

The Sufficiency of Scripture in Biblical Counseling

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Abstract

Since the 1950s there have been many different views of how the Christian faith relates to psychology. Three groups have been though more prominent throughout these last six decades. One is the secular psychology camp, which believes that the Bible is completely irrelevant to counseling. Another group is biblical counseling, which believes that even though the Bible is not exhaustive, the Bible is relevant and sufficient for counseling. And the third group, as you might rightly deduct, is a blend between the first two, and believes that the Bible is relevant to counseling but insufficient for it and take their cures from secular psychology. In this article, I will suggest that the most effective, Christ-centered and eternally life-transforming model of counseling is the Biblical counseling one. I will try to bring arguments both from the Scripture and from the public square regarding the reliability and sufficiency of this model. Even though I am aware of the benefits of secular psychology in our society, I will try to argue that psychology, at its core is a philosophy that is build on quicksand and even though its observations and data could be useful in counseling, its theories and methods are inconsistent and superflous. Giving the limited scope of this article, my desire is at the minimum to encourage the reader to be more vigilant and cau-

tious regarding psychology, and to hopefully excite him to have a high view of the Word of God and dig deeper into it, to realize its tremendous wealth and relevance to the greatest problems of the human soul.

Keywords

counseling, Scripture, psychology, soul, society

How do destructive people become constructive? How do out-of-control people become fruitfully self-controlled? How do rigid people become flexible? How do hopeless people grow in hope? How do angry people learn to make peace? And even before we can ask How? We must ask, Why are troubled people troubled? What's wrong with us?¹

Is Scripture sufficient to inform all the possible counseling situations in this fallen world? The implications of such a question are huge.

A brief history of counseling debates and the sufficiency of Scriptures

The debate revolves around the relationship between an understanding of hard problems, the nature of counseling, the contents of Scripture, and the role of secular psychology. How we answer the question about the *sufficiency* of Scripture ultimately describes our understanding of the *content* of Scripture and defines the *kind of literature the counselors should use to help them helping others* – whether theological or psy-

¹ David Powlison, "The Sufficiency of Scripture to Diagnose and Cure Souls," *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Spring 2005, 1.

chological in nature. Obviously Christians have disagreed about this question at times.

The debate began in the late 1960s with the work of Jay Adams. By the time Adams began to write about counseling, it had been over a century since a Christian had written a book explaining how to use the Bible as *the* source of wisdom to people with their counseling related problems – Ichabod Spencer’s book *A Pastor’s Sketches*. Even though we don’t have the space to deal with what led to this situation, is enough to say that by the middle of the 20th century *most Christians did not believe that the Bible was a book that was pointedly relevant* for the kinds of conversations that happen when counseling someone with difficult problems.²

Due to the rapid rise of liberal theology and mainstream psychology, the Christian effort to help people with their problems had basically become a conversation about *how much and what kind of secular psychology to add to the inadequacies of Scripture* to offer “real” help. This conversation turned into a debate with the groundbreaking ministry of Adams, a graduate of John Hopkins University with a PhD from University of Missouri. His central contribution to Christian counseling was a bold and controversial claim that the task of counseling was a theological enterprise that should be primarily informed by a commitment to God’s Word. He further argued that any attempt by the discipline of psychology to address counseling-related issues must be judged according to biblical standards rather than secular ones. Listen to a quote from

² Heath Lambert, “Introduction,” in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, ed. Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert (Nashville: B&H, 2012), 3-4.

Adam's first book, *Competent to Counsel*, that launched the official biblical counseling movement:

All concepts, terms and methods used in counseling need to be re-examined biblically. Not one thing can be accepted from the past (or the present) without biblical warrant... I have been engrossed in the project of developing biblical counseling and have uncovered what I consider to be a number of important scriptural principles. It is amazing to discover how much the Bible has to say about counseling, and how fresh the biblical approach is. The complete trustworthiness of Scripture in dealing with the people has been demonstrated. There have been dramatic results.... Not only have been people's immediate problems been resolved, but there have also been solutions to all sorts of long-term problems as well... The conclusions in the book are not based upon scientific findings. My method is presuppositional. I avowedly accept the inerrant Bible as the standard of all faith and practice. The Scriptures, therefore, are the basis, and contain the criteria by which I have sought to make every judgment.³

Since the 1950s there have been many different views of how the Christian faith relates to psychology (one good book on that topic is Eric Johnson's *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, from IVP Academic Publishing company). Three groups have been though more prominent throughout these last six decades.

