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THE CHRISTIAN AND PEDOPHILIA: APPLYING BIBLICAL  
COUNSELING TO CHRISTIANS STRUGGLING  
WITH PEDOPHILIA

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Educational Ministry

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by  
Benjamin Wallace Marshall  
December 2020

APPROVAL SHEET

THE CHRISTIAN AND PEDOPHILIA: APPLYING BIBLICAL  
COUNSELING TO CHRISTIANS STRUGGLING  
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For the glory of God.

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## PREFACE

First and foremost, I would like to give praise and honor to Jesus Christ and for the gospel of Good News that is the absolute foundation for all of life and godliness. Without the sacrificial life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, there would be absolutely no point to this thesis and no hope for the lost.

Additionally, my highest praise and deepest gratitude goes to my wife, Cory, for watching our seven kids, maintaining our home, and supporting me regardless of the cost to her throughout my time at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the writing of this thesis. Without her commitment to me throughout this process, all of my efforts would have been in vain.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Robert Cheong, for his wisdom and guidance as I navigated not only the material for this thesis but the overall doctoral process. Without his help, the thinking and writing required for this project would have not achieved the breadth and depth of biblical thought represented in the final copy. Additionally, I would like to give thanks and praise for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and its faculty and staff for the combined influence and efforts that have been used by God for my further sanctification. My time at Southern is time I would not trade for the world.

I would also like to thank a lifelong friend and mentor, Dr. Stuart Scott for his influence in my life and my ministry. Dr. Scott's intentional, thoughtful, and gentle exegetical and practical ministry of Scripture has been a strong influencing factor which God has used to shape and mold me into the husband, father, and pastor I am today. I will forever be grateful for his influence, wisdom, and friendship as I have navigated the twists and turns of life, ministry, and my doctoral career. Because of his direct influence



in my life, hundreds if not thousands of people have been counseled in a more Christlike manner.

Ben Marshall

Bothell, Washington

December 2020

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

I had been ordained all of two weeks. Three months prior, I had received my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. At that moment, I stood at a crossroads as the father of a teenage girl in my youth group confessed to me that he had been molesting his daughter for the past seven years and he wanted help. My secular education and my commitment to the authority of God's Word came crashing together in that moment in a way I will never forget. My secular education taught me well that I had all of 48 hours to report what this man had confessed to me. Upon my report, Child Protective Services would take over. He would be interviewed, arrested, and sentenced. He might be eligible for the SOSA (Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative) program, which would allow for him to spend minimal time in prison, but require him to undergo intense psychotherapy for a lengthy amount of time. This SOSA program would not only cost him a large amount of money, but it would also expose him to some forms of therapy that would be at odds with Scripture. The other alternative would be to serve the amount of prison time that the judge would impose with the hopes of getting time off for good behavior. For this particular man, who was a member of the Armed Forces, his punishment was dual-factored. He was going to have to face a civilian court, as well as a military court. Not only would jail time be a given, but he would lose his military retirement after 24 years of faithfully serving the United States. My mind protested, "But this is what he gets for doing what he did. You have an obligation to report him."

At the same time, my heart and mind were drawn to the gospel and the power of the gospel to not only forgive but also bring about change in someone. The promise of the gospel was not for some sinners who did small things, but it was a promise for the

worst of sinners who committed the greatest of sins. After all, if the apostle Peter could be forgiven for denying the Son of God on the cross, then there was hope for anyone. My strong desire was to start to minister the gospel to this man who had found me, trusted me, and asked for help. My inner dialogue sought to persuade me by arguing, “You know what will happen to this man if you turn him over to the state authorities. He will be immediately incarcerated which will make ministry very hard, if not impossible. Most likely you will not be able to help him change.” And yet, I thought that if I chose not to report him,<sup>1</sup> there was a very real chance that I could be charged with a crime myself that would require a punishment of my own.<sup>2</sup> The crossroads of that moment were one of the worst moral dilemmas I had faced in the twenty-four years of my life.

While this was my initial experience with a pedophile, statistics say that pedophilic experiences are more common than one might expect, especially in instances in which a pedophile acts on his or her desires. Current statistics suggest one in four girls and one in twenty boys are sexually abused by the time that they reach adulthood.<sup>3</sup> The most current statistics<sup>4</sup> on those who struggle with pedophilia indicate that approximately one in five adults admit that they struggle with pedophilia.<sup>5</sup> These statistics are admittedly skewed due to the nature of pedophilia. In most countries, pedophilia is not

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State is one of the few states that allows for client clergy confidentiality. RCW 5.60.060 states, “A member of the clergy or priest, shall not, without the consent of the person making the confession, be examined as to any confession made to him or her in his or her professional character, in the course of discipline enjoined by the church to which he or she belongs.” Due to this law, information confessed to clergy is not permissible in court.

<sup>2</sup> It was unclear to me as to the nature of my role and the subsequent legal requirements I was obligated to obey. I was an ordained minister, therefore, client clergy confidentiality applied. At the same time, I was being asked to counsel someone struggling with criminal sexual sin.

<sup>3</sup> David Finkelhor et al., “The Lifetime Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault Assessed in Late Adolescence,” *Journal of Adolescent Health* 55, no. 3 (September 2014): 329-33.

<sup>4</sup> While there are many modern scientific reports regarding pedophilia, the research cited in these modern reports is six to seven years old.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah D. Goode, *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children: A Study of Paedophiles in Contemporary Society* (London: Routledge, 2009), 20.

only taboo, it is criminal. Therefore, those who admit to having pedophilic desires are taking a risk in their admission. Sarah Goode, regarding skewed statistics, writes,

Remember, these survey rates were found by relying *only* on what the volunteers decided to disclose to the researchers. It's probably that, even when anonymity and confidentiality are absolutely guaranteed, a proportion of people who are asked questions such as this on a written questionnaire will still feel uncomfortable and will chose not to disclose any information on their sexual attraction to children, so the rates of around one in five men is likely to be a minimum figure.<sup>6</sup>

Applying this statistic to the United States of America would indicate that over 65 million adult men and women are sexually attracted to children eighteen years of age or younger. To put that in perspective, there are approximately 400,000 people in the United States with Down Syndrome.<sup>7</sup> It is 163 times more likely that someone would find themselves in the presence of someone with a pedophilic attraction than someone with Down Syndrome. Pedophilia is an issue that the church needs to address.

To make matters more daunting, the secular approach toward helping pedophiles begins with the conclusion that pedophilia does not have a cure. Pedophilia is most often treated from one of two perspectives: a genetic orientation<sup>8</sup> or a behavior disorder.<sup>9</sup> Either way, the goal is not to cure but to treat and manage. Much like the secular approach to alcohol, the pedophile is told that this sexual attraction to the young will never go away. Therefore, different treatment options will need to be used: drugs, different aversion therapies, Electro Shock Therapy, or some combination of the three. As one leading doctor stated, "We're not going to be able to put the fire out, but we can

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<sup>6</sup> Goode, *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children*, 20.

<sup>7</sup> DoSomething.org, "11 Facts about Down Syndrome," accessed June 11, 2017, <https://www.dosomething.org/us/facts/11-facts-about-down-syndrome>.

<sup>8</sup> Fred S. Berlin, "Pedophilia and DSM-5: The Importance of Clearly Defining the Nature of a Pedophilic Disorder," *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* 42, no. 4 (December 2014): 404-7.

<sup>9</sup> Michael C. Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children: Theory, Assessment, and Intervention* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007), 79.

do a nice job of containing [it].”<sup>10</sup> This approach does not offer much hope for the one struggling with pedophilia.

Unlike the world’s approach to pedophilia, the gospel has so much to offer. True and lasting change, complete forgiveness, and communal acceptance in this life are possible for anyone, including those struggling with pedophilia. The rest of this work is devoted to applying the gospel specifically to the sin of pedophilia that provides hope and help for those struggling. It is my intention to allow the gospel of Jesus Christ, in all its glory, to be the beacon of light illuminating a path of change for the pedophile so that, at some point, he would agree with the apostle Paul when he said, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11). As darkness must flee when light appears, those struggling with pedophilia can learn to walk in the glorious light of the gospel with all the forgiveness, peace, reconciliation, and confidence of anyone who knows Jesus and has truly been set free from guilt and shame.

### **Familiarity with the Literature**

To show how “true” freedom is found for those struggling with pedophilia, three distinct types of literature will be referenced. The first category of literature focuses on secular psychological approaches to pedophilia. This section will include definitions, causal factors, research studies, as well as therapies applied from experts who have done research in the field of deviant sexual behavior, including pedophilia.

The second category of literature will deal with a historical Christian response to sexual sin, including pedophilia<sup>11</sup>. As the Catholic Church has gone through many changes over the last two millennia, so has her response toward all types of sin.

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<sup>10</sup> *The Week* Staff, “Pedophilia: A Guide to the Disorder,” *The Week*, November 25, 2011, <http://theweek.com/articles/479986/pedophilia-guide-disorder>.

<sup>11</sup> The term *historical* refers to post-Apostolic Christianity up to the present.

Resources in this category include writings from the Early Church Fathers as well as the modern evangelical church from the 1940s to the present, including Christian psychologists.

The final category of literature will deal with the gospel and how it specifically frees pedophiles<sup>12</sup> from the power of sin, allowing them to become a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). While the entire Bible speaks to this issue in one manner or another, Leviticus 13, Romans 1:24-32, and 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 will be the sections of Scripture in focus. Exegetical commentaries and other technical forms will be referenced.

### **Secular Psychological Approach toward Pedophilia**

In an attempt to understand the modern secular psychological approach to pedophilia, this work will use four primary resources. Two resources represent foundational thoughts on sexual perversion in general, as well as initial thoughts on pedophilia from the late 1800s. While the late 1800s might appear to be outdated and irrelevant, writings from this era are important as other resources have built modern day psychological thoughts and ideas on these original works. The other two resources represent the most modern writings and research conducted regarding the issue of pedophilia.

The first resource is entitled *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* by Sigmund Freud.<sup>13</sup> From a secular perspective, Sigmund Freud is often referred to as the

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<sup>12</sup> Freedom from the power of sin is not the same as freedom from the presence of sin. The gospel frees the pedophile from the power of sin so that he can progress in Christlikeness. The presence of sin will only be eradicated when the believer receives a new body. This truth means that the pedophile, while free to grow and change, will still be plagued by a battle to do what glorifies God and what pleases the self.

<sup>13</sup> Sigmund Freud, Steven Marcus, and Nancy J. Chodorow, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey (1905; repr., New York: Basic Books, 2000).

founding father of psychology.<sup>14</sup> Freud's writings are foundational to understanding much of what psychology understands regarding human behavior. Of note in this writing, is Sigmund Freud's "five stages of psycho-sexual development."<sup>15</sup> Freud believed that as a person moved through the five different stages through childhood and adolescents, his personality would naturally progress from one stage to the next. Given non-stressful normal experiences through childhood and adolescents, these five stages normally would produce a functional adult who responded well within their given society. However, when there are perceived discrepancies between what physically happens and what is socially expected, unresolved conflict can arise. According to Sigmund Freud, it is this unresolved conflict that gives way to all sorts of different disorders, including those of a sexual nature.<sup>16</sup>

In Freud's *Three Essays*, he outlines what he believes is happening at the different stages of life which allow for the development of sexual aberration [dysfunction]:

In view of what was now seen to be the wide dissemination of tendencies to perversion, we were driven to the conclusion that a disposition to perversions is an original and universal disposition of the human sexual instinct and that normal sexual behavior is developed out of it as a result of organic changes and psychical inhibitions occurring in the course of maturation; we hoped to be able to show the presence of this original disposition in childhood. Among the forces restricting the direction taken by the sexual instinct we laid emphasis upon shame, disgust, pity, and the structures of morality and authority erected by society. We were thus led to regard an established aberration from normal sexuality as an instance of developmental inhibition and infantilism.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ellen R. Green Wood, *The World of Psychology*, annotated instructor's ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1993), 401.

<sup>15</sup> "Stages of Psychosexual Development," *Journal Psyche*, accessed June 23, 2017, <http://journalpsyche.org/tag/stages-of-psychosexual-development/>.

<sup>16</sup> Gerald Corey, *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 5th ed. (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1996), 97-105.

<sup>17</sup> Freud, Marcus, and Chodorow, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 97.

Understanding Sigmund Freud’s application of his theory regarding the five stages of psycho-sexual development are paramount when it comes to understanding the psychological work that has been produced in the years that followed.

Preceding Sigmund Freud’s work in the area of sexuality was Richard von Krafft-Ebing. His book *Psychopathia Sexualis: The Classic Study of Deviant Sex*<sup>18</sup> is considered the first of its kind in which different sexual deviations were identified and categorized.<sup>19</sup> In 1896, Richard von Krafft-Ebing is credited as having coined the term “pedophilia” to describe adults who were physically attracted to pre-pubescent children fourteen years and under.<sup>20</sup> Many secular professionals cite Krafft-Ebing’s work as the genesis of an understanding toward pedophilia. Regarding his groundbreaking work, Harry Oosterhuis wrote:

In the mid-1880s, Krafft-Ebing initiated and, in the 1890s, Moll elaborated a shift from a psychiatric perspective in which deviant sexuality was explained as a derived, episodic and more or less singular symptom of a more fundamental mental disorder, to a consideration of perversion as an integral part of a more general, autonomous and continuous sexual instinct. Before Henry Havelock Ellis and Sigmund Freud had expressed similar views, it was primarily through the writings of Krafft-Ebing and Moll that a new understanding of human sexuality emerged.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to being the first to use the word “pedophilia,” Krafft-Ebing also wrote about antipathic sexual instinct.<sup>22</sup> Antipathic sexual instinct describes what Krafft-Ebing theorized as one’s inability to change who or what they are attracted to sexually. He recognizes that there are degrees of severity regarding this antipathic sexual instinct, but once those instincts are established, treatment is the only option as opposed to a

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<sup>18</sup> Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis: The Classic Study of Deviant Sex*, trans. Franklin S. Klaf (1965; repr., New York: Arcade, 2011).

<sup>19</sup> Harry Oosterhuis, “Sexual Modernity in the Works of Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Albert Moll,” *Medical History* 56, no. 2 (April 2012): 133-55.

<sup>20</sup> Oosterhuis, “Sexual Modernity,” 134.

<sup>21</sup> Oosterhuis, “Sexual Modernity,” 135.

<sup>22</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 186-88.



cure.<sup>23</sup> This theory factored heavily into the idea that those who are attracted to children will most likely always be attracted to children. With very little scientific data, this theory was promoted as truth and continues to be foundational material for modern approaches toward pedophilic treatment.

While controversial, this work provided those struggling with abnormal sexual fetichists<sup>24</sup> with the sense that they were not alone in their struggle.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, *Psychopathia Sexualis* was unique in that it contained scientific information as well as numerous accounts from the patients he had worked with throughout the years in his practice. These personal accounts provided some sort of redemptive measure for those who were struggling; redemptive not because their stories undid what they struggled with nor changed the actions that came out of their desires; rather, redemptive because their stories might perhaps lead to a better understanding and treatment of their perversion.

The third and more current resource is *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children: A Study of Paedophiles in Contemporary Society* by Sarah D. Goode. By the author's own admission, her viewpoint is one from which no one has ever written:

This book is unusual. It presents a view from a world which [sic] has never previously been discussed or written about in any depth, either at an academic or popular level, yet which paradoxically is almost instantly available to anyone with access to the internet.<sup>26</sup>

The primary distinguishing aspect of this resource is that it seeks to speak to the experience of pedophilia before it has been acted upon. Much of the research done prior to this book only involved those who had been incarcerated or placed in an asylum

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<sup>23</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 189.

<sup>24</sup> Throughout Krafft-Ebing's work he refers to fetichists [sic], which is his term for abnormal desires.

<sup>25</sup> Oosterhuis, "Sexual Modernity," 138.

<sup>26</sup> Goode, *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children*, 1.

because they had been caught performing pedophilic actions. Goode takes advantage of the “anonymity” provided by the internet to gather data from those who struggle with child pornography. Her hope in writing is to bridge “the gulf in understanding between those who want to protect children and those who feel sexual attraction towards children.”<sup>27</sup> In approaching pedophilia from this perspective, she brings empathy to those struggling with child attraction while not crossing the line in giving credence nor permission to act on those feelings. Speaking to this, Goode writes, “There is no assumption in this book that paedophiles [sic] are pathological, deviant, criminal or evil.”<sup>28</sup> Goode’s book attempts to offer some hope to those struggling as well as those who would be victims by discussing pedophilia in a non-emotional unsensational manner.

One final resource that is useful to understanding a secular approach to pedophilia is *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children: Theory, Assessment, and Intervention* by Michael C. Seto. This resource is all-encompassing in that Seto provides his theory regarding the development of pedophilia, assessments designed to help identify those who struggle with pedophilia, as well as interventions that can be used in the treatment of pedophilia. Michael Seto cites over 800 different academic resources, not to overwhelm the reader, but to confirm for the reader that he is presenting more than just his opinions. He attempts to accomplish two goals through his writing. In recognizing the fear that often accompanies the word “pedophilia,” Seto attempts to provide an *accurate* picture of a pedophile. Speaking to this goal, he writes,

Much of what laypeople and professionals believe about pedophiles and sexual offending against children—and the policies and laws that are implemented as a result—is not supported by empirical evidence. I believe this has been to the detriment of children, offenders, their respective families, and the mental health and criminal justice systems that deal with sex offenders against children.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Goode, *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children*, 2.

<sup>28</sup> Goode, *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children*, 2.

<sup>29</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, xii.

The second goal of this book is to provide some hope for those who struggle with pedophilia, both those who have acted out and those who have not acted upon their desires. Understanding that the unknown is often fearful, Seto begins his work by offering an explanation of sexual-offending that describes the offender as one who struggles with “social incompetence, conventional sexual experiences, childhood sexual abuse, and psychopathology.”<sup>30</sup> In describing the origination of pedophilia in this manner, Seto is acknowledging that pedophilia is a complex issue that has myriad avenues of influence that have been contributing factors in the pedophile’s life which need to be examined and addressed. Seto’s multifaceted explanation offers a glimmer of hope for the pedophile because on some levels, learned behavior can be changed.

While Seto convincingly argues the learned behavior of pedophilic behavior, he also gives credence to the idea that pedophilia has a genetic component. In speaking to this genetic component, Seto states, “Because pedophilia appears to be a stable sexual preference—akin to heterosexual or homosexual orientation in the sense that it manifests early in life and directs a person’s sexuality—it is highly unlikely that any treatment can change it, just as no treatments have successfully changed homosexual (or heterosexual) orientation.”<sup>31</sup>

He also provides hope in providing some suggestions for assessing pedophilia. The assessments that this resource provides also offer hope for both the pedophile, as well as those who do not understand pedophilia.<sup>32</sup> Using numerous research data, Seto’s resource provides assessments which both aid in identifying those who struggle as well as assessing the “treatment” success for those struggling. Finally, he offers hope through suggesting how to best help the pedophile by presenting a wide range of treatment

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<sup>30</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 96.

<sup>31</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, xiv.

<sup>32</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 141-66.

options with data to back up each suggestion.<sup>33</sup> In a non-emotional approach toward pedophiles, Michael Seto invites to the same table both those who struggle and those who do not understand the struggle. The goal of his writing is aimed at protecting those who might suffer at the hands of a pedophile. To date, there does not exist another resource as comprehensive as *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*.

