

Mental Health: A Biblical Perspective - pt 2 7/6/25

1. Intro

- a. 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

2. A Biblical View of Mental Health¹

- a. Again, remember that all of the various psychologies are belief systems/worldviews. What is taught to help someone change or to deal with whatever issue they are struggling with, is not neutral. They all come from a view or belief about the world, the causes and nature of the problems, and how to fix, or deal with those issues.
- b. The following tools encourage counselors to evaluate counseling methods not just by their techniques but by their **worldview assumptions** about authority, human nature, and solutions.
- c. Source of Authority
 - i. This addresses the ultimate authority that the counseling system relies on for truth and guidance. For biblical counseling, the source of authority is the **Bible**, regarded as the fully sufficient and inspired Word of God (Psalm 19:7, 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Other systems may rely on psychological theories, scientific research, or diagnostic manuals like the DSM.

¹ These 7 S's were originally developed by David Powilson (6 S's), and Ernie Baker added the 7th one.

- ii. What does sufficiency mean?
- iii. Proverbs and counseling.
- d. Sin -
 - i. Not all mental health issues are sin, but everything can be traced back to our sinful nature.
 - ii. This is the system's understanding of what is fundamentally wrong with humans. Biblical counseling sees sin as the root problem—rebellion against God and moral failure. Secular systems might attribute problems to poor life experiences, trauma, or biological factors instead.
- e. Salvation
 - i. How does the system propose people are made right or healed? Biblical counseling points to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit for transformation, whereas secular systems might emphasize behavioral change, medication, or therapy techniques.
- f. Sanctification
 - i. This concerns the ongoing process of growth and change after initial salvation or healing. In biblical counseling, sanctification is the lifelong work of God in a believer's life, involving repentance, obedience, and spiritual growth.

g. Support System

- i. What kinds of relationships, community, or external aids does the system encourage? Biblical counseling emphasizes the local church, Scripture-based community, and accountability, while other systems may rely on professional therapists, support groups, or social services.

h. Sparring

- i. How does the system defend its beliefs or engage with competing worldviews? Biblical counseling uses apologetics to challenge false beliefs and to lovingly confront error with biblical truth.

i. Servants of the System

- i. This refers to the practitioners and teachers who promote and embody the counseling system, shaping how it is applied and understood in practice.

S	Description	Biblical Counseling View	Secular/Other Views
Source of Authority	Where truth is found	Bible (Scripture as ultimate authority)	Psychology theories, scientific research, DSM
Sin	What is wrong with humans	Moral failure, rebellion against God	Poor conditioning, trauma, biology
Salvation	How healing or change occurs	Gospel of Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit	Behavioral change, therapy, medication
Sanctification	Ongoing growth and transformation	Lifelong spiritual growth and obedience	Skill development, coping strategies
Support Systems	Community and relational aids	Local church, biblical community	Therapists, support groups, social services
Sparring (Apologetics)	Defense and engagement with competing views	Biblical apologetics confronting error	Scientific debate, therapeutic models
Servants of the System	Practitioners shaping the system	Biblical counselors trained in Scripture	Secular psychologists, therapists

10 Things in Proverbs for Counselling²

1. Wise people pursue counsel

Proverbs 1:5-6; 12:15

Scripture tells us that a wise person will actively *listen* and *increase in learning*. They seek guidance to grow in understanding and walk in discernment. In Proverbs 12:15, the contrast is sharp: the fool thinks he's always right, but the wise man listens to counsel.

In counselling, the wise counselee is teachable and hungry for truth – not content with their own wisdom but eager to be shaped by God's Word and godly input.

2. Foolish people do not pursue counsel – because of pride

Proverbs 13:10; 1:25, 30

Pride is the root of refusing counsel. Proverbs 13:10 says, "*By insolence comes nothing but strife, but with those who take advice is wisdom.*" The fool resists wisdom because he believes he doesn't need it.

Counselling from a biblical worldview calls for humility – recognizing that sin clouds our thinking and we need help from outside ourselves. Those who reject godly counsel often experience internal conflict, broken relationships, and personal destruction.

3. Truthful counsel is therapeutic

Proverbs 27:9; 16:24

Truthful, godly counsel is sweet to the soul and healing to the body. Just as oil and perfume were valuable, soothing, and refreshing in ancient times, so is wise counsel to the one who receives it.

Proverbs 27:9 says, "*Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel.*" Biblical counselling should come from a friend who loves the counselee and knows them intimately.

² From Dr. Daniel Berger

A friend walking with God provides better counsel than a stranger or someone outside the faith. Proverbs connects wise, relational counsel to healing, encouragement, and restoration.

4. Truthful counsel is God's

Proverbs 8:14

All true wisdom and counsel come from God. Proverbs 8 speaks of wisdom personified – ultimately pointing to Christ (Colossians 2:3). Counsel that is truly helpful must align with God's Word.

Romans 12:2 reminds us that transformation comes from the renewing of the mind – truth reshapes the heart, which then transforms behaviour.

Counselling that merely provides relief without redemptive truth falls short. As Psalm 23:3 says, *"He restores my soul; He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."*

5. Counsel and discipleship are connected

Proverbs 19:20

Discipleship is a process of lifelong transformation. Proverbs encourages receiving counsel and instruction so that one may be wise *later in life*.

Counselling isn't just about solving problems – it's about forming Christ in someone (Galatians 4:19). Every counsellor is discipling in some direction.

Proverbs 12:5 contrasts the thoughts (or "counsels") of the righteous and wicked. Biblical counselling leads toward Christ-likeness, while secular counselling often pursues worldly comfort or self-actualization.

6. The heart lives by counsel

Proverbs 20:5

"The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out."

Everyone lives based on the counsel they've believed, even if it's subconscious. Biblical counselling involves drawing out the heart, understanding what "counsel" someone is already believing (lies, self-justification, fear).

Then, using **Colossians 3:16**, we replace worldly counsel with the truth of Scripture:
"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..."

7. Success comes by wise counsel

Proverbs 20:18; 15:22

Plans succeed when they are established by wise counsel. True success is not worldly achievement but alignment with God's will.

Even good intentions must be rooted in truth to bear fruit. Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 warn that the way that *seems* right to man leads to death.

Biblical counselling helps people rightly apply wisdom so they can live fruitful, obedient lives under God's lordship.

8. The multitude of counsellors

Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 24:6

There is wisdom and safety in seeking multiple godly counsellors, not just one voice. This protects against bias, deception, or isolation.

Biblical counsellors should be grounded in the Word, not just offering experience or opinion. Avoid those who simply affirm or "tickle ears" (2 Timothy 4:3), but seek those who lovingly speak truth.

9. Counselling must be truthful, loving, and fruitful

Proverbs 15:4; 18:21; 12:18

The words of a counsellor can heal or destroy. Proverbs 12:18 says, *"There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."*

Biblical counselling cannot divorce truth from love. Some secular counsellors may be sincere, but sincerity without truth cannot heal the soul.

Love requires truth (Ephesians 4:15) – even when it's hard. Real help must include God's Word, not just comfort.

10. Only God's wisdom will stand

Proverbs 19:21; 21:30

People may have many plans, but only the Lord's purpose will prevail. The final authority in counselling is God's truth.

All human "wisdom" that is divorced from the fear of the Lord will ultimately fail.

2 Corinthians 10:5 reminds us to demolish arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God.

In the end, only God's counsel restores the soul and leads to life (Psalm 1; Psalm 19:7).