One is the secular psychology camp, which believes that the Bible is completely irrelevant to counseling. Another group is biblical counseling, which believes that the Bible is sufficient for counseling. And the third group, as you might rightly deduct, is a blend between the

³ Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), xviii-xxi.

first two, and believes that the Bible is relevant to counseling but insufficient for it, and they take their cures from secular psychology.

In this article, I will suggest that the most effective, Christ-centered and eternally life-transforming model of counseling is the Biblical counseling one. I will try to bring arguments both from the Scripture and from the public square regarding this model.

Biblical arguments for the Sufficiency of Scripture

Biblical texts

What exactly do I mean when I say that the Bible is sufficient? According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, “sufficiency” may be defined as “sufficing, adequate, especially in amount or number to the need, enough.” It is adequate, ample, and abundant. It meets the need. It fulfills God’s purpose for it. It is not deficient or scanty. The biblical counselor believes that the Word of God is adequate for the task of counseling. In fact, he believes that it contains everything needed for a person to achieve God’s goals of loving Him and others. To illustrate this, let me direct you to a few key passages:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 *“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you, and you know that from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

Some have argued that this text cannot be used as an argument for the Bible's sufficiency in dealing with counseling cases, especially the hard ones, and they claim that the Bible is just sufficient to make us wise for salvation. Still, here is what David Powlison a former psychologist, and a Harvard graduate, says:

Scripture proclaims itself as that which makes us "wise unto salvation". This is a comprehensive description of transforming human life from all that ails us. This same passage goes on to speak of the Spirit's words as purposing to teach us. The utter simplicity and unsearchable complexity of Scripture enlightens us about God, about ourselves, about good and evil, true and false, grace and judgment, about the world that surrounds us with its many forms of suffering and beguilement, with its opportunities to shed light into darkness. Through such teaching, riveted to particular people in particular situations, God exposes in specific detail what is wrong with human life. No deeper or truer or better analysis of the human condition can be concocted.⁴

If you are familiar with Paul's letters and the context of 1 Timothy you would know that when he refers here to the term "salvation", Paul is not referring necessarily to the moment of becoming a Christian, but to the process of sanctification. In other words, Jesus intends to redeem his people from all of the problems of life but in most cases this is not an instantaneous event. Salvation – with the idea of sanctification – happens in a process, and the believer is "trained in righteousness". The Scriptures impart instruction (teaching), makes us aware of our problems (reproof) and are profitable for pointing in the direction of positive change (correction). Actually, these categories are required elements of

⁴ David Powlison, "Is the Adonis Complex in *Your Bible*?" *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 22, no. 2 (2004): 43.

any decent counseling theory (religious or secular). All counseling theories or models contain some sort of apprehension regarding what is wrong with people (a “diagnosis” or version of *reproof*); what should be right (a goal of healthy humanness – a version of *correction*) some process of communicating that understanding; and some theory of what the change process might look like (“*teaching*” and “*training*”). To say that the Bible is profitable for these things is actually saying that the Scripture is profitable for counseling.⁵

2 Peter 1:3-4 *“His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. By these he has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.*

Ed Bulkley, in a book he wrote on biblical counseling, described this passage as one that clearly affirms the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling. Here is what he said:

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... 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.⁶

^{5.} Lambert, *Counseling*, 12.

^{6.} Ed Bulkley, *Why Christians Can’t Trust Psychology* (Eugene, OR: Harvest

Thus, biblical counselors believe that Christians possess everything necessary to help people with their *nonmedical* problems. Peter does not teach that Christians have access to everything there is to know about everything but that we have access to everything *necessary*. We possess everything *essential*.