### **A Historical Christian Approach toward Pedophilia**

While secular literature has addressed pedophilia for well over 100 years, the church has remained relatively silent from her inception until present; pedophilia is a form of sexual sin and should be avoided.<sup>34</sup> This section of literature is presented to show how the church has historically approached homosexuality and pedophilia, as well as how the church has historically responded to such sin.<sup>35</sup>

In *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition*, Donald Fortson and Rolling Grams provide excellent research regarding the Early Church and how she understood and responded to sexual sin.<sup>36</sup> While many resources available today do an excellent job of exegeting Scriptures relevant to homosexuality and other sins, this resource is unique in that the first half of the book is dedicated to specifically examining how the Early Church responded to sexual sin. In regard to this unique aspect, Fortson and Grams state,

Many theological works on the subject [homosexuality] have omitted this discussion [church history], as though theology is a matter of reading the Bible and then

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<sup>33</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 167-208.

<sup>34</sup> The use of the word “Catholic Church” is meant to include the church from the end of the Apostolic Age up until the current time, which would include the Early Church Fathers, the Catholic Church pre-Reformation, the fathers of the Reformation, as well as recent Protestant Church authors.

<sup>35</sup> A look at the early church’s view on pedophilia must include the topic of homosexuality as homosexual acts with adults or children was generally viewed under the same classification.

<sup>36</sup> S. Donald Fortson III and Rollin G. Grams, *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition* (Nashville: B & H, 2016).

discussing what it says without listening to nearly two millennia of church history. We intend to right this imbalance, even to the extent of beginning with church history.<sup>37</sup>

Another unique feature of this resource is the profound use of primary resources. The authors have gone to great lengths to research and quote original sources as opposed to merely referencing original sources. Quoting original sources lends a great amount of credibility to their writing that in turn fosters more credibility. In speaking to this aspect of their work, the authors write, “We hope the present work will give readers abundant quotations from primary sources so that they can discuss the subject knowledgeably, not having to take an interpreter’s word on what a text says.”<sup>38</sup> Beginning with the Early Church Fathers and ending with the modern church, the first half of this resource faithfully recounts the path of the church in regard to her stance on sexual sin. The argument is clear that there has been one consistent message from the church as she has faithfully exegeted Scripture: God is against all sexual sin because it distorts sexuality as God created it.

This resource not only speaks to the church’s understanding of sexual sin, but it also speaks to the church’s response toward sexual sin since the time of the Early Church Fathers. For example, the church in the Middle Ages developed Penitential Manuals, which gave guidelines for pastors when they heard the confessions of their parishioners. These detailed manuals were very specific and laid out different consequences for different types of sexual sin, some of which lasted ten to fifteen years.<sup>39</sup> These historic accounts provide solid evidence that the church has not ignored nor remained quiet about sexual sin, but at the same time, has not consistently given a response aimed toward change and reconciliation. Knowing that the early church addressed sexual sin in detail helps to understand that there is much to learn from the Early Church as well as much work that

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<sup>37</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 2-3.

<sup>38</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 3.

<sup>39</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 45-46.

the church still needs to do to provide hope and help for those who deal with pedophilic struggles.

Another set of resources that are paramount to a correct understanding of an Early Church view of sexual sin in its many forms is the collection of works from many of the Early Church Fathers entitled *Ante-Nicene Fathers*.<sup>40</sup> This multi-volume collection includes writings from Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and John Chrysostom. While not much is written with use of the word pedophilia, there is a consensus among the Early Church Fathers regarding sexual sin of all sorts and how the church should respond to such sin. It is important to hear from these men due to the proximity in time of the original writings. The closer a writer is to original sayings and writings, the more accurate their understanding. This fact needs to be added into any modern work that seeks to bring help and hope to a world that is sexually broken. Examining the thoughts and insights of the Early Church Fathers reveals that sexual sin was an issue that faced the church even at her inception.

Historically speaking, Christians use of psychological theories and methods is relatively new, the influence from Christians who have studied and practice psychology needs to be considered as another significant influence within historical Christianity. Admittedly, not much has been written concerning the use of psychology from a Christian approach as applied toward pedophilia. At the same time, these Christian psychologists have developed extensive theories, models, and practices regarding personality formation, dysfunctional development, and so on from which principles for dealing with pedophilia can be appropriated.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, trans. G. Reith, 9 vols. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885).

<sup>41</sup> Eric L. Johnson, ed., *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, ed. 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

At this point, it is necessary to mention that a large spectrum of theories and practices are utilized by Christians who practice psychology. Eric Johnson identifies five separate camps within this spectrum in his book entitled *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*.<sup>42</sup> This spectrum ranges from those who separate themselves from secular psychology (SP) altogether to those who would agree with secular psychological theories and employ many modern secular psychological methods.<sup>43</sup>

Of those that favor modern psychology, the “Levels-of-Explanation” (LOE) view contains theory and practice that are hardly distinguishable from SP.<sup>44</sup> This perspective values the science of psychology and guards against combining anything that would bring into question the integrity of this science. Regarding this respect for psychology, Johnson writes, “Confusing them [psychology and theology] would distort both.”<sup>45</sup> As a result, this perspective strongly believes that a robust distinction needs to remain between psychology and theology.<sup>46</sup> Psychological theory and practice at this end of the Christian psychology spectrum will not be considered for this paper.

The “Christian Integrationist” (CI) is another perspective that favors modern psychology.<sup>47</sup> While this group still favors psychology, they differ from LOE in that they have sought to weave together those parts of psychology that are “consistent with and

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<sup>42</sup> Eric Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 31-38.

<sup>43</sup> Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” 33.

<sup>44</sup> David G. Myers, “A Levels-Of-Explanation View,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 49-100.

<sup>45</sup> Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” 33.

<sup>46</sup> Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” 33.

<sup>47</sup> Stanton L. Jones, “An Integration View,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 101-48.

built upon the Bible.”<sup>48</sup> Writing in *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling*, Edgar Barker gives a clear example of this perspective:

A clinical diagnosis of pedophilia is made following a formal evaluation by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist of an individual whose sexual preference is prepubescent children. . . . [Pedophilia] should not be classified as a [subset of] paraphilia but rather as a sexual orientation and is therefore *unlikely to change* or be affected by treatment.<sup>49</sup>

While Barker’s explanation might be construed as an example reflecting the LOE perspective, the difference is apparent when he introduces biblical and spiritual concepts. Regarding these aspects, Barker writes, “The Bible makes it clear that sexual activity between adults and children is forbidden.”<sup>50</sup> He then proceeds to mention verses from 1 Corinthians 6, Ephesians 5, and Matthew 18 as scriptural prohibitions regarding pedophilia.<sup>51</sup> This form of psychological theory and practice will be considered for this paper.

Another category identified by Johnson distinct from other Christians who practice psychology is the Christian Psychologist’s view.<sup>52</sup> While *integrationists* seek to weave together existing secular psychological paradigms with Scripture, the goal of Christian psychology is to develop a new Christian paradigm through which counseling takes place. It is the belief of this view that a distinctly different position needs to be taken by Christian psychologists. To develop a distinctly different Christian Psychology, members of this group have devoted large amounts of time, energy, and money to establish schools, organizations, and journals that further develop the Christian psychology

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<sup>48</sup> Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” 35.

<sup>49</sup> Edgar Barker, “Pedophilia,” in *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling: An Indispensable Tool for Helping People with Their Problems*, ed. Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011), 316, emphasis added.

<sup>50</sup> Barker, “Pedophilia,” 316.

<sup>51</sup> Barker, “Pedophilia,” 317.

<sup>52</sup> Robert C. Roberts and P. J. Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 149-98.



viewpoint.<sup>53</sup> As a result, this view has had a significant influence in the world of Christians who practice psychology. Due to the profound influence of Christian Counseling (CC) within the world of Christians who practice psychology, resources from this view will be considered for this thesis.

Transformational Psychology (TP) is another distinct view identified by Johnson.<sup>54</sup> This focus is different from the previous three in that it considers the spiritual nature of the counselor and how this impacts both his interpretation and application of Scripture. Regarding TP, Robert Kellemen writes, “They [Transactional Psychologists] have redefined psychology as the science of Scriptural interpretation/ application plus first-hand sage observation/reflection on creation (humanity) designed to discover prescriptive insight for living.”<sup>55</sup> Due to the rising influence of TP within Christian circles, resources that have come from the TP view will be considered for this thesis.

In order to understand the different approaches toward sexual deviancy and pedophilia, myriad resources will be cited.<sup>56</sup> With an understanding of four different Christian views that seek to integrate secular psychological theories and practices, it will also be necessary to explore a Biblical Counseling (BC) approach and the hope that it promises for those struggling with pedophilia.

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<sup>53</sup> Johnson, “A Brief History of Christians in Psychology,” 37.

<sup>54</sup> John H. Coe and Todd W. Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 199-244.

<sup>55</sup> “Review of Psychology in the Spirit,” *RPM Ministries*, May 29, 2010, <http://www.rpmministries.org/2010/05/review-of-psychology-in-the-spirit-2/>.

<sup>56</sup> Paul D. Meier et al., *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010); Patrick Carnes, *Facing the Shadow: Starting Sexual and Relationship Recovery*, 3rd ed. (Carefree, AZ: Gentle Path, 2015); Harry Schaumburg, *False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction*, rev. ed. (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1997); Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*; John H. Coe and Todd W. Hall, *Psychology in the Spirit: Contours of a Transformational Psychology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

## **A Biblical Counseling Approach toward Pedophilia**

In the last decade, there has been no shortage of books devoted to a deep discussion of a biblical approach toward sexual depravity, with many of the resources focusing on homosexuality. With all the prolific writing that has been done, no resources specifically focus on the sin of pedophilia. The resources that are helpful fall under two different categories: (1) Scripture and those resources that aid in a better understanding of Scripture, and (2) topical resources dealing with sexual sin from an orthodox biblical perspective.

**Scriptural resources.** Three main sections of Scripture will be used to speak to the issue of pedophilia to provide hope and help: Leviticus 13, Romans 1, and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Leviticus 13 speaks to the laws of leprosy for those who suffer from leprosy as well as those who must interact with those who suffer from leprosy.

Throughout the Bible, leprosy was used both literally as well as symbolically for sin.

Speaking to this issue, Spence-Jones writes,

Leprosy is regarded at [sic] the type of sin in a more especial way than other foul and ugly things. Affections of the body often serve as means of representing to ourselves the affections of the mind. This is witnessed to by ordinary language. The words, “see,” “perceive,” “feel,” originally expressive of bodily acts, have come to signify mental acts, and so in other cases, “healthy,” “diseased,” “upright,” “debased,” are words which we apply to men in their moral even more than in their physical capacity.<sup>57</sup>

There are many parallels between those who suffered from leprosy and those who struggle with pedophilia. For instance, Leviticus 13:45 required the leper to cry out, “Unclean, unclean,” declaring to all who would hear that he was a danger to them. In parallel fashion, the convicted pedophile is required to register as a sex offender and that information is often made public, declaring the danger he is to the public. Continuing in Leviticus 13:46, the leper was required to go before the priest and the priest was the only

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<sup>57</sup> H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Leviticus*, The Pulpit Commentary (London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1910), 198.

one who had the right to declare whether he was clean. In a similar manner, the pedophile is never declared free of “disease.” Leviticus 13:46 also declared that the leper is to live alone and dwell outside the camp for the protection of the rest of the community.

Similarly, pedophiles are told where they can and cannot live in society for the good of society. To further amplify those parallels without making the pedophile into a victim, the following sources will be cited: *Leviticus 1-16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* by Jacob Milgrom,<sup>58</sup> and *The Book of Leviticus* by Gordon Wenham.<sup>59</sup>

Romans 1:24-32 is very descriptive in describing the process of worship replacement as well as the product of worship replacement. Offering hope and help demands that both the process and the product of false worship be addressed so that repentance can take place first in the heart and then in behavior.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to Leviticus 13 and Romans 1, this work will also focus on 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Commentaries will be used to understand both the meaning of this passage as it was originally intended; as well as, the application of this passage as it relates to issues of pedophilia.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, Continental Commentary Series (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004).

<sup>59</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979).

<sup>60</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998); John Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001); C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of Romans*, International Critical Commentary (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2004); Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1988).

<sup>61</sup> Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013). This book is considered one of the leading commentaries of the modern age and will serve as the reference to best understand and apply 1 Cor 6:9-11. Thiselton's work stands out from other commentaries due to his balance of scholarship and practicality when speaking of justification by grace alone. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014). The extensive knowledge found in this commentary will be used to underscore that permanent change is possible in the pedophile. David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

**Topic resources.** Just as there was the need to limit the CP resources for this thesis, there is also the need to limit the BC resources used in this paper. Only resources in which authors are members of The Association of Certified Biblical Counselor and The Christian Counseling and Education Foundation will be used.<sup>62</sup>

To date, there are no resources written that speak to the specific issues of pedophilia and the gospel. Numerous volumes speak to the issue of life-enslaving sexual sin and the gospel. Of those resources, two stand out as primary resources for this thesis. Heath Lambert's *Finally Free* is one of the best resources that attempts to address sexual sin with the gospel.<sup>63</sup> Lambert explains that change requires intentional hard work and at the same time is completely dependent on the grace of God. Many books have been written about the hard and intentional work required with sins such as pedophilia. Yet for those struggling with sexual sin, no resources highlight the grace of God as the answer in such a profound manner as Lambert. While the intended audience of this book is those who struggle with pornography, the principles of grace, humility, confession, and accountability equally apply to those who struggle with pedophilia.

One additional resource is Paul Tripp and Timothy Lane's *How People Change*.<sup>64</sup> This resource speaks to issues such as identity, hope, shame, and real change that are all addressed both theologically and pragmatically. With grace and precision, Tripp and Lane move through the themes of Scripture to explain the biblical process of true and lasting change. This process begins with a correct understanding of God, moves onto a correct understanding of one's self, and ends with expected behavior that flows out

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<sup>62</sup> Both organizations have clearly stated their biblical counseling resolve in their constitutions and by-laws. These standards not only clearly state what they believe but also how their members are to counsel. These standards govern writing as well.

<sup>63</sup> Heath Lambert, *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013).

<sup>64</sup> Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp, *How People Change*, 2nd ed. (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2008).

of a changed person. Throughout this process, the gospel of Jesus is highlighted as the reason why real and lasting change is possible and to be expected in this life as well as in the life to come. Regarding this hope, the authors write, “What is Paul’s focus? He wants us to know that the Cross defines our identity and potential right here and now because we are alive in Christ. We have the very Spirit of Christ living in us.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Void in the Literature**

While some biblical resources have been produced that speak to sexual sin, rarely have those resources been written in anticipation of cultural shifts. At best, biblical resources tend to be written in response to current cultural issues resulting from shifts that took place in the past decades. An example of such an instance is the church’s response to the sexual revolution of the 1970s. Prior to that revolution, very few resources were in print specifically addressing sexual sin, either at the heart level or the pragmatic level. Sex was simply a topic that was not talked about in a public setting.

The sexual revolution has continued to promote the normalization of all sexual sin and the church has continued to produce resources in response. Heath Lambert’s book *Finally Free* represents a well-balanced approach toward those enslaved to pornography. A crystal-clear explanation of the gospel is given, a robust understanding of grace is laid out, and practical steps are offered. While this is an excellent book on pornography, it was produced over 60 years after the first Playboy magazine was printed.<sup>66</sup> To be sure, earlier writings sought to aid those struggling with pornography, but the church and her people took far too long to produce resource on the level of *Finally Free*.

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<sup>65</sup> Lane and Tripp, *How People Change*, 170.

<sup>66</sup> Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies: The Sexual Politics of Playboy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

In the last decade, hundreds of resources have been written in response to LGTBQQIAAP issues.<sup>67</sup> Where there used to be few well-written books, a multitude of books now exist that not only address pragmatic issues related to LGTBQUAI, but some resources also address theological and historical issues that relate to this issue. Books such as *Transforming Homosexuality: What the Bible Says about Sexual Orientation and Change* by Denny Burk and Heath Lambert,<sup>68</sup> *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality* by Kevin DeYoung,<sup>69</sup> and *Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ* by Rosaria Butterfield<sup>70</sup> are excellent resources that provide a biblical apologetic and a pragmatic approach toward helping those who struggle with LGTBQQIAAP issues. At the same time, as with the issue of pornography, the church has not been at the forefront of this change. It took progressives writing very persuasive books before the church produced books dealing with this issue. As with pornography, the church has played catch-up.

The sexual revolution has not declared victory with the normalization of LGTBQQIAAP. Many other manifestations of sexual sin are still “hush-hush” and have yet to be “normalized.” The next manifestation that appears to be on the “normalization” agenda is pedophilia. As with everything else related to the sexual revolution, the church does not appear to have any resources aimed at a biblical approach to pedophilia on a theological or pragmatic level. At best, books are written about sexual sin in general or written about specific sexual sins that mention pedophilia as a side note. However, a mere

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<sup>67</sup> LGTBQQIAAP stands for Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Ally, and Pansexual.

<sup>68</sup> Denny Burk and Heath Lambert, *Transforming Homosexuality: What the Bible Says about Sexual Orientation and Change* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2015).

<sup>69</sup> Kevin DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015).

<sup>70</sup> Rosaria Champagne Butterfield, *Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ* (Pittsburgh: Crown & Covenant, 2015).

mention of pedophilia is not what is needed. Writings that speak to sexual sin in general, leaving the application up to those that struggle, do not transform.

What is needed is writing aimed at a robust theological approach toward the sin of pedophilia. This writing needs to have a strong theology regarding pedophilia to combat the “normalization” agenda of the sexual revolution. Additionally, this work needs to be very practical to provide steps to help those who fall under the category of pedophile. In short, the pedophile needs hope: hope in Scripture that it is sufficient to address specific sin and hope that change is possible in this lifetime. The void in literature regarding hope for the Christian who struggles with pedophilia is the aim of this current work.

### **Thesis**

SP literature and therapy agree that permanent change for the pedophile is not possible; rather, treatment/management is the only option. The best outcome, from this perspective, is to provide enough accountability and oversight so that the pedophile’s willingness to reoffend is suppressed. BC offers a superior answer for those struggling with pedophilia, believing that true lasting change is possible for the pedophile in this life as well as in the life to come. “True lasting change” does not intimate that temptations will become non-existent. As with any other sin, pedophilic temptations might continue to be experienced. True and lasting change refer to a permanent perspective change, a change of affections toward pedophilic thoughts and actions, a change of behaviors regarding pedophilia, and finally a humble attitude that welcomes the insights, admonitions, and rebukes of others. This promised change takes place holistically, beginning in the heart and then works out through Christ-like behaviors (Ezek 36:26-27; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:5-14). This holistic transformation contains three major components: the gospel of Jesus Christ (justification), the work of the repentant sinner in cooperation with the

Holy Spirit (sanctification),<sup>71</sup> and active participation in the body of Christ. The combination of these three components allows for the belief that permanent change, not just treatment, is possible in this life.

