of man must be rooted and guided by the word of God.

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