Everything we need to become partakers of the divine nature has been provided for us in His precious and magnificent promises, the Word of God. Everything we need for sanctification (the changing of our heart and life from the old to the new) is available to us. Change is accomplished through God's Word as we interact with it in faith. Indeed the Word of God is the only tool that can disclose the hidden motives of our hearts.

Hebrews 4:12 *"The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."*

The writer of Hebrews tells us here that "only the mirror of the Word has the power to enlighten blind eyes to motives and attitudes. Even the most sensitive and discerning of counselors cannot judge or absolutely know the heart. Nothing reveals hidden motives and intentions but the Word, which is sufficient for godly change engendered by candid self-evaluation."⁷

House, 1993), 268.

⁷ Elyse Fitzpatrick, "The Philosophy of Biblical Counseling," in *Women Helping Women – A Biblical Guide to the Major Issues Women Face*, ed. Elyse Fitzpatrick and Carol Cornish (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1997), 19-20.

The Word of God is not just a dead book with a bunch of nice, out dated stories that don't have any relevance for today's world, but it describes itself as being living, active and powerful in a spiritual manner. The Holy Spirit uses God's Word to bring stony and dead hearts to life and make us alive in Christ and sanctify us. In every area of darkness, despair and desolation, the Word of God brings true light and real life.

A right perspective over science

What about the scientific knowledge that's not covered in the Bible? For example, the Bible doesn't give instructions on how to repair a car or develop a vaccine for polio. Do biblical counselors believe that scientific information from outside of the Bible is insignificant? Of course not! Biblical counselors believe that the blessings of true science are part of God's common grace. Hence, the biblical counselors will draw upon the knowledge gained in the medical sciences when they are searching for answers to perplexing behavior.

But it is very important to recognize that not all disciplines that go by the name "science" are true science. Some of these disciplines are really philosophies and I believe that psychology is one of them. John MacArthur rightly states that "Modern psychologists use hundreds of counseling models and techniques based on a myriad of *conflicting theories*, so it is impossible to speak of psychotherapy as if it were a *unified and consistent science*."⁸

⁸. John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1991), p. 64.

The belief that psychology is scientific is problematic for Hilton Terrell too, who holds a doctorate in psychology and is an M.D. He believes that the study of the soul, which is the definition of the term *psychology*, is scientifically impossible:

The nonmaterial aspect of us, however you wish to carve it up, cannot be known – other than by introspection, which the Bible itself tells us is not a trustworthy thing to lean upon, and by the elucidation of the Scripture itself... the mind is impervious to outside observation [and by definition], beyond the pale of the natural sciences which require something to have material existence – to be measured and studied.⁹

This bankruptcy of psychology was dramatized by a Stanford professor of psychology and law and a dozen friends who presented themselves at mental hospitals in 1973:

All repeated exactly the same opening words, “I feel empty,” or “I feel hollow.” Following this admission, they acted normally. They related to others as they would ordinarily. All were admitted. The length of stay in the hospitals was between seven and fifty-two days. Requests for release on the basis that they were normal were viewed as confirmatory signs of illness. Those who spent a portion of their hospital stay writing about their time were labeled as obsessive and compulsive... When released, all retained the diagnosis “schizophrenic” with the added note, “in remission.”¹⁰

Even *Time* magazine run several front-cover stories throughout the years in which they’ve questioned the scientific validity of psycholo-

⁹ Hilton Terrell as cited in Mark Horne, “The Battle for the Babble”, *World Magazine*, July 3, 1993, 11.