## **Outline of Chapters**

### **Chapter 2: A Secular Approach**

This chapter will examine the secular concept of pedophilia including a secular understanding, multiple secular approaches to treating pedophilia, proving that SP does not believe that a pedophile can truly change. This examination will begin by analyzing the early psychological approaches in which pedophilia was categorized as a disorder. This chapter will then examine the modern therapeutic approach toward pedophilia that is trending in the direction of labeling pedophilia as a sexual orientation. This chapter will not only examine the steps taken to “normalize” pedophilia, but it will also show how the stage has been set for full acceptance of pedophilia as a normal orientation.

### **Chapter 3: A Historical Approach**

Chapter 3 will examine the historical response of Christians from the age of the Early Church Fathers up until the present. The goal of this chapter will be to evidence that the Christian church has devalued the power of the gospel to transform the pedophile. Adopting secular thought regarding sexual sin, she has had the tendency to treat the changed believing pedophile more as the proverbial leper than a new member of the body of Christ.

This historical review will cover two different aspects of the Christian church. The first will be the corporate church’s response to sexual sin, with deviant sexual sin being the primary focus. It is necessary to examine the early church’s response to sexual

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<sup>71</sup> Sanctification is spoken of as both positional and progressive. At regeneration, the Christian is positionally sanctified in Christ. However, the act of becoming more like Christ is a progressive process that is worked out over a lifetime. This progressive sanctification is carried out in cooperation with the Holy Spirit (Phil 2:12-13).



sin in general as this sets the stage for how the modern church has responded to sexual sin. The second aspect that will be discussed is the CP approach to pedophilia. Due to the extensive influence of CP within the evangelical church, and CP's willingness to adopt secular thought and practice with regard to pedophilia and those who experience pedophilic tendencies, it will be necessary to discuss issues of sexual deviancy and pedophilia through the different viewpoints found within the CP spectrum.

#### **Chapter 4: A Biblical Counseling Approach**

This chapter will provide the BC response for pedophilia with the argument that this approach alone leads to permanent Christ-like change for the pedophile. This is accomplished by focusing on three main aspects: the origin of pedophilic sin, the power of the gospel to set free from sexual sin, and the resulting product of being set free from sin. Leviticus 13-14, Romans 1:18-32, and 1 Corinthians 6:11 will be used to argue that Scripture speaks to the issue of pedophilia. This permanent change will not only impact the one who used to be a pedophile, but it will also be a vivid example to the world regarding the power of the gospel to bring about real lasting change in the darkest most hopeless of circumstances.

#### **Chapter 5: Implications for the Church**

This final chapter will focus on the implications for the church today as she faithfully proclaims the gospel to pedophiles and is witness to their change. Just as the pedophile will need to see himself differently and act in accordance, so the church will also need to see and respond to the pedophile differently. The church will need to consider what it will look like to bring the changed pedophile into the fold so that he can use the gifts he has been given.<sup>72</sup> The church will need to decide how to build trust with the changed pedophile. The church will also need to balance issues of caution alongside

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<sup>72</sup> See appendix 1 for an example of how a church could bring a changed pedophile into the fold.

the gospel requirement to see and treat the new believer in a new Christ-like fashion. Just as the changed pedophile is an example to the world regarding the power of the gospel to radically transform, so the church's response toward the changed pedophile provides an equally powerful message of the gospel's power to radically transform.

CHAPTER 2  
SECULAR PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH  
TOWARD PEDOPHILIA

**Understanding Pedophilia**

Rare is the person who wants to understand pedophilia in the sense that they want to understand the inner workings of pedophiles, why they think the way that they think, and why they do the things that they do. This is perhaps one of the reasons why good research under this topic is so scarce from the world of biblical counseling. The goal of this chapter is to provide the reader with a thorough understanding of the secular concept of pedophilia, the etiology of pedophilia from three major authors of secular psychology, as well as treatment plans developed by secular psychologists. As the reader will see from the numerous articles and studies cited, secular psychologists agree upon little regarding pedophilia and how to help those who are diagnosed as pedophiles. The overall conclusion posited is that great confusion exists about what pedophilia is, the etiology of pedophilia, and the treatment of pedophilia. Perhaps the most hopeless conclusion stemming from the secular approach is that true and lasting change is not offered as a possibility, only management and coping of those who are labeled as pedophiles. Given this hopelessness, the gospel of Jesus Christ stands to offer the greatest amount of hope as it offers a definition, an etiology, a treatment, and the possibility of true and lasting change, not only in the life to come, but in the present life lived.

**Paraphilia**

While the focus of this thesis is on pedophilia, a discussion of the broader category of paraphilia is needed so that the understanding of the subcategory pedophilia is not convoluted with the more general category of paraphilia. The original use of the

word *paraphilia* meant love of the perverse.<sup>1</sup> That definition, while short and concise, has one major problem; namely, the word “perverse.” While one might be able to define today what is perverse versus what is acceptable, decades or centuries ago, that might not have been the case. This happens quite regularly as societal norms change almost as often as political powers. For instance, alcohol was looked down upon as prohibition was instituted, and today it is exalted as a great way to have fun and to be an adult. Smoking cigarettes used to be what “real” men did, and now smoking is looked down upon for medical reasons. Examples of culture shifts are endless, pointing to the mutability of societal thought, which makes issues such as sexual deviancy hard to solidify over long periods of time. Considering this truth, to claim that one suffers from a particular paraphilia today might not be true ten or twenty years from now as society norms ebb and flow. The reverse could be true as well if society were to take a more conservative turn in sexual acceptability.

Perhaps realizing the extreme nature of the word *perverse*, experts in the field of psychology began to be more specific in describing paraphilia as well as assigning subcategories of paraphilic behavior. A cursory look into the original *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* printed in 1952 reveals that paraphilia was simply defined as a sexual deviation in one of the following five areas: homosexuality, transvestism, pedophilia, fetishism, and sexual sadism.<sup>2</sup> Volumes 2 and 3 of the *DSM* provided more clarity regarding a professional understanding of paraphilia yet still retained very subjective language such as “bizarre” and “unusual,” allowing for a diagnosis to

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<sup>1</sup> Michael W. Wiederman, “Paraphilia and Fetishism,” *The Family Journal* 11, no. 3 (July 2003): 315-21.

<sup>2</sup> Christian C. Joyal, “Defining ‘Normophilic’ and ‘Paraphilic’ Sexual Fantasies in a Population-Based Sample: On the Importance of Considering Subgroups,” *Sexual Medicine* 3, no. 4 (2015): 321-30. Of special note to this thesis is the observation that four of the five original subcategories of paraphilia have not only been removed as a subcategory of paraphilia but have been removed as any kind of disorder or problem unless the person who has the desires is experiencing some sort of distress due to the desire. In addition, it should also be noted that more subcategories of paraphilias have been added since 1952.

change from decade to decade, which did not offer much help for therapists nor those they were attempting to help.<sup>3</sup> Michael Wiederman observes that the *DSM-IV* was the first volume that made a significant change in the understanding of what constituted paraphilia through specifying that paraphilia “must be distinguished from non-pathological use of sexual fantasies, behaviors, or objects as a stimulus for sexual excitement.”<sup>4</sup> While many claim that this understanding provided a better understanding of paraphilic activity, it also revealed that a radical shift had taken place in what was normal and what was abnormal. Prior to the distinction found in the *DSM-IV*, all activity that fell into the subcategories of homosexuality, transvestism, pedophilia, fetishism, and sexual sadism were deemed paraphilic and abnormal. Adopting the terminology of the *DSM-IV* meant that it was only abnormal if the activity was deemed “pathological.” A diagnosis of non-pathological paraphilia did not necessarily reside in the hands of the professional; rather, a diagnosis was given on whether a compulsion or persistent obsession caused distress to the one experiencing the paraphilia. The subtle shift in diagnosis slid away from the objective professional observance of certain activities to the personal experience of the homosexual, pedophile, transvestite, etc. To be clear, by the advent of the *DSM-IV*, societal norms regarding sexual activity had shifted to such a degree that most of the activities which fell under the category of paraphilia were only considered a problem if it caused mental distress as defined by the one committing the activity. For instance, if someone liked to wear women’s undergarments in public (a type of fetish), but experienced no marked distress, then he did not fit the diagnosis of a paraphilia.

The discussion of paraphilia also addresses a unique and perhaps foretelling of where the subcategory of pedophilia is potentially headed. As mentioned, five original subcategories were listed underneath the general heading of paraphilia in the first two

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<sup>3</sup> Wiederman, “Paraphilia and Fetishism,” 316.

<sup>4</sup> Wiederman, “Paraphilia and Fetishism,” 316.

volumes of the DSM. Of those five, four have gone somewhat mainstream and become accepted by American culture at large: homosexuality, transvestism, fetishism, and sexual sadism. All four of these subcategories have not only gone mainstream, but they are celebrated each June under the banner of “Pride Month.”<sup>5</sup> In all four of these subcategories is an aspect of criminalization when non-consenting individuals are made to take part in a particular paraphilia, but where there are two consenting persons, all four paraphilias are accepted and celebrated. Pedophilia has yet to go mainstream, presumably because two consenting persons are not possible at this current time.

While one may read the preceding paragraph and conclude that pedophilia will never become as mainstream as the other four paraphilias, the truth is that much effort has gone into laying the foundation to remove the negative stigma of pedophilia thus making it as mainstream as the other four paraphilias. The most notable effort to make pedophilia mainstream has been the American Psychological Association’s change regarding pedophilia away from a disorder and toward an orientation.<sup>6</sup> It is not being hyperbolic to state that this was the same path that the former paraphilic category of homosexuality took. Prior to the *DSM-III*, homosexuality was referred to as a disorder. In 1974, the American Psychological Association (APA) started referring to homosexuality as a disorder only if the one experiencing homosexual attraction was bothered by the attraction in one way or another (ego-dystonic)<sup>7</sup>. If the one experiencing homosexual attraction was not bothered in the least internally by his or her same-sex attraction, then the

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<sup>5</sup> William J. Clinton, “Proclamation 7203—Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, 1999,” *The American Presidency Project*, June 11, 1999, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-7203-gay-and-lesbian-pride-month-1999>.

<sup>6</sup> American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed. [DSM-5] (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association Press, 2013), 698.

<sup>7</sup> Ego-dystonic describes when someone expresses a marked distress by what they are experiencing. In contrast, Ego-syntonic expresses a harmony between what the person is experiencing and what they would like to see happen. This is often used as a marker between a disorder and a non-disorder in secular psychology.

term “disorder” was not deemed appropriate. Changing the conditions for the term *disorder* gave way to the removal of the term “disorder” in the *DSM-III* and was replaced with the term “orientation.” While it took approximately two decades for homosexuality to go mainstream, it can reasonably be argued that replacing the term “disorder” with “orientation” was one of the first steps toward normalizing and mainstreaming homosexuality. Confirming this thought, Agustin Malón writes, “The past *depathologization* of homosexuality is the strongest argument available to those who take the position that pedophilia and other paraphilias should not be treated as mental disorders.”<sup>8</sup>

Similar paths have been used to normalize three of the four other paraphilias, including the use of prominent social figures, books, and movies.<sup>9</sup> Given this similar path and knowing that there is only one paraphilia remaining to go mainstream, it is logical and reasonable to see the “writing on the wall” and conclude that pedophilia is the last and final “paraphilic wall” to bring down. The predictable path begins with relabeling pedophilia from a disorder to an orientation. Speaking to this issue, Avik Howsepian writes,

If those individuals who are sexually aroused by prepubescent children “report an absence of feelings of guilt, shame, or anxiety about these [pedophilic] impulses and are not functionally milted by their paraphilic impulses (according to self-report, objective assessment, or both), and their self-reported and legally recorded histories indicate that they have never acted on their impulses, then these individuals are judged to have a pedophilic orientation but not a pedophilic disorder.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Agustin Malón, “Pedophilia: A Diagnosis in Search of a Disorder,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 41, no. 5 (October 2012): 1083-97.

<sup>9</sup> *50 Shades of Gray*, Caitlyn (Bruce) Jenner, and Drag Queen Story Hour are popular examples that have led to different paraphilias going mainstream in American culture.

<sup>10</sup> Avak Albert Howsepian, “Psychiatry’s Dysphoric Turn: Psychophysical Dysmorphia, Transgender Euphoria, and the Rise of Pedophilia,” *Christian Bioethics* 25, no. 1 (March 2019): 44.

Once there is sufficient societal approval regarding pedophilia being an orientation that does not need to be feared, much as any other paraphilia does not need to be feared, then the path for mainstream acceptance will not be far behind.

One might argue that homosexuality has gained mainstream approval where there are two consenting adults, which could never be true in cases of pedophilia because a minor is involved. Sexual autonomy is the golden calf of American society. What one wants to think, desire, and ultimately do is held up as the most important “right” afforded to someone. Evidence of this truth is found in the current Washington State Sex Education curriculum, which was passed in the spring of 2020. One of the resources included in the curriculum is entitled *It’s Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health*, aimed at ten to fourteen-year-old children. This book not only discusses and illustrates almost every kind of sexual activity possible, but it also promotes all kinds of sexual activity as healthy and wholesome, including heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender activity. In talking about viewing pornography of all sorts, including images that might be “upsetting, scary, confusing, gross, and/or weird, or more than you ever want to see about bodies or sex, and makes you feel uncomfortable,” the authors still argue, “What is important to know and understand is that what really matters in any relationship involving sex is that people treat one another in respectful, caring, and loving ways.”<sup>11</sup> This statement reveals the philosophical foundation regarding sexual activity found throughout the United States and other Western cultures presently.

Arguing that all sexual activity that is mutually loving is normal and right is how LGBTQ+ issues have been woven into civil rights. One issue that has not been tackled thus far is when sexual rights become established. Does someone’s sexual autonomy start at age 18, 15, 13, 9 or are sexual rights endowed at birth? Can someone who is 9 be sexually oriented toward those who are older? Do adults have the right to

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<sup>11</sup> Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberly, *It’s Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2014), 76.



limit what children can and cannot do sexually and with whom they can commit such acts? If children can choose to be sexual with adults without any marked distress, is it appropriate for adults to reciprocate so long as they do not experience any marked distress? Is it Judeo-Christian ethics that judge pedophilia as wrong, or is there something intrinsically wrong with pedophilic thought and behavior? What about other cultures that considered sexual acts between adults and children pathways toward maturity, such as the Greeks and Romans? The list of question could go on and on. These questions, which are reasonable in the current social climate in The United States, seem to indicate that the mainstreaming of pedophilic thought as an appropriate sexual response might be closer than one might think. In support of this conclusion, Howsepian states, “This [diagnosis criteria for pedophilic disorder] should be cause for celebration for the pedophiles in our midst, who gradually, (albeit in fits and starts) are being eased into the sexual mainstream by the APA.”<sup>12</sup>

More details will be provided in the following section regarding the ebb and flow of the APA and the diagnostic criteria for pedophilia. Concluding this section, it is sufficient to say that pedophilia is the one remaining paraphilic activity that has yet to go mainstream, but it is well on its way to running through the same finish line fanfare as homosexuality, transvestism, fetishism, and sadomasochism. Christians need to be ready with a hopeful response when pedophilia goes mainstream.<sup>13</sup> With that understanding, the next section narrows this discussion and focuses on the idea of pedophilia.

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<sup>12</sup> Howsepian, “Psychiatry’s Dysphoric Turn,” 51-52.

<sup>13</sup> This was not the case in the Christian community when homosexuality went mainstream. It could be argued that the Christian community was forced into reactionary responses (books, therapies, sermons, seminars, etc.) as the compass of sexual ethic began to shift. Few, if any, resources were available to professing Christians who once hid homosexual thoughts, urges, desires, and actions.

## Pedophilia

Pedophilia, simply stated, is the condition when someone is sexually attracted to prepubescent children.<sup>14</sup> While this term has generally referred to anyone who has sexual attractions to those under the age of 13, other categories have been delineated based on certain age ranges below age 13, which do not need to be discussed in detail for the purposes of this thesis.<sup>15</sup> The *DSM-5* has made a distinction between those who are interested in sexual activity (orientation) with children from those who have a sexual desire for children (disorder).<sup>16</sup> The distinction between these two ideas will be discussed later in this chapter, but for the time being, it is important to note that the *DSM-5* has made that distinction. To qualify for Pedophilic Disorder (PD), the APA has set out three criteria, with six specifiers:<sup>17</sup>

Criteria A: An individual who has had arousing fantasies about, urges for, or behaviors with a prepubescent child or children.

Criteria B: The individual has acted out these sexual desires or is experiencing significant distress or difficulty as a result of these desires.

Criteria C: The individual is 16 years of age, and at least five years older than the child or children noted in Criterion A.

Specifiers:

1. Exclusive type – sexual attraction to children only
2. Non-Exclusive type – sexual attraction to adults and children.
3. Attraction to boys
4. Attraction to girls
5. Incestuous only

Without speaking to the specifiers, it appears that the APA considers a pedophile to be anyone who is 16 years or older and has acted on or is experiencing significant distress to any kind of sexual attraction regarding a prepubescent child. A few questions should be

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<sup>14</sup> Sara Jahnke, “The Stigma of Pedophilia: Clinical and Forensic Implications,” *European Psychologist* 23, no. 2 (April 2018): 144.

<sup>15</sup> Infantiphilia refers to children under that age of 5 and Hebephilia refers to children ages 11-14. Both of these categories are subcategories of Pedophilia, which is a subcategory Paraphilia

<sup>16</sup> Valérie Mongeau and Joanne-Lucine Rouleau, “DSM-5 Pedophilic Disorder: Are the Age and Number of Victims Significant Variables?” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 43, no. 7 (2014): 1247.

<sup>17</sup> Donald W. Black and Jon E. Grant, *DSM-5 Guidebook: The Essential Companion to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association Publishing, 2014), 291.

asked of this definition to make as useful a definition as possible. If someone 16 years or older does not act upon or have significant distress regarding prepubescent children, does that person qualify for the diagnosis of PD? If a 15-year-old has sexual desires about someone who is 11 years old and that 11-year-old has started to go through puberty, does that qualify for PD? If a 12-year-old (7th grade) male who has gone through puberty has sexual fantasies about an 8-year-old (3rd grade) girl who has not gone through puberty, does that qualify for PD? What constitutes “significant distress” as qualified by Criteria B? What if someone having Obsessive Compulsive Disorder fears that they will sexually act out with someone who is more than five years younger, do the intrusive sexual thoughts and images that are very distressing qualify as PD? What if someone has had two fantasies over the course of a lifetime and has been severely distressed by those fantasies, does that qualify as PD? If someone has had two or more fantasies and is severely distressed, what are the consequences if he confesses to those attractions? To self-report depression has drastically different social consequences than self-reporting pedophilic desires, so what is someone to do who wishes to get help but is fearful of the repercussions? Many more questions could be asked, but the point is that the current *DSM-5* criteria for labelling someone with pedophilic disorder might fit a few cases, but many distinguishing characteristics to each potential case make criteria A through C of little help. They might speak to the broad general category, but they can be confusing when deciding if there is a disorder or not.

**Social constructs.** One major issue that needs to be considered regarding the APA’s definition and diagnosis of pedophilia is whether pedophilia is a social construct versus a true disorder.<sup>18</sup> Not to be misunderstood, for many different societies throughout the world there is right and wrong, which are not social constructs, such as an adult being

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Seto, “Pedophilia and Sexual Offenses against Children,” *Annual Review of Sex Research* 15, no. 1 (2004): 322-23.

sexually interested in a 5-year-old. What is intended by use of the term *social construct* is that individual societies around the world have decided what is too old and what is too young when it comes to sexual interests. In some middle eastern countries, girls younger than 15 are allowed to marry without anyone's consent.<sup>19</sup> While marriage does not always indicate that sexual activity is taking place between partners, in most marriages sexual activity is assumed. As chapter 3 will expound upon, sexual activity between an adult and a child is viewed as part of the maturation process during both Greek and Roman eras. In a country such as the United States, which is often considered a melting pot of the world, such extreme beliefs about sexual activity between children and adults only lead to confusion when trying to distinguish between disorder and worldview. The point being made is not by any means to condone sexually activity between an adult and a child, but to highlight how moving sexual activity away from "right" and "wrong" and into the category of "orientation" and "disorder" can lead to further confusion and be less helpful. Is the goal in therapy to address the disordered behavior and/or significant distress? Is the goal to change the orientation? Is the goal to address the felt distress of the individual hoping to change those distressful feelings? If the goal of secular therapy is to help the pedophile move away from sexual attraction toward children, then there needs to be more definite language surrounding what constitutes pedophilia as well as the use of a universally understood pedophilic language.

**The grammar.** While the grammatical structure of the *DSM-5* definition may not seem that important, in a criminal setting where the "letter of the law interpretation" makes a world of difference, grammar is extremely important. Criterion A is written in such a way that if someone has had sexual fantasies, urges, or behaviors at any time in their life after turning 16 years of age, and either acted on those fantasies, urges, or

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<sup>19</sup> Girls Not Brides, "Where Does It Happen?," accessed July 19, 2019, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/>.

behaviors, or is experiencing significant distress or difficulty in response to those fantasies, urges, or behaviors, then they qualify for PD. If this is true, then a 50-year-old man who had sexual attractions to his 11-year-old neighbor when he was 17 and is significantly distressed by that would qualify for the diagnosis of PD. There does not appear to be any other situation in which this kind of diagnosis would be given to someone who is 34 years removed from his fantasies, urges, and behaviors. And while that might seem like an exaggerated statement, for the 50-year-old man who is staring at being labeled with pedophilic disorder and all of the social shame and potential isolation that would accompany such a diagnosis, that experience is packed with fear and provides no hope as nothing can be done by the 50-year-old man to erase what happened when he was 17.

**Subjective terms.** Another issue with the APA's understanding is the use of a couple of very subjective terms. The first term of note is *arousing*. The term connotes that the one who is experiencing the arousing is either confessing to the arousal or the arousal is somehow measured. While some objective measures can be used to determine whether someone is physically being aroused, this is not always the case.<sup>20</sup> Admitting to arousal knowing that there are some significant negative societal attitudes and even possible criminal actions makes for the very real possibility that a confession will remain hidden.

Another term that proves to add to the confusion is *acting out*. This phrasing insinuates that thoughts, urges, and desires have physically manifested through behaviors. This leaves a whole host of behaviors to the discretion of either the individual or a therapist to help identify whether PD is a proper diagnosis. Outer behaviors could include physically touching a child, creating a scenario in which a child touches the individual, looking at a child in a private or public setting either live or in a picture or video, or masturbating in a

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<sup>20</sup> Objective tools used to measure arousal in pedophilic males will be further discussed in this chap.

variety of different contexts. All of these scenarios constitute behavior that has manifested from inner thoughts and desires. Do all of these qualify for Criteria B? The *DSM-5* does not indicate which behaviors fall into the category of “acting out” and which one’s do not. By not clarifying, the APA has left the interpretation of that term up to the individuals and therapists, as well as the judicial system that could very likely arrive at different understandings and conclusions. Of importance to this section are laws for mandated reporters. These laws mandate that if a crime has been committed against a child, that matter needs to be reported to the appropriate state authorities or legal punishment could be handed down to the mandated reporter. Given that those laws are in all fifty states, what constitutes reportable criminal behavior? Once again, confusion seems to be the result of using subjective terms.

*Significant* is yet another subjective term that can add to the confusion instead of clarity with regard to of PD. What is significant to one person might not be significant to another person. One person who grew up in a home with lots of siblings who bathed together, dressed together, and even shared beds together might be oblivious to the naked body of a child. After all, that is what was seen for years while growing up. If they are around a naked child and find themselves being aroused, they might not experience significant distress, rather they are slightly bothered by the arousal at the sight of a naked child. For the one who grew up a single child, the case might be very different. That person might be very distressed at seeing a naked child and sensing any sort of arousal. The word *significant* means that one could experience less significant options. Does the APA intend to posit the idea that one could have less distressing or difficult experiences when experiencing any sort of sexual arousal for a child? Why does the distress or difficulty need to be *significant* for such distress to qualify for PD? Once again, the point is not to condone any sexual attraction to children, rather, using subjective terms such as *significant* do not help those struggling and can lead to greater confusion and hopelessness.

The final terms used by the APA that can be confusing due to a lack of clarity are the terms *distress* and *difficulty*. These ideas appear to discount the human experience known as *desensitization*. Merriam-Webster states that *desensitizing* happens when someone becomes emotionally insensitive or calloused to resulting from the extinguishing of an emotional response to stimuli that formerly induced it.<sup>21</sup> Pedophilia is usually discovered years after the arousals first began, often times being discovered or being caught after many acts have been committed. Intense feelings experienced the first time something was done usually give way to less intense feelings. In much the same way, intense distress experienced the first time a pedophilic act was thought or acted out will not be felt to the same extent hundreds of times later. If Criteria B is mandatory for a PD to be attributed, and the individual in question is being asked about his distress level after he has experienced sexual arousal hundreds or thousands of times, then there is a chance that he will say that he is not distressed. However, if that same person were to be asked at the beginning of his pedophilic experiences, he might report that he is quite distressed by what he is experiencing. Does the fact that he was asked at the onset or later down the road indicate that he has a disorder, or does it indicate that he has simply gotten used to what he is experiencing? Confusion for the individual is a strong possibility.

**Orientation versus disorder.** The *DSM-5*, as noted earlier, identifies those who only have sexual urges, fantasies, thoughts, and arousal as being pedophilic in orientation only and not a true disorder. A small deviation from this discussion is needed to accurately represent the APA. In the initial release of the *DSM-5*, there was a marked distinction between those who had arousals and urges only yet never acted on them from those who acted on them. The term *pedophilic orientation* addressed the former, while the term *pedophilic disorder* applied to the later. The APA came under fire for using the term

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<sup>21</sup> Merriam-Webster, "Desensitize," accessed July 18, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/desensitize>.

*orientation* and quickly recanted the use of the word, calling it an error. It replaced the word *orientation* with the word *interest* in an apparent attempt to quiet the firestorm that had erupted. The motivations for why the APA retracted and replaced the term could range from appeasing the masses (being politically correct) to actually understanding that the wrong term was used (genuinely erred).<sup>22</sup> Understanding that the APA has motivations beyond mere political corrections, choosing to go with the term *interest* appears to be a loving and caring move on the part of the APA. *Orientation* speaks to the way one is naturally inclined. Enjoying the arts over sports, drawn toward English over Math, and other such examples reveal the idea behind the word *orientation*. One does not choose it—at least one does not understand how one chooses it—and it rarely, if ever, can be changed. One who is oriented toward the arts may be forced to play football, but when given the freedom he will head back in the direction of the arts. While that may be a silly example, it proves the point that orientations are somewhat enslaving in that rare is the person who changes what he is oriented toward. Using the word *orientation* in regard to pedophilic attractions grammatically indicates that the one who has pedophilic fantasies and urges is doomed to be oriented toward pedophilia for his entire life. Once again, one might argue that this is a hyperbolic argument, but the reality is that a life-long unchangeable attraction toward children has been presented thus far by secular literature regarding pedophilia. Interests, on the other hand, do tend to change over the course of someone’s life, proving that the word *interest* is a more hopeful term for those requesting help with pedophilic attractions.

Skepticism of the word *orientation* exists from secular therapists and researchers who admit that delineating orientation/interest from action does little to help the pedophile, and in many cases may cause more harm. This delineation provides little help in that

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<sup>22</sup> Fred S. Berlin, “Pedophilia and DSM-5: The Importance of Clearly Defining the Nature of a Pedophilic Disorder,” *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* 42 (November 2014): 404.



using the term *orientation* or *interest* is simply stating the truth—the pedophile is attracted to prepubescent children. It does not make any moral or ethical judgment that would try to steer the pedophile away from wanting to have such feelings. In opposite fashion, the *DSM-5* appears to have as a motivation the normalization of pedophilic orientation as normal as heterosexual orientation. Recategorizing pedophilic thoughts, urges, and desires does nothing to change either the attraction or social perception of the pedophile. It simply leaves the pedophile with the understanding of, “I can’t act on this or I’ll get in trouble if I hurt other people.” In other words, white knuckle this and hope to not mess up. This truly is a hopeless situation. In a study conducted by the group B4U-ACT, the following comments were made by self-reporting individuals regarding the hopelessness that they feel:

I’m a 15-year-old male. . . . I’m not attracted to anyone my age or older anymore. I am only attracted to prepubescent girls. I feel like there is no hope for me to live, and sometimes I feel like killing myself. . . . I know the idea of a psychologist and everything, but I can’t talk to anyone at this time because my parents would find out and get the wrong idea, and people would judge me and think I really want to hurt little kids.<sup>23</sup>

Another stated, “Parents will disown you, teachers will report you, friends will abandon you. People in my situation can’t discuss this without serious risk of persecution and/or harassment.”<sup>24</sup> It does not matter if the term *orientation* or *interest* is used. The only two options from a secular perspective are to “own” the orientation or live a life of misery trying to negate that which is biologically driven. Regardless of the reason for changing the terminology, the APA was wise to use the term *interest* as interests tend to change over the course of one’s life while orientations can be much harder to change. The difference is terminology, which provides hope, versus terminology, which can be disheartening to hear.

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<sup>23</sup> Berlin, “Pedophilia and DSM-5,” 407.

<sup>24</sup> Berlin, “Pedophilia and DSM-5,” 407.

Getting back to the discussion of interest versus disorder, whether the *DSM-5* uses the term *interest* or *disorder*, the APA appears to have intentionally drawn a distinction between those who experience attractions only from those who experience attractions and act on those attractions.<sup>25</sup> There are both potential positive and negative consequences to such distinctions. At the forefront, it should be positively noted that the APA appears to fall in line with Krafft-Ebing, Seto, and others who genuinely want to help those who struggle with pedophilic attractions. Delineating between those who have attractions from those who do not have attractions is a profound step toward providing help. This delineation is helpful in allowing those who struggle to come forward and ask for help without being categorized or lumped in with those who have acted sexually against children. The APA appears to want to mitigate the shame that comes along with admitting sexual interest in children and in this vein of thinking, the APA is showing compassion toward those struggling with pedophilic attractions.

Identifying some of the confusing and inconsistent language in the *DSM-5*, Michael Seto, a prominent researcher and writer on the issue of pedophilia, offers a slightly different definition:

Pedophilia is a persistent sexual interest in prepubescent children, as reflected by one's sexual fantasies, urges, thoughts, arousal, or behavior. In its clearest expression, the individual sexually prefers children and no sexual interest in adults. In other cases, the individual is sexually attracted to children but also has sexual fantasies, urges, etcetera, regarding adults.<sup>26</sup>

Seto's definition, while being a little more concise, still proves unhelpful by using language that is just as subjective.

**Unhelpful distinctions.** Seto adds the qualifying term *persistent* in reference to sexual fantasies, urges, and behaviors. Where the *DSM-5* did not have any qualifiers allowing for two items underneath category A to qualify for pedophilic disorder, Seto's

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<sup>25</sup> Berlin, "Pedophilia and DSM-5," 404.

<sup>26</sup> Berlin, "Pedophilia and DSM-5," 392.

definition appears to go beyond two or three and keeps the grammar in the present tense. Keeping his grammar in the present tense avoids the “34 years ago” scenario presented previously.

While there is at least one positive change in Seto’s definition, the term *persistent* is still a subjective term and can mean many different things to many different people. *Persistent* could mean one time per day or it could mean many times per day. In keeping with the *DSM-5*’s understanding, the term *persistent* needs to be understood to be more often than one would prefer, thus causing a marked distress. The problem with this term is that it is subjective and lacks any sense of objectivity from which a researcher or therapist could make a diagnosis. The term *persistent* also does not speak to the man or woman who would not agree to persistent but would admit to something less than persistent, and they have marked distress regarding thoughts and urges. Removing the term would seem to be more helpful and less confusing.

Another unhelpful aspect regarding Seto’s definition is that he does not identify any markers of the one who would be labeled a pedophile. Unlike the *DSM-5*’s qualification that the one with PD is at least 16, Seto does not have the same qualification. He does not use any age qualifiers nor any other qualifiers to help identify when someone fits the category of pedophile. Many different researchers have identified the onset of pedophilia sometime during the adolescent years. Criminally speaking age qualifiers change from state to state, but generally the distinctions have to do with the amount of years between the perpetrator (pedophile) and the victim. That appears to logically make sense given the fact that, by a certain age, most people have entered puberty and are able to experience sexual arousal. The age qualifier helps set an objective standard by which a measurement can be made. Seto does not appear to make the same kind of connection; rather, through the lack of a qualifier he leaves the diagnosis of pedophile to refer to someone who has sexual interest in prepubescent children. This begs the question, could a 12-year-old boy be considered a pedophile who has entered puberty because he is

sexually attracted to a neighborhood girl who has not gone through puberty? If a 12-year-old boy sexually acts out against a 10-year-old neighborhood girl, is he a pedophile? If he is not a pedophile, are his actions telling of a disorder? This unhelpful distinction is brought up to show the confusing nature of what secular psychology provides to those who ask for help or are identified as needing help.

**Helpful distinction.** While Seto adopts the *DSM-5* language of *prepubescent child*, and is not unique in that phrase, it is noteworthy that Seto's use of the phrase *prepubescent child* is helpful with regard to understanding the term *pedophile*. Many researchers working in this field use age 13 as the general age at which the pedophilic line is drawn, the main factor distinguishing pedophilia from other sexual attraction being that the child of the sexual interest has not started to show outer signs that puberty has started. For males this would include a deepening of the voice, broadening of the shoulders, hair under the arms, in the pubic area, and face. For females, pubescent indicators would include a widening of the hips and growth of breast tissue. One problem that has recently been identified lies in linking "age 13" to "prepubescent." When the *DSM* was originally published in 1952, the average onset of puberty was around age 13. Current studies have shown that the age of puberty has been on the decrease for both boys and girls. In other words, onset of puberty for both boys and girls is starting at an earlier age.<sup>27</sup> In some cultures, the average age of onset for puberty is approaching 9 years old.<sup>28</sup> This creates a confusing situation in which a man could be sexually attracted to a 12-year-old who exhibits physical evidence of having gone through puberty and yet the man would be considered a pedophile because the girl is under 13. This would not seem to fit the *DSM's* description regarding sexual attraction to prepubescent children. On the other hand,

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<sup>27</sup> William A. Merrick, "Changes in DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria for Paraphilic Disorders," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 45, no. 8 (November 2016): 2176.

<sup>28</sup> Girls Not Brides, "Where Does It Happen?"

because she exhibits physical traits of puberty, this would simultaneously indicate that the man does not have pedophilic disorder, especially in cases where the girls is wearing make-up and dresses in an adult fashion to look older. An interesting observation regarding sexual attraction and pedophilia is that prepubescent boys and girls wearing the same clothing with the similar haircut do not have much distinction, thus making it harder to understand what aspects of the child are sexually attractive to the pedophile. Unlike with the terms *persistent* and *behavior*, the phrase *prepubescent child* limits the scope of children when trying to understand the population of those who would qualify for the diagnosis of pedophilia. Removing the age allows the definition to remain useful regardless of the onset of the puberty in the child.

The issue of what constitutes a child is of utmost importance because of the current social outlook on pedophilia as well as the criminality of pedophilia if acted upon. While the issue of criminality will be discussed at length later in this paper, it is sufficient to say that the prospect of jail/prison as well as registering as a sex offender for life is enough to keep anyone experiencing prepubescent child sexual attractions from coming forward and getting help.

**The uniqueness of Seto's definition.** While Seto's definition provides helpful thoughts as well as unhelpful thoughts, a unique aspect to his definition should be noted. As will be presented, almost all secular psychological thought regarding pedophilia is that it is a lifelong condition that cannot be changed, only managed and treated. The grammar that Seto uses, intentioned or not, seems to present the case that one can change. Seto uses the present tense when speaking about thoughts, desires, urges, arousals, and behaviors. This is clearly different than what is clearly stated in the *DSM-5*. With regard to pedophilia, the *DSM-5* states that the sexual desires, urges, thoughts, and arousals were experienced for six months for more, past or present. The *DSM* clearly believes that if someone experiences sexual attraction in any form toward prepubescent children at any time in their life, then they at least have a pedophilic orientation. Seto's definition offers

more hope in that it grammatically offers the option for thoughts, desires, urges, arousals, and behaviors to be in the past, thus not applicable. While this does offer hope, the use of subjective terms still provides a fair amount of confusion when it comes to diagnosis and treatment of pedophilia.

**History of diagnosis.** It is impossible to cover the entire history regarding the *DSM* development of pedophilia in this document. This section will give a brief overview using the seven different volumes of the *DSM* that the APA has produced since 1952.

Table 1 provides a visual regarding the differences between the different versions of the *DSM* and how each version understands and diagnosis pedophilia.

Table 1. *DSM* comparisons

<i>DSM</i> Version	Thoughts, Urges, Desires, and Arousals	Behaviors	Marked Distress for thoughts and/or Actions
<i>DSM</i> (1952)	X	X	
<i>DSM-II</i> (1968)	X	X	
<i>DSM-III</i> (1980)	X	X	
<i>DSM-III-R</i> (1987)	X	X OR	X
<i>DSM-IV</i> (1994)	X		X
<i>DSM-IV-TR</i> (2000)	X	X OR	X
<i>DSM-V</i> (2011)	X	X OR	X

In the previous quote from Seto, the criteria fall into one, possibly two, categories: thoughts and behavior. It has not always been this way. Much of this section is credited to Agustin Malón in his paper entitled “Pedophilia: A Diagnosis in Search of Disorder.” The *DSM* and the *DSM-II* both recognized pedophilia as a pathological sexual interest in children and was often viewed as a sub-category of homosexuality, making the issue a moral and legal issue by identifying pedophilia as a sexual deviation.<sup>29</sup> There was no requirement for the inner thoughts and urges to have been acted upon in order for the

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<sup>29</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1084.

diagnosis to be given. The common approach then was exclusion from society upon conviction, i.e., incarceration.<sup>30</sup>

The *DSM-III* brought about the first substantial change in that pedophilia was considered a psychiatric category as opposed to a personality disorder. This shift in category seems to indicate that the authors of the *DSM-III* believed that pedophilia was an issue all on its own (a root issue) and not a manifestation of some sort of personality disorder that exhibited itself in non-socially conforming behavior (a fruit issue).<sup>31</sup> In other words, the *DSM-III* made pedophilia THE issue for pedophiles and not a consequence of some other condition. As with both the *DSM* and the *DSM-II*, outward action upon inner thought and fantasy was not required for the diagnosis to be given. The common approach became any number of psychotherapeutic interventions, as well as incarceration, as this was considered a psychiatric or mental issue.<sup>32</sup>

The *DSM-III-R* (revised) brought about the first two-tiered approach regarding the diagnosis of someone as a pedophile. The two tiers included: “(1) over a period of at least six months, recurrent intense sexual urges and sexually arousing fantasies involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (generally age 13 or younger), and (2) the person has acted on these urges, or is markedly distressed by them.”<sup>33</sup> Prior to this delineation, one only had to be sexually attracted to children to gain this diagnosis. For the first time, thoughts manifesting themselves physically were required for the diagnosis. This presented, for the first time, the hypothetical situation in which a person

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<sup>30</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1085.