¹⁰ Richard Ganz, *Psychobabble: The Failure of Modern Psychology and the Biblical Alternative* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1993), 47.

gy. Almost two decades ago, one of the front-cover story was entitled *Is Freud Dead?* The writer Paul Gray examined several of the critiques of Freud's systems and concluded that in light of modern developments, new discoveries "raise doubts not only about Freud's methods, discoveries and proofs and the vast array of therapies derived from them, but also about the lasting importance of Freud's description of the mind."¹¹ Frank Sulloway, a scholar of science history at M.I.T. is quoted as saying, "Psychoanalysis is built on quicksand."¹² Although many therapies are not Freudian *per se*, his influence on mental health practices are profound. "If Freud's theories are truly as oozy as his critics maintain," Gray asked, "then what is to keep all the therapies indebted to them from sinking into oblivion as well?" Gray continued, "What Freud bequeathed *was not* (despite his arguments to the contrary), *nor has yet proved itself to be, a science.*"¹³

Thomas Szasz, a famous professor of Psychiatry at the State University of New York Health Science Center, is an outspoken critic of psychotherapy and the entire philosophy of mental illness. He writes, "I am convinced that psychiatric explanations and interventions are fatally flawed and that, deep in their hearts, most people think so too."¹⁴

Elyse Fitzpatrick was pointing out that those who support a psychological philosophy cannot even decipher the truth about psychology.

^{11.} Paul Gray, "The Assault on Freud," *Time*, November 29, 1993, 46-51.

^{12.} *Ibid.*, 49.

^{13.} *Ibid.*, 51.

^{14.} Thomas Szasz, *Insanity: The Idea and Its Consequences* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1987), 5.

As former psychologist Richard Ganz writes, "Clinical psychology comes to no consensus in its view of human beings – with one critical exception. It is unified in its belief that people are free from God."¹⁵

At one time Freud was considered the ultimate source. Now most psychologists look upon Freud's theses as fallacious. Which of the many schools of psychology is right? Behavior Modification, Person-Centered Therapy, Rational-Emotive Therapy, Gestalt Therapy, Existential Psychotherapy, Transactional Analysis, Family Therapy, or Multimodal Therapy? These are all major systems of therapy that are up and down in the waves of popularity, like tides. This is affirmed by Raymond J. Corsini in *Current Psychotherapies*, which is a textbook for psychology students:

... the field of psychotherapy is in constant ferment and change. "Minor" systems begin to become more popular. "Major" systems begin to fade. Some systems begin to change. Splitting occurs with contending groups heading rival viewpoints. New ideas, new concepts, new views which amount to complete new systems, arise. In illustration of this, there are currently at least 250 innovative systems of psychotherapy in existence [year 1997].¹⁶

He goes on to say,

It is important to note that what some authority considers to be psychotherapy may be completely different from how another person sees the process. There is no way to settle any differences; so even though A and B may be doing completely different and contradictory things, both are doing psychotherapy. We come to the same conclusion as

^{15.} Ganz, *Psychobabble*, 30.

^{16.} Raymond J. Corsini, *Current Psychotherapies*, 3rd ed. (Itasca: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1984), preface.

Lewis Carroll in his *Through the Looking Glass*, that a word means what you want it to mean.¹⁷

Isn't that astonishing? Corsini, a prominent figure in the psychotherapy, acknowledges that there is *no absolute truth* in this so-called *science*! What kind of scientist writes disclaimers on his ability to distinguish absolute truth? Is it wise to wholeheartedly embrace a philosophy as though it were a science? Just because psychology has trained "experts" using therapeuting terminology and theories doesn't make it a science. It is in fact a philosophy. Norman Geisler and Paul Feinberg define philosophy in this way:

... we would learn that the word philosophy comes from two Greek words which mean "loving wisdom". This idea of wisdom was central in the thought of the ancients. In this view of philosophy, the primary role of philosophy was ethical education. That is, philosophy was to teach the good life.¹⁸

Psychologists are seeking to teach people how to live "the good life." It is in this area that psychology is in competition with the Bible. It seeks to answer such questions as, Who is man? What are his problems? And, how should we live? Because psychology claims to answer these questions it is a philosophy, not a science.

Long ago, Jesus made some very radical affirmations saying that He is the Truth, the Life and The way and asked His Father to sanctify us in the Truth, His Word being the Truth. Does the church that He shed

^{17.} Idem.

^{18.} Norman Geisler and Paul Feinberg, *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 13.