<sup>31</sup> A root issue is an issue that is the main problem which needs to be addressed. A fruit issue, while being *an* issue, is not *the* main issue. A possible application of the *DSM-II* regarding pedophilia is that working on the personality disorder could potentially alleviate the pedophilic attraction and behavior. A possible application of the *DSM-III* could be that pedophilic attraction and disorder are the issues needing to be addressed.

<sup>32</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1085.

<sup>33</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1086.

could be sexually attracted to a prepubescent child, not act on it, not be distressed by it thereby nullifying the diagnosis of pedophile, i.e., if he was okay with his attraction, there was nothing wrong with the attraction so long as he never acted on it. Any number of psychotherapeutic interventions could have been applied in order to manage the sexual urges felt. In cases where inner thoughts were acted upon, incarceration was still the overwhelming response.<sup>34</sup>

There were two distinction in the *DSM-IV* regarding pedophilic diagnosis. The first difference was that the requirement of “acting on these urges” was removed. This was a reversal matching the criteria for the *DSM*, *DSM-II*, and *DSM-III*. Perhaps the APA realized that it was more dangerous to tell a pedophile that they were only pedophilic if they acted on their desires. Perhaps the reversion is attached to the more socially conservative climate of the Reagan era. Regardless of the reason, the diagnostic rationale was once again more applicable to those who were sexually attracted to children as opposed to those who committed outward acts only. Another distinction provided by this version of the *DSM* was a more descriptive understanding of the “marked distress.” Marked distress was unpacked to mean fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors that cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of function.<sup>35</sup> Using the term *clinically significant* gave a stronger sense as opposed to simply being bothered by the sexual urges. As with the *DSM-III* and *IIIR*, the common approach was psychotherapeutic intervention and management along with incarceration for those who acted upon their fantasies.<sup>36</sup>

The *DSM-IV TR* (revised) only brought one change to the diagnosis, that being a reversion back to the *DSM-IIIR*'s mandate that physical expression regarding the urges

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<sup>34</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1085.

<sup>35</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1088.

<sup>36</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1086.



and fantasies was required. Once again, the reversal might have been due to a recognition that the diagnosis was a pejorative diagnosis giving the one diagnosed extremely negative consequences. It could have also been considering the furtherance of changing social norms regarding sexuality and not wanting to condemn personal experiences regarding sexuality, which led the APA to once again narrow the scope of who should be considered a pedophile. Regardless, a reversal took place and many who were considered pedophiles under the *DSM-IV* were no longer considered pedophiles according to the *DSM-IV TR* because they failed to have acted upon their urges. As with the *DSM-III*, *IIIR*, and *IV*, the common approach was some sort of therapeutic invention to help the pedophile cope and incarceration for those who acted out their fantasies with children.<sup>37</sup>

This quick overview of the history of pedophilic diagnosis moves to the most current understanding of pedophilia found in the *DSM-5*. In short, the requirements for a pedophilic diagnosis are the same as the requirements underneath that *DSM-IV TR*. The terminology has changed, however. What was called *Pedophilia* in previous editions was changed to *Pedophilia Disorder*. A distinction was made by the APA regarding those who only have a sexual “interest” (the APA’s terminology) from those who act upon their interest who experience marked distress in their life as a result of their interest.<sup>38</sup> This conclusion leads to the current suggested approach in any number of therapies, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, behavioral therapy, biological therapy, as well as incarceration. The goal is to help the pedophile maintain control of urges and raise self-esteem, i.e., feel better about who they are as well as their sexual interests.<sup>39</sup>

**Child sexual offending and pedophilia.** At this point is wise to make a distinction between two different ideas that are often linked together but should not

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<sup>37</sup> Malón, “Pedophilia,” 1086.

<sup>38</sup> Howsepian, “Psychiatry’s Dysphoric Turn,” 45.

<sup>39</sup> Howsepian, “Psychiatry’s Dysphoric Turn,” 44-45.

always be linked together. Child sexual offending is the criminal act of forcing a child under the age of 18 in the United States to do anything of a sexual nature, period. Pedophilia has been sufficiently defined thus far as sexual urges, desires, and fantasies along with a marked disturbance regarding such thoughts. It could reasonably be argued that child sex offenders do not have such fantasies, urges, and desires, concluding that not all sex offenders are pedophiles just as not all pedophiles are sex offenders.

Society at large often conflates the two ideas so much that they are used interchangeably. The entertainment industry, news, social media, and a host of other resources continually add to this confusion. Facts regarding pedophilia and child sex offense reveal that there is some overlap between the two ideas, but only in the minority. Regarding the misunderstanding that exists between pedophilia and sexual offending against children, Dominique Simons writes, “Not all individuals who sexually assault children are pedophiles. Pedophilia consists of a sexual preference for children that may or may not lead to child sexual abuse (e.g., viewing child pornography), whereas child sexual abuse involves sexual contact with a child that may or may not be due to pedophilia.”<sup>40</sup>

This fact is important in that it skews research results in two ways. In past research, the data was been skewed as researchers, wanting to find an appropriate sample of the population, were often given no other choice but to go toward prisons to find those who at least fit part of the diagnosis, which is that they have sexually offended children sometime in the last six months. There are myriad reasons why someone would commit sexual crimes against children, yet not be motivated by sexual fantasies or desires. For instance, a husband could be mad at his wife and seek to hurt her through acting out against her children. Research regarding sexual activity under these conditions skews the data.

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<sup>40</sup> Dominique A. Simons, “Adult Sex Offender Typologies,” Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative, US Department of Justice, Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking,” July 2015, <https://smart.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh231/files/media/document/adultsexoffendertypologies.pdf>.

Second, the research presented does not include many people who do in fact have attractions to children, yet refuse to act on them due to societal pressures or moral convictions. Research devoid of this sample of the population does not help researchers nor therapists in deciding what needs pedophiles have regarding therapy nor does it help in figuring out if current therapies are effective.

**Concluding thoughts.** Concluding this discussion of pedophilia, it is enough to say that pedophilia can be understood to mean a condition in which a man or a woman has sexual interest in someone under 13 years old who has not begun to show signs of puberty. Regarding the thesis of this paper, the idea that one needs to show signs of distress regarding sexual attraction to prepubescent children for the diagnosis of disorder to be given is not a necessary component for the issue of pedophilia to be the focused topic. The lack of distress could be for various reasons, such as years of attraction and the normalization that can come with that kind of history, societal norms, or language differentiation.

As stated numerous times in this thesis already, there appears to be a movement to normalize pedophilia just as the other four paraphilia's have been normalized. When the thinking is normal, but the acting is not normal, societal influence is the only factor that stands in the way of both thinking and acting becoming normal. It is impossible to say that thoughts are normal and okay just not the behavior. Without side-stepping the issue at hand, Jesus' words in Matthew 5:28 are applicable: "But I say to you that everyone who looks a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Both the thought and the action are wrong.

As has been referenced under the discussion of paraphilias, distinguishing between orientation and disorder appears to be a motivation in line with normalizing this paraphilia as has been done with the other paraphilias. Regardless of whether this assumed motivation is true, the vocalized motivation by those in the secular therapeutic realm, as emphasized by Sara Jahnke, is to destigmatize the term *pedophilia* in hopes that those

who have at least a pedophilic orientation will seek help in order to live “productive, happy, and law-abiding lives while dealing with the stigma of their identity.”<sup>41</sup> In speaking to this issue, Cantor and McPhail state, “One main ramification of having a sexual interest in children, even if one does not act on it, is that these individuals are likely to face intense stigma due to their pedophilic interests and because of this stigma-related stress, be at increased risk of negative mental health and interpersonal outcomes.”<sup>42</sup> This proposition put forth by those who want to change the stigma, is that, for those who are at least orientated toward pedophilia, the strong negative connotation deters them from seeking help out of fear that they will be lumped in with the “monsters” from which society abhors.

The trend of secular therapies appears to promote those labeled as a pedophile as a victim of genetics as opposed to predators and perpetrators who need to be prosecuted and locked up. As one researcher in this field stated, “This still leaves us with the dilemma that the lottery that spits out a sexual orientation for every human on the planet leaves quite a few people with an orientation that is unacceptable to their society.”<sup>43</sup>

Given the points of the previous discussion, the term *pedophilia* will be used to describe the condition in which anyone, having entered puberty, experiences wanted or unwanted sexual thoughts, attractions, urges, or arousals toward prepubescent children upon which they may or may not act. Having a workable definition, attention will now be given to theories regarding the etiology of pedophilia.

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<sup>41</sup> Jahnke, “The Stigma of Pedophilia,” 144.

<sup>42</sup> James Cantor and Ian McPhail, “Non-Offending Pedophiles,” *Current Sexual Health Reports* 8, no. 3 (2016): 123.

<sup>43</sup> Michael Gross, “Paraphilia or Perversion?,” *Current Biology* 24, no. 17 (September 2014): 778.

## Theories Regarding Pedophilia

### Sigmund Freud

While Sigmund Freud<sup>44</sup> wrote little about pedophilia itself, his theories regarding sex and sexual orientation have been foundational to authors who have written extensively on pedophilia. One foundational principle that undergirded much of Freud's theories regarding sexuality is found in the word *libido*. Freud explained that *libido* expressed the sexual appetite for every human being, much like the word *hunger* expressed the physical appetite for food.<sup>45</sup> The libido could be stronger in some and weaker in others. And just as every individual has a different preference for different types of food, so every individual has different preferences regarding what excites each person regarding sexual activity.

While Freud admitted that the cause of inversion (homosexuality) is far too complex to attribute to one item or another, he did believe that, for some, inversion was exclusively a biological predisposition regarding their sexual appetite. Regarding homosexuality, Freud believed that some were biologically predisposed toward those of the same gender.<sup>46</sup> He referred to this attraction as innate [biological] and made his conclusions regarding the innate nature of same-sex attraction based upon the “assurances given by them [homosexuals] that at no time in their lives has their sexual instinct shown any signs of taking another course.”<sup>47</sup> Freud admitted that some appeared to be solely

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<sup>44</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey, rev. ed. (New York: Basic, 2000), 15-26. While this section is specifically reserved for the etiological theory posed by Freud regarding the origins of pedophilia, it is also noteworthy that Freud's thoughts and arguments have helped pave the way for a modern acceptance of pedophilic attractions as normal. In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud speaks to issues such as anal sex, bestiality, and fetishes of all sorts and attacks the idea that those activities are wrong simply because they have been deemed “disgusting” by some parts of society. By removing the label “disgusting” he attempts to normalize such behaviors thus making them preferences and not aberrations.

<sup>45</sup> Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 1.

<sup>46</sup> Freud referred to those who were sexually attracted to the same gender as inverts.

<sup>47</sup> Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 5.

committed to a homosexual appetite regarding their sexual preference and over the course of their life did not change.

While Freud believed that there existed innate attractions of a homosexual nature in some that never changes over time, he also held out the idea that others have a sexual appetite that changes over time. Freud was attracted to the hypothesis that all men and women possess remnants of both male and female sexual organs that the evolutionary process has altered, leaving one sexual preference primary and one secondary. Regarding this theory, Freud states, “These long-familiar facts of anatomy lead us to suppose that an originally bisexual physical disposition has, in the course of evolution, become modified into a unisexual one, leaving behind only a few traces of the sex that has become atrophied.”<sup>48</sup> These biological bisexual remnants, claims Freud, play a role in determining sexual attraction for those who were neither exclusively committed to a homosexual disposition nor a heterosexual disposition. In either case, sexual preference was still biological albeit altered by evolutionary processes.

Freud not only believed that sexual preference could be changed over time, but he also believed that sexual preference could change with different circumstances. In marking out this third category, he recognized that there exists individuals who seem to change their sexual preference depending upon the situations in which they exist.<sup>49</sup> For instance, the man who is placed in prison for one reason or another might never have a homosexual appetite. However, due to the needs of his sexual appetite, the lack of the opposite sex to fulfill that appetite as well as remnants of the bisexual organs in his body, this man could find himself with a new sexual appetite for someone of the same sex. This belief, while conceding to the fact that some individuals appear to change sexual preference

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<sup>48</sup> Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 6.

frequently, still contains a large biological undergirding as the primary etiology regarding homosexual and bisexual preference.

While this info is enlightening, the question is: what does this have to do with the etiology of pedophilia from a secular perspective? Freud sheds some light on this question by referencing his beliefs surrounding ancient Greco-Roman pedophilic practices:

It is clear that in Greece, where the most masculine men were numbered among the inverts [homosexuals], what excited a man's love was not the masculine character of a boy, but his physical resemblance to a woman as well as his feminine mental qualities—his shyness, his modesty and his need for instruction and assistance. As soon as the boy became a man [*sic*] he ceased to be a sexual object for men in himself, perhaps, became a lover of boys. In this instance, therefore, as in many others, the sexual object is not someone of the same sex but someone who combines the characters of both sexes; There is, as it were, a compromise between an impulse that seeks for a man and one that seeks for a woman, while it remains a paramount condition that the objects body (i.e. genitals) shall be masculine. Thus, the sexual object is a kind of reflection of the subject's own bisexual nature.<sup>50</sup>

Freud clearly believed that pedophilic attraction was embedded in the prepubescent biology and personality of the young boys simply because the biology and personality are deemed more feminine prior to puberty. Freud hypothesized that the etiology of pedophilia was found in the biology of the pedophile, which contained a dominant sexual appetite for one gender but contained the ability for another gender based on the evolutionary hypothesis that at one time Homo Sapiens were bisexual biologically and psychically.

While Sigmund Freud is often referred to as the father of modern psychology, he was preceded by a German neurologist in labeling and identifying what is called pedophilia. Freud gave credit to this German neurologist by stating, “With regard to a case where the childhood remembrances were confirmed by seeing an old nurse, this provided new valuable evidence that the soundness of my material is provided by its

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<sup>50</sup> Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 10.

agreement with the perversions described by Krafft-Ebing.”<sup>51</sup> It is toward Krafft-Ebing’s work that attention will now be given.

### **Richard Von Krafft-Ebing**

Richard Von Krafft-Ebing was a neurologist who took it upon himself to write the first volume dedicated to what he called “deviant sexual behavior.” The book is largely composed of case-studies from which Krafft-Ebing describes different situations and interviews that he witnessed which involved abnormal sexual behavior. By his own admission, he did not set out to write a systematic understanding of sexual deviation. Instead, writes Krafft-Ebing,

The physician finds, perhaps, his satisfaction solace in the fact that he may at times refer those manifestations which offend against our ethical or aesthetical principles to a diseased condition of the mind or the body. He can save the honor of humanity in the forum of morality, and the honor of the individual before the judge and his fellow men. It is from the search of truth that the exalted duties and rights of medical science emanate.<sup>52</sup>

Krafft-Ebing’s goal was in one way or another to bring some kind of scientific explanation regarding deviant sexual behavior to bear so that those who were found guilty of sexual crimes might find some sympathy in the eyes of the those declaring such crimes worthy of the most severe punishments. More than anything else regarding sexual crimes, Krafft-Ebing wanted erroneous ideas to be corrected, just decisions by the court to be delivered, and both judicial and public opinion regarding deviant sexual to be accurate and helpful.<sup>53</sup>

*Psychopathia Sexualis* was a volume of writing that was not well accepted and Krafft-Ebing was highly criticized for writing about such deeds that had yet to be brought out into the light and written about with scientific sympathy. Highlighting just how criticized

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<sup>51</sup> Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis: The Classic Study of Deviant Sex*, trans. Franklin S. Klaf (1965; repr., New York: Arcade, 2011), xviii.

<sup>52</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, xxii.

<sup>53</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, xxii.



Krafft-Ebing was, John Bancroft, contributing author to “Review symposium: Krafft-Ebing, 100 years on” states,

In his introduction, Oosterhuis points out how Foucault, Szasz and others considered “the emergence of the science of sexuality as a deplorable medical colonization, replacing religious and judicial authority with a new form of moral tyranny” (p. 10). And Krafft-Ebing in particular has been criticized for “endorsing traditional views of sexuality; for posing sexual liberation; for espousing the heterosexual standard, homophobia and Roman Catholic faith in the teleology of sexuality for representing bourgeois respectability and male chauvinism; for urging the state to control as much as possible all forms of “immorality”; and for overlooking the supposedly political context of his case histories” (p.8).<sup>54</sup>

While Krafft-Ebing was criticized by many during his day and age, he still stands as a pioneer in his field as someone willing to take a look at the different types of deviant sexual activity, attempting to categorize the different types of sexual activity that he observed through the vast array of case studies available to him, and attempting to bring some kind of rationale for such deviant sexual activity. His work in this field cannot go unnoticed or unrecognized as having a significant impact on the current understanding of pedophilia as well as the current treatment for those who struggle with pedophilia.

For Krafft-Ebing, love was a supreme value. From the beginning of his writing he makes it clear that sex and the sexual experience is the root of everything.<sup>55</sup> Specifically speaking to this conclusion, Krafft-Ebing states, “If man were deprived of sexual fulfillment in the nobler enjoyments arising there from, all poetry and probably all moral decency would be eliminated from his life.”<sup>56</sup> Continuing this thought of sex being God, he states, “Love unbridled is a volcano that burns down and lays waste all around it: it is an abyss that devours all—honor, substance and health.”<sup>57</sup> Krafft-Ebing, with this understanding, moves on to state that all of life is a “never-ceasing duel” between the

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<sup>54</sup> John Bancroft, “Review Symposium: Krafft-Ebing, A Hundred Years On,” *Sexualities* 4, no. 4 (November 2001): 497-99.

<sup>55</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathis Sexualis*, 1.

<sup>56</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathis Sexualis*, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathis Sexualis*, 1.

animal instinct and morality.<sup>58</sup> With this statement, he is indicating that he believes that all sexual deviances take place when this battle swings more toward the animalistic side of things (biology) and away from morality, which in his mind was set by religion and society.<sup>59</sup> Krafft-Ebing makes an interesting comment regarding religion and society when he states, “The episodes of moral decay always coincide with the progression of effeminacy, lewdness and luxuriance of the nation’s.”<sup>60</sup> He then believed that moral decay in any given society took place as individual after individual lost the battle between animal instinct and morality. In contrast to future writers, Krafft-Ebing does not blame religion in society for wrong oppressive morals; rather, he still blames the individual for giving way to animalistic instinct, i.e., he does not allow blame shifting away from personal responsibility to take place. This is a point of agreement between Krafft-Ebing and biblical counselors.<sup>61</sup>

Having given credit to Krafft-Ebing’s contribution to the broad category of sexual deviancy as well as the specific category of pedophilia, a question that arises in reading through Krafft-Ebing’s work is, “What was driving Krafft-Ebing’s motivation regarding the fair treatment of those struggling with pedophilia?” While Krafft-Ebing does not explicitly give his motive for his writing, he does strongly elude to his motivation: “The medical barrister only then finds out how sad the lack of our knowledge is in the domain of sexuality when he is called upon to express an opinion as to the responsibility of the accused whose life, liberty and honor are at stake. He then begins to appreciate the

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<sup>58</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathis Sexualis*, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Krafft-Ebing does not state who sets morality but gives strong indications on pp. 3-6 that morality is governed by Christianity and society.

<sup>60</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathis Sexualis*, 4.

<sup>61</sup> While this is a point of agreement, it is a very small point of agreement between Krafft-Ebing and biblical counselors. This point is brought up to exhibit that at one point in time, there were agreements, albeit small agreements, between secular writers and Scripture. The secular movement has no such points of agreement today indicating the gap between biblical counselors and secularists has grown even wider.

efforts that have been made to bring light into darkness.”<sup>62</sup> What is interesting about this comment is that the biblical counselor finds at least one thing in common with Krafft-Ebing when it comes to the person struggling with pedophilia. The biblical counselor also has the life, liberty, and honor of the one struggling with pedophilia in the forefront of his mind. The main difference between Krafft-Ebing and the biblical counselor is that life, liberty, and honor are defined according to the culture for Krafft-Ebing while defined by the Bible for the biblical counselor. The source of the definition will inevitably lead to two different paths for the one struggling with pedophilia. Taking Krafft-Ebing’s motivation and applying it to today’s cultural understanding and reaction to pedophilia would demand that the one struggling with pedophilia be managed in that there is no cure for those who are struggling. Hypothetically speaking, if cultural and social understandings regarding pedophilia were to change in a more acceptable direction, then life, liberty, and honor would mandate that laws change, vocabularies change, and theories change, so that the one who has a pedophilic orientation would be just as accepted as the one who has a non-pedophilic heterosexual orientation. Adopting Krafft-Ebing’s motivation of protecting the life, liberty, and honor of the sexual deviant would mandate that one of two things happen. Either those who have the ability to change cultural and societal norms assume the majority power and make the necessary changes to make pedophilia acceptable, or those who have the power to change cultural and societal norms accept the fact that pedophilia is a disorder that does need to be managed, thus cementing the current course of treatment for those who do struggle with pedophilia.

On the other hand, the biblical counselor has the life, liberty, and honor of the pedophile in mind as well. Life, liberty, and honor; however, are seen through the eyes of Coram Deo; being made in the image of God. The biblical counselor understands that the image of God was marred because of the fall of Adam which brought about devastating

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<sup>62</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, xxii.

effects on the image of God and is found in every human being that has ever been created. These devastating effects include all forms of sexual deviancy, including pedophilia. The goal of the biblical counselor, then, is to restore life, liberty, and honor to the one struggling with pedophilia by bringing about permanent change as prescribed by Scripture. More will be discussed regarding this biblical plan of change in chapters 4 and 5. For now, it is sufficient to state that Krafft-Ebing had a love for all mankind in view in writing his book and that motivation of love resonates with the biblical counselor. However, in his motivation of love, it appears the Krafft-Ebing sought to diminish the cultural view of pedophilia as well as other forms of sexual deviance instead of highlighting the sexual deviant's need to conform to Christ.

Having discussed two of the prominent men who are regarded as forefathers in the area of sexuality as well as sexual deviancy, an examination of a modern secular approach will now be given.

### **Michael Seto**

As the tide of the sexual revolution continues to grow, the number of researchers that seem to devote time and energy to the subject of pedophilia continues to grow as well. One researcher/academic, however, has devoted time and energy to the topic of pedophilia for about twenty years. More than any other researcher/author prior to him, Michael Seto was the first to develop a systematic theory, assessment, and intervention suggestions for those who have been tasked with providing help for pedophiles. Seto's approach is based on research conducted as opposed to case studies observed, which is what Krafft-Ebing's writings were based.

Seto's theory regarding the origination of pedophilic tendencies and attractions consists of three legs of a proverbial stool: conditioning, childhood sexual abuse, and

neurodevelopmental factors.<sup>63</sup> Conditioning plays a role in the development of pedophilia, according to Seto, because as children sexually play with other children out of curiosity,

some individuals, for unspecified reasons, maybe here the physical cues of young partners—such as small body size, androgynous body shape, absence of pubic hair, and absence of secondary sexual characteristics—with the sexual pleasure elicited by these initial experiences and eventually learn to associate these cues with a powerful reinforcement of orgasm.<sup>64</sup>

While this is one leg of the proverbial stool regarding the etiology of pedophilia, Seto quickly recognizes that this cannot be the sole explanation regarding the onset of pedophilia. Simply too many children engage in curious sexual play that do not end up with pedophilic attractions. Speaking to this consideration, Seto explains, “Empirically, there is no evidence that pedophilic men are more likely to have had sexual experiences with other children when they themselves were young, and retrospective accounts indicate that some pedophiles report an onset of sexual interest in children before they had any sexual contact with children.”<sup>65</sup>

Recognizing that there needs to be more than simply conditioning as a result of curious childhood sexual play, Seto’s theory regarding the etiology of pedophilia adds a second leg of the proverbial stool, which is childhood sexual abuse. Seto admits that in reviewing previous scientific studies regarding pedophilia and childhood sexual abuse, there is a much stronger connection between childhood sexual abuse and being attracted to children than there is a connection between sexual play driven by curiosity amongst children and pedophilic attraction and subsequent action later on in adulthood.<sup>66</sup> While Seto admits that there is a lot of evidence regarding the connection between pedophilia and childhood sexual abuse, he also admits that much of the evidence gathered for such a

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<sup>63</sup> Michael C. Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children: Theory, Assessment, and Intervention* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007), 101.

<sup>64</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 102.

<sup>65</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 103.

<sup>66</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 104.

conclusion was collected from those who had been convicted of committing sexual crimes against children.<sup>67</sup> This admission then brings into question whether childhood sexual abuse leads to pedophilic attractions or if childhood sexual abuse lends itself more to antisocial behavior.<sup>68</sup>

The third and final leg of the proverbial stool is what Seto has entitled neurodevelopmental factors. Underneath this topic Seto explains that there could very well be a whole host of what he calls neurodevelopmental perturbations, including “maternal malnutrition, illness, exposure to toxins, chromosomal abnormalities, birth complications, child illness, or head injuries.”<sup>69</sup> Seto’s claim is that any one of these neurodevelopmental factors could produce one or two possible outcomes. One outcome might be that these neurodevelopmental factors could leave someone vulnerable to childhood sexual abuse and/or conditioning due to curious sexual play. For instance, if an infant were exposed to certain toxins or illness, and his brain were to not develop in a normal consistent fashion, then he might not be able to develop certain protective measures that would have otherwise made him cautious of sexual predatory behaviors by adolescents or adults. Seto sites work done by the Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), which indicated that patients who were “diagnosed with pedophilia tendencies based on their sexual offense histories as well as their phallometric responding scored lower on intelligence tests than non-pedophilia patients.”<sup>70</sup>

At this point in the discussion it is important to note that all the authors mentioned up to this point hold to a strong Darwinian view regarding the evolution of man. While both authors previously mentioned to Seto held to a strong Darwinian view,

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<sup>67</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 104.

<sup>68</sup> This specific topic was discussed early on in this thesis underneath the subtopic entitled “Sexual Offending and Pedophilia.”

<sup>69</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 108.

<sup>70</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 109.

Seto directly connects a strong Darwinian understanding of the evolution of man to the issue of pedophilia. In his book *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, Seto makes the following statement regarding Darwin's theory regarding the evolution of man: "Key Darwinian concepts for this book include sex differences in minimal parental investment and the consequent sex differences in mating strategies, partner age preferences, and risk-taking as well as the application of inclusive fitness theory to understanding incest avoidance."<sup>71</sup> Under this section of his book, Seto briefly explains how Darwin's theory of evolution applied to these different aspects help build the foundation for a proper and correct understanding of pedophilia. While Seto does hold a strong Darwinian view as a foundational concept regarding man, he also admits that a "puzzle" remains regarding pedophilia and the evolution of man.<sup>72</sup> Seto could not be more accurate in his statement given that the lack of procreation would seek to eliminate at some point in the evolutionary timeline those who have exclusive pedophilic attractions.

In addition to directly connecting Darwinian Evolution to the issue of pedophilia, Seto also omits a concept from his discussion that the previous two authors connected to the pedophilia, namely, religion. While both Freud and Krafft-Ebing make specific statements regarding the negative effects of religion regarding culture's view on pedophilia, Seto's lack of discussion regarding the effects of religion on the concept of pedophilia is pronounced. Seto also mentions that he attempts to integrate findings from many different disciplines, including anthropology, criminology, neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, and sociology.<sup>73</sup> While he lists a lot of different disciplines, one specific discipline not mentioned is the discipline of religion. One could argue that religion falls underneath many of the different disciplines that Seto does mention, but

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<sup>71</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 14-15.

<sup>72</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 118.

<sup>73</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 17.

given that morality and ethics are often associated with religion, it would seem that Seto would still want to speak to the effects of religion upon the understanding of pedophilia. It is odd that he omits religion from the long list of disciplines that he factors into his understanding of pedophilia.

Omitting religion from the disciplines could be a deviation of thought toward pedophilia from the men who came before him. Regardless of Seto's motivation for not speaking to the role of religion as a factor regarding pedophilia, the fact that by the time of Seto's writing, discussions regarding pedophilia had moved out of the realm of religion and morality and into some other realm that primarily consists of biology and experience. One could argue that removing religion from the discussion, i.e., removing the Bible from the discussion, allows for all kinds of sexual activity to be condoned and normalized.

Overall, Seto's theory regarding the etiology of pedophilia appears to be a combination of those characteristics which fall underneath being made human, suffering at the hands of others, as well as being broken physically. He is clear in stating that all three legs of the proverbial stool are required when considering the origins of pedophilia.<sup>74</sup> Additionally, Seto is clear that the etiology of pedophilia remains a mystery. At one-point Seto states, "Clinicians and researchers are still in search of an explanation for pedophilia itself."<sup>75</sup> At another point Seto states, "There are many unanswered questions about the etiology of pedophilia."<sup>76</sup> Seto, while standing on the shoulders of the men who came before him, and with scientific integrity, simply admits that "clinicians and researchers,

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<sup>74</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 102.

<sup>75</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 101.

<sup>76</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 113.



are still in search of an explanation for pedophilia.”<sup>77</sup> Once again, this statement is hopeless for those who struggle.

Under the category of conditioning, Seto tries to use the fact that humans are born curious with the need to learn about what is unknown as one leading factor causing someone toward a pedophilic orientation. While biblical counselors would agree that humans are created with the need to learn, biblical counselors would not agree that the desire to learn, even about sexual things, somehow creates a desire that finds children sexually attractive. There is no biblical evidence for such a conclusion. While being curious and needing to learn is absolutely a human characteristic, there appears to be a significant jump between sexual curiosity about another’s sexual anatomy and that curiosity leading to a sexual attraction to prepubescent children. As already stated, Seto admits that this factor alone is not enough evidence on its own; his logic regarding causality appears to be flawed. He appears to link sexual activity between children driven by curiosity and sexual activity driven by adolescents and adults which is driven by pleasure. Seto admits that this leg of his theory is weak when he uses terms such as “some individuals,” “for unspecified reasons,” and “may pair.”<sup>78</sup> Terms such as these do not indicate causality in any way, shape, or form.

Seto also acknowledges the effects of suffering due to the sinful actions of others. Biblical counselors would agree with this same conclusion based on scriptural accounts, personal experience, as well as research results. Living in a sin-cursed world means that those living in that world will feel the effects of sin in big and small ways. As with conditioning, however, Seto appears to draw a non-logical conclusion regarding the causality of pedophilic attractions and childhood sexual abuse. As with many other sins that one may experience as a child, there are simply too many external factors to consider.

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<sup>77</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 101.

<sup>78</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 102.

Seto covers his tracks by stating that past experience alone is not enough to cause pedophilia, but he does draw a strong connection to past sexual abuse and the development of pedophilic attraction.

Finally, Seto's theory regarding pedophilia acknowledges that the body responds in all kinds of abnormal ways when brains do not develop in a normal fashion. Once again, biblical counselors would agree with this conclusion. The physical human body is fearfully and wonderfully made, and as such, one deviation in any direction can lead to myriad different outcomes. However, a deviation regarding physical development should never be considered a causal factor regarding sin.<sup>79</sup>

Without getting into issues that will be discussed in later chapters, it is clear that Seto, along with the other authors discussed thus far, believes that those who struggle with pedophilia are more or less victims of circumstances and/or evolutionary development outside of their control. One way or another, these authors believe that the pedophile is more or less a victim in this life. A victim who has attractions and orientations that may hurt others if acted upon, but at the same time is not responsible for those attractions and or potential actions. In other words, these authors seek to elicit sympathy for those who struggle with pedophilia attractions and orientations from those who do not. The danger with this approach toward pedophilia is that it could potentially lead to pedophilia becoming widely accepted as a normal human attraction and lifestyle, similar to the path regarding the normalization of homosexuality.

While more researchers, authors, and studies could have been explored underneath the topic regarding the etiology of pedophilia, Sigmund Freud, Richard Von Krafft-Ebing, and Michael Seto represent end points on the continuum of secular research on pedophilia. Other researchers fall somewhere in between these three authors and their conclusions. Having explored secular thought regarding the origins of pedophilia, the

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<sup>79</sup> Causal factors should be differentiated from influential factors. This subject will be discussed at length in chap. 4.

discussion will now turn toward secular assessments regarding pedophilia and how secular psychologists delineate those who are attracted to pre-pubescent children from those who do not share in that same attraction.

### **Assessment of Pedophilia**

Assessing whether an individual can be categorized as a pedophile has proven to be somewhat of a struggle for secular psychologists. One of the primary problems facing assessors when it comes to the issue of pedophilia is that, in most cultures, pedophilia is still considered taboo at the least and criminal at the most. This creates a climate in which those who struggle with pedophilic attractions are not encouraged to be forthright with their struggles; rather, struggles of this nature are often kept hidden away so as not to be discovered. Given this truth, most assessments devised by secular psychologists have had to be implemented on those who have already been caught acting out against children. As already discussed, just because someone commits a crime against a child sexually does not necessarily indicate that they struggle with being a pedophile. Therefore, assessment tools developed to identify those with pedophilic attractions and yet administered to those who may or may not be attracted to children proved to be somewhat helpful but not at all conclusive. Secular researchers use two main categories to identify those who struggle with pedophilia: subjective tools and objective tools. Subjective tools consist of self-reporting, interviewing, behavioral observations, and the Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests (SSPI). Objective tools include polygraph and phallometric testing. Each of these assessment tools will be defined and examined regarding the efficacy in identifying those who struggle with pedophilia. It should be noted that these different types of assessments have been identified and categorized by Michael Seto in his book entitled *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children: Theory, Assessment, and Intervention*.

## Self-Reporting

When it comes to the issue of self-reporting, someone would report that they have sexual attractions to children in two basic situations: non-forensic and forensic evaluations. The first situation is what Seto refers to as a “non-forensic evaluation.”<sup>80</sup> Non-forensic reporting does not have criminal associations with it; rather, non-forensic reporting refers to an instance when someone openly admits that he or she has pedophilic attractions. The positive aspect to this kind of situation is that if someone were to trust the non-forensic evaluator enough to open up and share that they have pedophilia attractions, then there is a likelihood that the information given by such a person would provide great details regarding thoughts, desires, motives, and even actions. Speaking to the positive effects of non-forensic self-reporting, one report stated,

In contexts where the pledge of confidentiality applies to those working in a treatment setting (as in the case of Germany) and where patients do not have to fear legal or social threats when disclosing committed violations in the past, self-report measures, such as clinical interviews or questionnaire assessments, are assumed to be the most favorable option.<sup>81</sup>

Because this kind of confession does not present itself very often, the non-forensic evaluator more than likely will not have much data against which to compare the details of the confession. The data-dump of this source would require many different non-forensic evaluations to take place for any kind of reasonable conclusions to be arrived at by researchers. The time this would take makes this option one that lacks appeal for those who are treating pedophiles.

The other situation in which self-reporting would come into play would be more of the forensic or criminal form. In this setting, more than likely a crime has been committed and the pedophile has been caught. In such cases, the one who committed the crime often does not want to add to the consequences of his crime by confessing to more

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<sup>80</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 23.

<sup>81</sup> Dorit Grundmann et al., “Stability of Self-Reported Arousal to Sexual Fantasies Involving Children in a Clinical Sample of Pedophiles and Hebephiles,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 45, no. 5 (July 2016): 1153-62.

than what he was actually caught doing. This could very well keep valuable data from the forensic evaluator, thus posing a negative consequence to this type of self-reporting. One positive aspect, on the other hand, could be that the forensic evaluator would have a lot more data to compare the known details against in order to help classify whether the criminal did indeed show signs of pedophilia.

Regardless of whether the evaluation is non-forensic or forensic, two different assessment tools are often used to aid in self-reporting: interviewing<sup>82</sup> and questionnaires. While there is no need to discuss what an interview is, understanding what is trying to be accomplished by the interview process is worth a small discussion. The main goal of the interview process is to ask a myriad of questions to identify different situations and circumstances that might indicate a pattern of being sexually attracted to young children. Some instances include having frequent and intense sexual fantasies about children, preferring to be with younger children rather than those from the same age demographic, a reluctance to being married, having little or no age appropriate friendships, and masturbating to images or thoughts of younger children.<sup>83</sup>

While the interview process is a very personal process, as opposed to the questionnaire tool, there are three significant drawbacks regarding this particular approach. One of the most profound drawbacks has to do with the shame factor associated with pedophilia. Many self-reporters, non-forensic or forensic, may not tell the whole truth simply because they are afraid to admit to the level of attraction fearing severe repercussions both socially and criminally. In addition to the fear of legal sanctions, the self-reporter might also fear what the interviewer might think about him or her; thereby changing or editing their answers to be not as “bad.” Some examples of editing one’s story are lying about frequency and intensity of attractions, actions that have or have not

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<sup>82</sup> Seto provides a list of typical interview questions that would be asked during a forensic interview for someone thought to struggle with pedophilic attractions. This is listed under appendix 2.

<sup>83</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 24.

been taken, the actual age of child attraction, and attempts to try and act out fantasies. Speaking to the issue of deception during interviews, Seto states, “Moreover, whether as a result of unconscious self-deception or a conscious effort to present oneself in a socially desirable manner, many sex offenders minimize or deny their pedophilic sexual interests and behavior.”<sup>84</sup>

The fact that the interviewer is completely reliant upon the memory of the interviewee is another drawback to the interview process. While the pedophile might intentionally mislead or lie about the frequency and severity of his attraction, the pedophile might also forget about some of the pedophilic temptations and actions he has taken, especially if the pedophile has been struggling for many years, thus presenting hundreds if not thousands of instances regarding pedophilic thoughts and actions. The ability of the mind to recall all the different situations in which child-attraction was at play over the course of many years would simply be impossible. For sure, most would be able to recall significant events such as the first recollection that one was attracted to children or a time when that attraction was almost uncovered, but if one has had repeated thoughts and acted on those thoughts multiple times, then there is a good chance that the reporting would not include all of the details. A less than accurate account regarding the frequency and intensity is reason enough to question the validity of the questionnaire process.