His precious blood for need the ideologies of atheists? Must His followers now turn to Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, Carl Rogers, or B.F. Skinner for abundant life? Is there no longer any source of absolute truth for the believer? Do Christians believe that words simply mean what you want them to mean? Wouldn't the majority of Christians respond to these questions with an impassioned NO? Most Christians believe that there is a truth that can be known, and that truth comes from God.

Common Criticisms to the Sufficiency of the Bible

- **"If it works, it might be true.."**

Most people today tend to judge truth on the basis of pragmatism. This means that they believe that something is true *if it works*. "The error of pragmatism," says John MacArthur, "is that it regards methodologies that "work" as more important and more viable than those that are biblical.¹⁹ Truth however cannot be determined by our subjective experiences, nor by what "works." Truth cannot be determined by whether something appeals to our reason or not (Prov. 3:5). Our reason must be informed by our faith. According to Augustine, faith is a prerequisite for the full understanding of God's revelation. Unless we truly believe, our understanding will be partial and distorted. We must learn to discern truth and error solely on the basis and through the lenses of Scripture. David said the following things about the Word of God: "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes... the

¹⁹. MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency*, 151.

judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether (Psalm 19:7-9).

- **“The Bible doesn’t talk in scientific/academic terms”**

The Bible presents a diverse assortment of communication styles. God reveals himself to us in the pages of his Word in a dynamic package of history, parables, proverbs, poetry, prophecy, song, letters, and apocalyptic literature. He does that because he wants to speak to people in ways that are deeply powerful, emotional, wise, and compelling. His words are accessible to a broad spectrum of people. That’s why you have more people sitting in their living rooms and reading the Bible instead of *The Journal of Psychology*. No matter how insightful a scientific text may be, it will never have the power to affect the soul in the way God’s more colloquial manner of speech does. In addition to these powerful characteristics, the form and the style of the Bible in no way undermine its power to communicate authoritatively. Texts do not need to be scientific to be authoritative, profound, precise, and relevant for counseling. Such a sense of authority, profundity, precision, and relevance is only lost to those who come to the text with an *a priori* belief that unscientific forms of discourse are inherently less valuable.²⁰

In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* secular professionals applied secular labels to life problems. These labels sound official and scientific: agoraphobia, borderline personality disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and the like. Though they have a technical ring, these labels describe behaviors repeatedly observed by many others. The Bible describes the same kinds of problems, but it uses different

²⁰ Lambert, *Hard Cases*, 18.

language: fear, pride, cravings, disobedient to parents, and things like these. The Bible's concrete language is closer to the actual observations. Differences in nomenclature do not amount to denials of observations.

What happens when Christian counselors begin with the nomenclature used by secular psychologists? They feel frustrated when they come to Scripture because the Bible does not address problems they learned in their interaction with the secular psychology. Biblical counselors, on the other hand, start with the Bible and desire to use the sort of language God uses – concrete, vivid, oriented to issues of good and evil, true and false, right verses wrong.

Lambert points out how “the divergence of language reveals different starting points. For example, the term *bulimia* does not appear in the Scriptures, but this does not preclude God from talking about a problem like this in different language. The Bible regularly uses the categories of sinful desire, works of the flesh, and lusts of the flesh. The “bulimic” vacillates between sinful cravings for thinness and sinful cravings for the comforts of food. The bulimic's gluttony and self-induced vomiting describes the oscillation. When understood in this light, the Bible's language is far more profound than the secular label. The Bible makes sense of both poles of bulimic behavior (bringing and purging) and connects the extremes of behavior to life lived before the face of God.²¹

- **“The Bible doesn't say everything about what we could know”**

²¹. Lambert, *Hard Cases*, 19.

This is a true criticism towards the Bible and is important to note the fact that the Bible itself doesn't make the claim that is "exhaustive." Scripture does not provide Christians with all the information we *desire* but rather with the understanding we *need* to do counseling ministry. It's true that the Bible doesn't speak about how the neurons work, or how the brain synthesizes mathematical or emotional information, or the types of memory, or the best way to conceptualize personality traits, BUT in reality and practice none of these factors are pivotal in whether the counseling succeeds or fails. What is pivotal in such situations is access to the power of God through His Word. Anyone who has relied on God's Word as the sufficient source of wisdom and dug deep into the well of its wisdom to find answers for the problems of life know the truth of this assertion.