One final problem with the interview process does not have to do with the interviewee but the interviewer. One key concept regarding good interviewing is that of the interviewer being unbiased. If the interviewer has a bias one way or another, then the questions asked, as well as the questions not asked, have a direct bearing on the validity of the interview. For sure, some professional interviewers make a living out of conducting good interviews, and some organizations have devoted themselves to writing good interview questions. That is all fine and well in a classroom or research environment.

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<sup>84</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 25.

However, outside of a sterile setting where real people and real victims are talked about combined with one's own life evolution (family makeup, life experiences, relational interactions, and even media consumed), it is almost impossible to have an interviewer not bring his/her own subjective decisions and conclusions to bear in any given interview. While there are some potential problems with the interview process, interviews still remain a valuable tool when assessing pedophilia.

Questionnaires are also a valuable tool in the assessment of pedophilia. This self-reporting tool is valuable because it reduces the "shame" factor discussed in the previous section. Questionnaires are often administered via paper or on a computer, thus eliminating the need for human interaction out of which the interviewee might feel shame and edit his/her story as it relates to pedophilia. Several questionnaires have been developed to help in the area of self-reporting: Clarke Sexual History Questionnaire, the Multiphasic Sex Inventory, the Sexual Interest Cardsort Questionnaire, and the Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire.<sup>85</sup> Each of these questionnaires is aimed at finding out different information regarding the one struggling with pedophilic attraction. Most of these questionnaires are written in such a way as to try and reveal if the self-reporter is lying by asking the same questions with different language to see if contradictory answers are provided by the one taking the questionnaire.<sup>86</sup> Additionally, the fact that the questionnaires are either on paper or computer diminishes the ability of the one taking the questionnaire to manipulate or fool someone. With the human factor removed and the questionnaire developed without the pressure of human interaction, the ability to manipulate, confuse, and distract becomes less of a factor when it comes to finding out accurate information.

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<sup>85</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 26. While there are other types of questionnaires, these four questionnaires were identified by Seto as the only four that have been empirically validated

<sup>86</sup> See appendix 3 for a sample of the report for the Multiphasic Sex Inventory.

While questionnaires reduce the shame factor and provide a wide array of information relating to pedophilic thoughts and actions, there are still a few problems with using this tool. One of the drawbacks is that the questionnaire is not administered by humans. Without the ability to clarify what is being asked to give accurate information, the one answering the questions is left to interpret the questions for himself. Guessing as to the intent of the question might or might not lead to accurate information given in response.

Another drawback to the questionnaire format is one of the same drawbacks found under interviewing—the mind cannot recall with 100 percent accurately all that has taken place in the past. One might recall major events, but all the nitty gritty details of life cannot be recalled with great accuracy, especially when those events have taken place over years and decades. While there are pluses to both interviews and questionnaires, their profound subjectivity as well as the ability of the pedophile to both recall with 100 percent accuracy as well as deceive with information given or omitted, make self-reporting on any level too risky a tool to use without some sort of other intervention tool. Other tools for assessment are viewed as necessary and it is toward those other tools that this discussion will now turn.

### **Behavioral Observation Using the SSPI**

Through Seto's research and experience in working with pedophiles, he identified a much-needed assessment tool he entitled the Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests (SSPI). He and a colleague set about developing a four-factored test to try and identify pedophiles who had committed sexual crimes against children from those who had committed sexual crimes against children but were most likely not pedophiles.<sup>87</sup> The four factors measured were having any male victims, having more than one victim, having a victim age 11 or younger, and having an unrelated victim. By way of understanding

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<sup>87</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 25-26.



how this scale functions, if one scored a total of 5, he would have had male victims, more than one victim, at least one victim under the age of 11, as well as an unrelated victim, which would be at the far end of the pedophilic spectrum indicating that most likely this person was a pedophile.

The unique idea behind this tool is that it evaluated the characteristics of the offender's victims and not the internal attractions and outer behaviors of the offender. In developing this tool, Seto attempted to remove most of subjective material often discovered in interviews and questionnaires, leaving only the more objective data to analyze and evaluate. For instance, whether one's victim was a boy or a girl is very objective. Whether one's victim was under the age of 11 is very objective. The SSPI attempts to establish whether an offender is a pedophile through the evaluation of data that is much more objective and less open for interpretation.

While objective data is less likely to be manipulated or misunderstood, there are still some problems with the SSPI. Seto admits that this test would not be very helpful if given to a first-time offender as there would only be one instance from which to gather data.<sup>88</sup> On that same note, this test would not be at all helpful for the one who has never acted on his thoughts and feelings. While he could be instructed to evaluate his fantasies according to the four different variables, he would then be forced to pretend to answer those questions, i.e., pretend that he has acted those out possibly causing great distress. For instance, if someone had never acted on his pedophilic fantasies, he would be forced to ask himself, "do I fantasize about male children, do I fantasize about boys under the age of 11," and so on. However, shame as well as the possible consequences for telling the truth would both still be factors in such a case, which then bring back the same negative possibilities found with interviews and some questionnaires. Another negative factor about the SSPI is that it does not help in predicting if someone who struggles with

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<sup>88</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 26-27.

fantasies will act on those fantasies, nor does it help someone who struggles with pedophilic fantasies and wants those fantasies to stop. Furthermore, in describing how to use the findings of SSPI, Seto admits that the findings are more helpful when combined with Phallometric testing.<sup>89</sup> Having addressed the pros and cons of interviews, questionnaires, and the SSPI, this discussion will now evaluate laboratory tools and testing.

**Laboratory testing: polygraph and phallometric testing.** It is important to remember as counselors, therapists, and judicial authorities that interview and questionnaire tools requiring personal and subjective interpretations regarding the data were developed in hopes of gathering data that would be helpful in the rehabilitation of the pedophile as well as to protect those who might be harmed by the actions of the pedophile. Subjectivity is very personal and often cannot be extrapolated from one situation to the next. On the other hand, objective data is not as reliant on the authority of the one administering the test; rather, it should produce the same results regardless of the one administering the test. With this in mind, two different objective tests will be evaluated that were designed to gather data from those thought to be pedophiles. It should be noted that while both tests offer more objective data, each tool still contains a strong subjective element when the data is interpreted. The term “objective” is used to differentiate one category of tools from another.

The polygraph tool was designed to try to scientifically and objectively evaluate whether someone was attempting to be deceptive regarding different facets of any given situation. A basic understanding of the polygraph method is as follows:

The polygraph is a combination of instruments that records a subject’s blood pressure, pulse, respirations, and galvanic skin resistance while a series of questions are posed. In a pretest process, the examiner asks a series of questions to evaluate the voluntary subject (suspect), obtains an informed consent, derives necessary background information, and establishes the kind of relationship that facilitates the

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<sup>89</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 27.

test by putting the subject at ease and stabilizing the parameters being measured. Finally, the formal questioning is begun. The subject is given a series of carefully formulated questions: the relevant questions dealing with the issue at hand, irrelevant questions, and control questions. The latter are designed to create the probability that the subject will lie or at least be unsure of the truth of his answer. By comparing the magnitude of responses to relevant and control questions with those to irrelevant questions, the examiner makes and interpretation on the truth, falsity, or inconclusive nature of each response.<sup>90</sup>

As clearly noted, the polygraph is an attempt to give some sort of credible evidence to whether someone is telling the truth in any given situation. While a high amount of subjective interpretation is still required when it comes to conclusions about the data, this tool does allow for a data source to be considered that rests outside of the one struggling with pedophilic attractions. Given that pedophilia is still considered taboo by most cultures, there exists a higher amount of probability that someone will either lie about pedophilic attractions, be deceptive about the strength of pedophilic attractions, or seek to distract attention away from his or her pedophilic attractions. When he or she lies, it is assumed that “physiological parameters such breathing rate, heart rate, and skin conductance” will spike on the polygraph machine.<sup>91</sup> Either way, the polygraph is a tool that attempts to biologically aid in determining when someone is not telling the truth.

According to Michael Seto, “more than half of the probation and parole agencies responding to a nationwide American survey Reported regularly using polygraph testing to monitor the treatment and supervision compliance of sex offenders living in the community under their jurisdiction.”<sup>92</sup> In keeping this highly positive report, British parole officers began using the polygraph on a voluntary basis in 2003 for post-conviction paroles and found that, on average, paroles were 14 times more likely to give new disclosures with

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<sup>90</sup> J. R. Jones, “Polygraph,” *The Journal of the American Medical Association* 256, no. 9 (September 1986): 1172.

<sup>91</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 31.

<sup>92</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 31.

regard to treatment and supervision.<sup>93</sup> Percentage numbers such as those given above would indicate that the polygraph is an effective tool in determining pedophilic attractions.

High percentages of “success” do not necessarily indicate the effectiveness of this particular tool, however. For instance, the fact that over 50 percent of probation and parole agencies use the polygraph could indicate a lack of options when it comes to obtaining objective data. While the use of a phallometric measuring tool will be examined shortly, there exists two, possibly three options when it comes to obtaining objective data help draw better conclusions regarding someone’s propensity toward pedophilia. The polygraph is one tool that does not require intimate intrusion nor the use of offensive material in its administration, issues which will be explained later in this chapter. Suffice to say, the polygraph is the less intrusive option from all options underneath this objective data category.

Additionally, most of the high percentage disclosures reported were disclosed by individuals who had already been convicted of a crime. A strong argument could be made that they had little to lose and much to gain by disclosing new information. By choosing to disclose new information, they would not necessarily be placed in any more criminal trouble nor given longer sentences. On the contrary, cooperation by offering up new disclosures could be understood as progress toward rehabilitation and lessen incarceration time.

This potential flaw exposes another probable flaw the polygraph—false disclosure. When someone is rewarded with less incarceration time by offering up new information, there inherently exists the potential for someone to make up or lie about what did or did not happen. It could be assumed that the polygraph would detect any form of deception as this is what it was designed to do, but that would be a false assumption. While the polygraph is designed to pick up on physiological reactions to

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<sup>93</sup> Daniel Marshall and Terry Thomas, “Polygraphs and Sex Offenders: The Truth Is Out There,” *Probation Journal* 62, no. 2 (June 2015): 128-39.

statements made by the examiner, if the interviewee learns that there is a positive reward for providing new information, even criminal new information, without the fear of more incarceration or humiliation, there is a strong chance that the physical response will be seen differently from disclosures that are negative. Regarding the use of polygraphs in cases of pedophilia, Seto concludes, “The validity of polygraph testing as it is commonly used in sex offender assessment has not been established.”<sup>94</sup>

Another tool often used in assessing pedophilic attraction is phallometric testing. Phallometric testing includes placing a measuring device around or on top of the penis when a sexual stimulus is presented. The devices placed around the penis measure for an enlarged circumference of the penis. In most cases, the devices placed over the penis measure the amount of displaced air, indicating an enlargement of the penis. In either case, positive pedophilic attraction is interpreted when there is an enlargement of the penis due to the presence of certain sexual stimuli.

As with the polygraph tool, this tool provides objective data that can then be interpreted. It is hard to argue with data gathered under these conditions. If appropriate stimuli are given and there is an increase in the penis circumference displacing the surrounding air, then that would seem to be an open and closed case; one is attracted to children. Evidence shows that phallometric tools do provide a very high success rate when evaluating pedophilic attraction. This is especially true when admission of pedophilia is being sought. Regarding this high success rate, Seto cites two studies that both reveal a 92 percent success rate in admitting to pedophilia when phallometric testing was applied to 137 convicted sex-offenders.<sup>95</sup>

As with the polygraph tool, high percentages of success need to be questioned and evaluated. As stated previously, two factors with the Phallometric tool need to be

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<sup>94</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 31.

<sup>95</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 35.

factored in regarding the outcomes of using such a tool: intimacy intrusion and offensive material. The first factor is that of “intimate intrusion.” There is no way around the phallometric tool invading one’s sense of privacy regarding intimate areas of the body. Seto admits this potential factor when, as part of his explanation of the testing process, he states, “After the setup is complete, the examinee’s lower body is covered with a sheet to minimize his embarrassment or discomfort.”<sup>96</sup> While one argument is that phallometric testing produces undeniable results regarding sexual attraction, another argument could be made that such intrusion of intimate areas would prohibit someone from responding sexually out of embarrassment. What someone will do in private when they think no one is looking is not always the same as what they will do when hooked up to measuring devices knowing at least one other person is watching.

Another factor with the use of the Phallometric tool is that the use of the tool demands the viewing of material that could be criminal under other circumstances as well as deemed offensive. According to Seto’s description of Phallometric testing, “The stimuli are audiotaped narratives presented through the headphones and accompanied by slides shown on the projection screens.”<sup>97</sup> Seto continues his explanation by providing the following transcript of what is presented in both audio and visual formats:

You are babysitting a five-year old girl for the evening. She is taking a bath before she gets ready for bed. Through the open bedroom door, she calls you to come in a scrub her back. You strip off your clothes and get into the bathtub with her. Your naked bodies slide against each other in the hot, soapy water. You take a washcloth and gently begin to rub the smooth, dimpled mound between her legs. She asks for the washcloth and you let her soap up your penis and testicles.<sup>98</sup>

This kind of auditory and visual material would be considered criminal voyeurism in many states as it is viewing material depicting someone involved in sexual situations for the

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<sup>96</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 218.

<sup>97</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 218.

<sup>98</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 218.

purposes of gratifying sexual desire.<sup>99</sup> In most states, this would be considered child pornography because a child is being used for sexual gratification purposes. While it might be argued that those being exposed to such stimuli have most likely already been involved in such behavior, this does not help the one who has not committed such acts, yet is struggling with such temptations.

Even if such stimuli were not criminal, many would still be offended by such visual and auditory stimuli. Part of the phallometric testing includes observing the examinees face using low-light videography to detect closing of the eyes or averting the eyes from test stimuli.<sup>100</sup> The argument for this kind of observation is that the one who does not want to physiologically respond to sexual stimuli would close or avert his eyes when presented with sexually stimulating material. What does not seem to be considered is that such material would be so revolting as to cause the examinee to habitually look away or avert one's eyes from such material. Even in cases where someone is sexually attracted to children but has not acted on those attractions, such stimuli could cause a knee-jerk reaction to look away.

One final comment on the research presented for the high percentage success of phallometric testing is that, once again, most of the research was conducted on those who had already been convicted of sexual crimes and have little, if anything, to lose regarding being open about their attractions. The British research cited just a few paragraphs prior reported a 92 percent success rate was conducted on 137 *convicted* sex offenders. The men who took part of that study had already been found guilty of committing the crimes for which phallometric testing was designed. One could easily argue that a desensitization toward the words and pictures presented to them would have

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<sup>99</sup> Washington State Legislature, "RCW 9A.44.115: Voyeurism," accessed July 20, 2019. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=9A.44.115>.

<sup>100</sup> Dominique Trotter et al., "Using Eye Tracking to Identify Faking Attempts during Penile Plethysmography Assessment," *Journal of Sex Research* 51, no. 8 (2015): 946-55.

already taken place due to their criminal actions. On that note, those who have been involved in pedophilic behavior over long periods of time might not be sexually aroused by such visual and auditory stimuli, making such a test not useful. At the very least, one could conclude that phallometric tests provide little help for those struggling but have not acted on pedophilic attractions. To the contrary, the Phallometric test is arguably offensive at the least and criminal at the most. Having examined what pedophilia is as well as attempts to identify those who struggle with pedophilia, attention will now turn toward secular attempts to help those who struggle with pedophilic attractions.

### **Treatment of Pedophilia**

As has been said previously, and needs to be stated again, the secular treatment of pedophilia is two-fold: controlling the pedophile and protecting those who would be hurt from pedophilic actions. When evaluating secular treatments for pedophilia, it will be important to factor in the fact that the idea of pedophilic orientation is gaining more and more traction, after all, orientations cannot be changed. Since change cannot happen, change is not the goal. Instead, control and protection are the goals. It is also important to note that this section does not deal with a societal response to pedophilia; rather, this scope of this section merely details the treatment of pedophilia.

### **Cognitive-Behavior Therapy**

While the focus of this paper is not on Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), a short understanding of this approach is needed before the application of this therapy can be evaluated. Seto states that CBT “targets attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that are believed to increase the likelihood of sexual offenses against children.”<sup>101</sup> In his popular book on CBT, entitled *Feeling Good*, David Burns states, “You can learn to change the way you think about things, and you can also change your basic values and beliefs. And

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<sup>101</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 171.



when you do, you will often experience profound and lasting changes in your mood, outlook, and productivity. That, in a nutshell, is what cognitive therapy is all about.”<sup>102</sup> It is sufficient to state that CBT focuses on more than just the behavior of the pedophile. CBT recognizes that thoughts, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and other non-physical factors play a role in helping the pedophile refrain from acting out against children.<sup>103</sup>

While there are many different adaptations of CBT applied to pedophiles, Seto highlights the most popular form of CBT as an adaptation from the world of addiction therapy.<sup>104</sup> As a point of reinforcement, the addiction therapeutic model does not allow for the addict to permanently change; rather, coping with addictive behavior is the best outcome from this perspective. The famous addiction mantra “once an addict, always an addict” can therefore be applied to the pedophile under this model, “once a pedophile, always a pedophile.” Seto summarizes this form of treatment into four steps: (1) identify high risk situation that might cause a relapse, (2) identify non-sexual behavior that might lead to a relapse, (3) develop strategies for avoiding high-risk situations, and (4) develop coping strategies that are used in high-risk situations.<sup>105</sup> The goal of this form of therapy, then, would be cognitive awareness on a multitude of levels as well as detailed planning in hopes of avoiding acting out against a child sexually.

It should be noted that there are many positive aspects of the CBT approach, aspects that are helpful. Understanding high risk situations and gaining a new perspective on what brings about temptation in any human is wise and helpful.<sup>106</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>102</sup> David Burns, *Feeling Good* (New York: Harper, 1980), xix.

<sup>103</sup> It is interesting to note that CBT in all other areas of therapy promotes the patient’s ability to change through addressing perspectives, attitudes, thoughts, emotions, and other non-physical aspects of the patient. The goal of CBT in pedophilic situations is not change, rather it is avoiding recidivism or further acting out against children. Change is not part of the agenda.

<sup>104</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 171.

<sup>105</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 171.

<sup>106</sup> The apostle Paul clearly tells the Corinthians to flee sexual immorality in 1 Cor 6:18. Fleeing

evaluating and identifying behaviors that make it easier to fall back into pedophilic behaviors is wise. Of note, alcohol and drugs will dull the senses and make self-control a much more difficult task, thus making it easier to fall back into pedophilic behaviors. Biblical counselors would agree with these conclusions since the Bible would agree with avoiding those types of behaviors that dull the senses.<sup>107</sup> If someone does realize that the amount of “free time” he spent on the internet was a significant behavior that led toward pedophilic behavior, then therapy which helps to expose this could be helpful. Learning to stay away from large amounts of alone time on the internet was very helping in deterring him from reoffending. Developing strategies aimed at staying away from tempting situations is also a wise and a helpful use of time. If new strategies are not built, then old habits tend to return. As drug addicts tend to return to drug use at the level they last used, so pedophiles will return to the level at which they last offended. Finally, it is positive for pedophiles to consider what steps they will take when, having taken all the proper precautions, they find themselves in tempting situations. Questions such as who will they inform, what will they do, where will they run, and others help to create a contingency plan that is wise and helpful.