What Now?

Every counseling system is, essentially, a worldview which presents its own understanding about how life works best and how best to help someone make changes in his life consistent with that worldview. Biblical counselors believe that the Scripture holds its own against any other worldview out there. We also believe that since the biblical worldview comes from God is superior because is TRUE.

The Lord himself describes His Word as perfect, sure, right, pure and true (see Ps. 19, Ps. 119). It is the standard by which all other knowledge must be measured. We read in Ps. 119:128, "I esteem right all Thy precepts concerning everything." Therefore, God's definitions and cate-

gories should be the criterion that we must use to distinguish truth from error. Not our experience (“but I felt good”), not our pragmatism (“but it worked”), not our reason (“but I like my own way of thinking”), but rather God’s revelation.

In addition to be *recipients* of TRUTH we have a responsibility to be good *sources* of TRUTH. Listen to what A.W. Tozer said, “No man has the right to offer advice who has not first heard God speak. No man has any right to counsel others who is not ready to hear and follow the counsel of the Lord. True moral wisdom must always be an echo of God’s voice. The only safe light for our path is the light which is reflected from Christ, the Light of the World.”

John MacArthur says:

“It is reasonable for people to seek medical help for a broken leg, dysfunctional kidney, tooth cavity, or other physical malady. It is also sensible for someone who is alcoholic, drug addicted, learning disabled, traumatized by rape, incest, or severe battering to seek some help in trying to cope with the trauma. Certain techniques of human psychology can serve to lessen trauma or dependency and modify behavior in Christians or non-Christians equally. There may also be certain types of emotional illnesses where root causes are organic and where medication might be needed to stabilize an otherwise dangerous person. These are relatively rare problems, however, and should not be used as examples to justify this indiscriminate use of secular psychological techniques for essentially spiritual problems. Dealing with the physical and emotional issues of life in such a way is not sanctification!”²²

²² MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency*, 58-59.

He goes on to say, “True psychology (‘the study of the soul’) can be done ONLY by Christians, since only Christians have the resources for the understanding and the transformation of the soul.” The secular discipline of psychology is based on unbiblical assumptions: that human nature is basically good; people have the answers to their problems inside them; the key to understanding and correcting a person’s attitudes and actions lies somewhere in his past; human problems can be purely psychological in nature – unrelated to any spiritual or physical condition; Scripture, prayer, and the Holy Spirit are inadequate and simplistic resources for solving certain types of problems. Thus, MacArthur adds, “it is capable of dealing with people only superficially and only on the temporal level. Scripture is the manual for all “soul work” and is so comprehensive in the diagnosis and treatment of every spiritual matter that, energized by the Holy Spirit in the believer it leads to making one like Jesus Christ. This is the process of biblical sanctification.”²³

People who don’t see the Bible sufficient fail to understand that all problems in living – emotional, mental, relational, behavioral – have a spiritual core. When problems are understood in the light of Christ’s light, it is psychology – not Scripture – what is truly insufficient to help people.

Let me end this lecture by letting David Powlison inquiring about our appreciation of God’s Word: “What do you see when you look at your Bible? Do you see a book crammed with relevance? Do you see a book out of which God bursts as He speaks to what matters in daily life? Is your Bible packed with application to the real problems of real people

²³. MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency*, 58-62.

in the real world: inexhaustible, immediate, diverse, and flexible? Or is the Bible relatively thin when it comes to addressing human struggles?"²⁴

God's Word never changes, so the one who seek to give counsel from the Bible has the confidence that was true yesterday, is true today and will be true tomorrow. In the Bible, we have everything essential for counseling ministry. We have CHRIST. The Bible is sufficient, because CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT and God shows us in His Word how to encounter him in all of life's complexities. Biblical counselors trust they have what they need for counseling because they believe the promise of these resources in the faithfulness of God in Christ.

²⁴ David Powlison, "Do You See?", *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, vol. XI, no. 3, Spring 1993, 3.

Further readings

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