Having stated the positives, CBT still leaves many unanswered questions regarding motivations (initial and ongoing) and heavily relies on the inner fortitude of the pedophile to not reoffend in the future. “Why am I the way that I am?” “What made me do what I did?” “Am I this way forever?” “Can I ever change?” and a host of other questions are not answered by CBT primarily because CBT does not aim at answering

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sexual immorality not only includes the behaviors of sexual immorality but also the contexts in which sexual immorality can be found. Having said that, removing oneself from the presence of children is about as easy as removing oneself from the opposite sex.

<sup>107</sup> Proverbs 31:6 is clear in stating, “Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress.” In this context, strong drink and wine offer a dulling of the senses to those who are in great distress. In modern day vernacular, the proverb might say, “Give a Percocet to the one who is perishing, and marijuana to those who are in bitter distress.” However, for those who are not in such a condition, the Bible would offer Noah, Lot, and Ben-Hadad as examples of men who got drunk, lapsed in their judgement, and committed sins as a result.

those questions. CBT targets the “attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that are believed to increase the likelihood of sexual offenses against children.”<sup>108</sup> While the past might be addressed during CBT, the goal is not to find the genesis of such behavior because change is not the goal. Change cannot be the goal because pedophilia is an orientation not to be changed. The goal can be to feel good about who one is, or accept the fact that one cannot change, but the goal is not permanent change.

CBT also heavily relies on the inner fortitude of the pedophile to not reoffend in the future. Identifying high risk situations, behaviors that cause a lapse in judgement, seeking to avoid high risk situations in the future, and developing coping skills for unplanned high-risk situations place the focus entirely outside the person. What happens when the temptation comes from within the person? What happens when the offender is not in a high-risk situation and has not allowed for anything to cloud his judgement, but still faces pedophilic temptations and attractions? Does he start all over again to find out what is now causing his pedophilic attractions? CBT does not consider any kind of situation in which the offender is completely and utterly responsible for his attraction. CBT cannot account for that because CBT, as a foundational principle, believes that all humans are at the very least neutral when born into this world. They are neither good nor bad; rather, humans simply react to the world around them, draw conclusions (thoughts), experience emotions, and react to those emotions.

In his foundational book regarding CBT, David Burns admits that the goal of CBT is not to admit (confess) to anything wrong (sinful); instead, the goal is to simply change thoughts, values, and beliefs to thoughts, values, beliefs that will lead to better outcomes.<sup>109</sup> This subjective goal found within the one receiving the therapy provides no hope for the one who desperately wants certain thoughts and feelings to disappear. This

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<sup>108</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 171.

<sup>109</sup> Burns, *Feeling Good*, xix.

foundational belief, out of which CBT then works, does not provide a situation in which everything outside of the offender is “good,” but the temptation toward children still exists. When this type of situation presents itself, recidivism is not too far away.

### **Behaviorism**

While it might be argued that behaviorism is a subcategory of CBT, or CBT is a subcategory of behaviorism, Seto holds that a behavioristic approach regarding pedophilia deserves a category all its own. His reasoning rests in differing goals. While the goal for CBT is to reduce recidivism, the goal of behavioral therapy is to change sexual arousal toward children.<sup>110</sup>

In short, behavioral therapy attempts to change sexual attractions away from children and toward adults using negative and positive reinforcement stimuli. Seto gives the example of showing sexual pictures or videos of children to an offender while simultaneously administering a mild electrical shock or the smell of ammonia. The thought is that the offender will start to associate negative experiences with being sexually aroused by children.<sup>111</sup> That negative experiences, over time, are thought to bring about a ceasing of pedophilic temptation altogether.

There are also positive reinforcement types of behavior therapy.<sup>112</sup> Following some addiction therapeutic models, the belief is that if the patient becomes satiated with whatever the addictive experience is, he will no longer seek after that particular experience. In the case of pedophilia, this form of behavior therapy would have the offender “masturbate to ejaculation while verbalizing aloud variations of his pedophilic fantasies. After ejaculating, and throughout the refractory period, he is told to continue masturbating

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<sup>110</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 175.

<sup>111</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 175.

<sup>112</sup> The term *positive* is used to delineate therapeutic techniques that allow for the patient to have a positive experience. This term is not used to indicate that these approaches are successful.

to the same fantasies.”<sup>113</sup> The idea is that patient will eventually become satiated with the experience and move on to something else. Regardless of the behavioral therapeutic approach, there seems to be little long-term evidence that change has taken place. Seto sites research from 1995 that might indicate some short-term change, but long-term change is unsure.<sup>114</sup>

While there does not appear to be many positive aspects regarding the behavioristic approach toward pedophilia, the one positive aspect is that it holds out for lasting change in the pedophile. The evidence would prove contrary to that aim, but the aim itself holds that behavior change is possible and that a pedophile is not doomed to always be attracted to children. Another perceived positive is that it provides the pedophile something to do when he or she feels pedophilic attractions. Much like the one who places a rubber band around his wrist and when he is in the mood to snack he snaps the band giving himself an acute sharp pain, so the pedophile can administer something negative in hopes of eradicating the urge to offend. Action steps that can be taken immediately provide some form of hope for those who do want to change.

Having stated the positive, the behavioral therapeutic approach does not offer much hope for true and lasting change. Thoughts of administering continual negative reinforcement for whatever amount of time is necessary is daunting at best and hopeless at worst. Since the goal of behavioral therapy does not provide a genesis for the behavior of pedophilia, the pedophile is left to simply respond to experiences of pedophilic attraction. Proverbs 13:12 states, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is the tree of life.” For the pedophile to continually hope that his current experience of pedophilic attraction is hopefully his last one, only to experience it again and again will lead to being heart sick as Proverbs states.

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<sup>113</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 175.

<sup>114</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 175-76.

Without restating the negative portions of CBT, the same negative arguments can be made regarding behavioral therapy. Some techniques that are part of behavior therapy either show illegal and/or pornographic material or encourage the pedophile to think about children in ways that they do not want to think all while masturbating. This is tantamount to pouring gasoline on a fire. The idea that one can satiate sexual desires seems to fly in the face of a booming billion-dollar pornography industry that banks on sexual desire never being satisfied.<sup>115</sup> As Seto states, the evidence does not support that satiation is possible when it comes to pedophilia.<sup>116</sup>

### **Medical**

One final treatment approach that is thought to be effective regarding pedophilia is the medical approach. The goal of the medical approach is to “reduce sexual response to children.”<sup>117</sup> In short, this approach seeks to treat pedophilia through the biology of the pedophile believing that biology is driving the attraction. Some researchers focused on testosterone, others focused on serotonin, and still others focused on Gonadotropin releasing hormone.<sup>118</sup> Regardless of the chemical, the hypothesis is that reducing said chemicals will reduce or eliminate sexual response to children. Some hypothesis proposit that a change in chemistry can replace sexual attraction to children with sexual attraction to adults.<sup>119</sup> While this flies in the face of modern thought regarding a pedophile’s inability to change, Seto cited a 2000 report which claimed that the use of sertraline (SSRI) by 20 pedophiles, led to a decrease in pedophilic sexual arousal yet did not reduce sexual

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<sup>115</sup> Ross Benes, “Porn Could Have a Bigger Economic Influence on the US than Netflix,” June 20, 2018, <https://qz.com/1309527/porn-could-have-a-bigger-economic-influence-on-the-us-than-netflix/>.

<sup>116</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 175.

<sup>117</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 177.

<sup>118</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 177-80.

<sup>119</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 179.

arousal nor intercourse with adult women. The hope, then, is in finding the correct chemical to lower and/or eliminate, which will lower and/or eliminate attraction to children. The strategy becomes trying a certain drug for a period of time and evaluating whether sexual attractions to children increases, stays the same, or diminishes.

One final, more permanent, medical approach is through surgical castration. This procedure involves the removal of the male testes, thus negatively affecting the production of those chemicals responsible for the sex-drive. While this procedure does not prohibit one from sexual activity overall, the process will produce a diminished level of androgen, leading to reduced sexual attraction toward children because it will produce sexual attraction overall. Regarding research findings by Wille and Beier's 1989 report on the effectiveness of castration, Seto reports, "[The] review seems to support castration as having a strong effect on recidivism. However, because there was no random assignment, there were likely important differences in risk between those who were sufficiently motivated to be castrated and those who were not willing to undergo the surgery."<sup>120</sup> Seto is admitting that while the numbers appear to be positive in reducing pedophilic attraction, there were too many unmitigated factors not accounted for to positively conclude whether the procedure was effective in diminishing sexual attraction to children.

The hope in the chemical treatment for pedophilic attractions is hard to find regarding true and lasting change. If science could find a chemical that could reduce a sexual response to children that would be wonderful. If science could finetune physiological understandings of the body to the point that it fully understands what chemicals were responsible for certain behaviors, then social problems beyond pedophilic attraction could be solved. The hope for pedophilic attraction regarding medical therapeutic approaches is that one day in the future that might happen. Until then, the one struggling

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<sup>120</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 182.

with pedophilic attraction is left to a proverbial roller coaster ride consisting of trying a medication (going up the roller coaster track) followed by a decrease in effectiveness (going down the roller coaster track).

This rollercoaster ride is accompanied by a vast amount of additional negative aspects. While it is tempting to say that the medical model is the only therapeutic model to provide a potential genesis for pedophilic attraction, the fact remains that the goal of the medical model is to reduce sexual responses to children. There is no attempt to find the root cause of pedophilia. There is no attempt because it simply is not part of the goal. The same philosophical questions that are left by CBT and behavioral therapy are left by medical therapy.

Additionally, with all the studies conducted, some men still reoffended regardless of the decrease in the chemicals thought to bring on pedophilic attractions. This indicates that pedophilic attractions very likely involve more than simple biology. In one study cited by Seto, 2 men out of 21 reoffended after long periods of time without offending.<sup>121</sup> Why would someone undergo the permanent solution of castration only to turn around and reoffend again? This strongly indicates that something beyond biology is involved in pedophilic attraction.

While both men and women experience pedophilic attractions, most medical therapies involve a decrease in testosterone chemically or surgically. These types of therapies would not aid women who struggle with pedophilic attractions and there appears to be no medical model that accounts for differences in male and female pedophilic attractions. If a chemical component could be identified which led to a reduction of a sexual response to children, then the chemical component would be applicable to both men and women.

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<sup>121</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 182.



One final comment needs to be highlighted regarding the effectiveness of the medical approach. The stated approach is to reduce the sexual response toward children. In all the medical approaches mentioned by Seto, one sexual response appears to be reduced, that being penile erection. Much of the data gathered revolved around a male pedophile's ability to produce an erection after chemicals had been altered. If the goal is to reduce a sexual response to children, then many more sexually abusive actions would need to be evaluated to conclude whether the medical approach was effective. Seto admits this when he states, "And many sexual offenses do not involve the penis; the majority of sexual offenses involved fondling, masturbation, or oral sex."<sup>122</sup> The medical model does not appear to broaden out pedophilic behavior to incorporate any of these other behaviors, at least in what has been written.

The medical approach simply does not offer much long-term hope for those struggling with pedophilic attraction, and based on the statistical numbers of those who reoffend after medical intervention, the medical model does not offer much protection for children.

### **Summary of Secular Approach**

In summary, the theories, assessments, and treatments regarding pedophilic attractions lead to an overwhelming conclusion: there is no hope for long-lasting permanent change in the one experiencing pedophilic attractions because that is who they are at the core of their genetic make-up. According to Freud and Krafft-Ebing, there exists all kinds of people with all kinds of sexual attractions. Both men would ascribe to the fact that not all sexual activity should be condoned because it hurts those to whom it is being done, and at the same time, no sexual activity should be condemned either because sexual autonomy is the "golden calf" of many cultures around the world. Both Freud and Krafft-Ebing had a strong foundation based on Darwin's theory of evolution, which led them to understand

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<sup>122</sup> Seto, *Pedophilia and Sexual Offending against Children*, 192.

sexual attraction and activity as more or less a product of genetic predisposition, which was neither good nor bad. Both men seemed to indicate that sexual preference can change over time, and yet some individuals are primarily attracted to one type of person. One logical conclusion based on the writings of these men is that culture might be better off changing what it deems as sexual appropriately away from what society believes to what the individual believes.

Seto, standing on the shoulders of men like Freud and Krafft-Ebing, admits that pedophilic attractions are a complex matter that science has yet to fully unpack. He offers a three-pronged hypothesis regarding the origins of pedophilia: conditioning, childhood sexual abuse, and neurodevelopmental factors. While his hypothesis is more detailed and complex than his predecessors, he similarly concludes that origins of pedophilic attraction are unknown to science, assessments regarding pedophilia are inconclusive, and treatments offer little hope of true and lasting change. All of this boils down to a strong secular understanding that those struggling with pedophilic attractions will probably always struggle with sexually attractions toward children, and unless there is a societal change regarding the acceptance of pedophilic attraction, management of said pedophiles is the key to protecting society from pedophilic actions and those who commit them.

CHAPTER 3  
HISTORICAL CHRISTIAN APPROACH  
TOWARD PEDOPHILIA

Having given ample attention toward the secular approach of pedophilia, it is now time to turn toward an examination of how the Christian church has historically handled the issue of pedophilia. Recalling that secular literature prior to the 1800s does not use the word “pedophilia,” the same consideration must be given regarding the church’s understanding and response. Since Scripture does not use the word “pederasty,” “pedophile,” nor “pedophilia,” it is paramount for this discussion to look for the broader writings from the church regarding issues closely related to pedophilia, such as homosexuality, sexual immorality, treatment of children, and so forth. This discussion will begin with a look at the secular culture in which the church was birthed and conclude with the modern approach of Christian psychologists.

**Roman Culture regarding Pederasty**

Without writing an entire treatise on the establishment of the church beginning with the apostles as described in the book of Acts, it is enough to say that the church was birthed after the ascension of Christ somewhere around AD 33. During this time, the Roman Empire ruled much of the known world, which meant that the church was forced to navigate not only Roman rule, but also Roman culture and all that Roman culture brought with it. Of significance is the Roman cultural view of and practice regarding pederasty. Before examining thoughts from the early church and prominent voices within the early church, it is necessary to set the Roman cultural stage, as that influence no doubt played a vital role in what the church needed to address at that particular time.

## **Worship and Sexual Practices of the Roman Empire**

In Psalm 115:4-8, the Psalmist makes definitive statements regarding the fashioning of man-made idols and the consequences of worshipping such idols. His summary at the end of this section is, “Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.” While the Psalmist was thousands of years away from being familiar with the Roman Empire, his statements regarding the worship of man-made idols could not have been more accurate for this particular culture.

Roman mythology, and the gods contained within it, wielded a strong influential power over those who held the highest places of power within the Roman Empire, which then filtered down to the common Roman citizen. The gods of Roman mythology were very much like the humans they ruled over, yet they contained superhuman powers. These manmade gods were easy to identify with and somewhat easy to appease. Appeasement of the gods was often sought through emulating the attitudes and actions revealed throughout the narratives describing these Roman gods. Worship, therefore, often revolved around doing things that would make the gods happy and avoiding things which would anger the gods. Pleasing the gods brought physical blessing, while angering the gods brought curses.

Specifically pertaining to the topic of this thesis, Greek and Roman gods were often said to have a voracious sexual appetite that showed little discrimination between young and old, male and female. Speaking of this indiscriminate attitude toward those whom the gods were sexually attracted, Kyle Harper states, “The traditional myths still held that even the gods were sexually indiscriminate: Zeus became a swan for Leda, but an eagle for Genymede: ‘some think one or the other is greater, but they’re equal [equally pleasurable] to me.’”<sup>1</sup> For Zeus, it did not matter really what the objects of his passion were. All objects possessed an equal weight sexually in his mind and were to be enjoyed

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<sup>1</sup> Kyle Harper, *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: First Harvard University Press, 2016), 25.

without reservation. Following this same vein of thought, the prostitutes who were stationed at the temple of Aphrodite would have sex with strangers as the primary form of worship.<sup>2</sup> This indiscriminate sexual activity was a direct reflection of the attitudes and actions of the goddess Aphrodite, who was said to be erotic and seductive. Since emulating the gods was one sure way of appeasing the gods, it should come as no surprise then that the Romans of that time sought to emulate the sexual practices of the gods. As Kyle Harper points out, these practices were enacted due in part to the widely held idea that the gods knit together a world “so that mankind might find in erotic fulfillment nothing short of salvation.”<sup>3</sup> To highlight the importance of that last statement, salvation for the Roman was found in erotic sensual pleasure. Nothing could have been more opposite for the early Christian living in and amongst this kind of pagan worship.

In Romans 12:1-2, the apostle Paul instructs the Roman Christians to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, since that is their spiritual worship. While this command is for Christians, also found within this statement is the truth that humans are living sacrifices of that which they worship. Taking this truth and applying it to the Roman culture of that time, it is easy to understand that the sexual worship practices of the Romans did not just stop at their individual temples and places of worship. On the contrary, erotic thought became the norm through the Roman Empire. Speaking to the normalcy of erotic thought and practice throughout the Roman Empire, Geoffrey Stone writes, “To the contrary, the phallus was a potent symbol of fertility, a central theme in Greek religion. A pillar topped by the helmet of Hermes adorned with an erect penis stood at nearly every Athenian’s front door. Vases and terra-cottas depicted explicit scenes of vaginal and anal intercourse, masturbation, and fellatio.”<sup>4</sup> Sexual

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<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Stone, *Sex and the Constitution: Sex, Religion, and Law from America’s Origins to the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2017), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 21.

<sup>4</sup> Stone, *Sex and the Constitution*, 25.

symbols of all sorts were front and center at literally every turn during that time. Containers to fetch water depicted erotic images. Normal everyday-type scenes and situations flooded the visual sphere as well as the mind of the average human living in those times. Simply walking over to a neighbor's house would mean seeing a phallic symbol. Accepting a drink from a neighbor who poured water or wine from a vase with erotic images would have been par for the course. Erotic sexual freedom was highly valued and highly normalized in Greco-Roman Culture. And since this was part of the culture, everything living within that culture was subjected to this "erotic" mindset.

Mixed into the highly erotic sexual freedom was the practice of pederasty: the practice of an older man courting and finding sexual pleasure in pursuing sexual experiences with boys who were prepubescent, reflecting the softness of a woman.<sup>5</sup> Courting, in this sense, indicated persuasive actions by the man intended to develop a romantic relationship with the pre-pubescent boy. Pederasty was a highly sought-after practice for two different reasons. Primarily, it was highly prized because young men were thought to embody physical perfection.<sup>6</sup> Regarding physical perfection, another early Roman author wrote, "[The], form, complexion, and image of the boy's beauty" was just as powerful a reminder, sent by the gods."<sup>7</sup> Obtaining sexual gratification with this "physical perfection" was one of the highest pleasures one could obtain. It was not the highest because it could never result in marriage, but it was next to perfection.<sup>8</sup> Regarding the intense pleasure of such a practice, one Roman novelist wrote, "[The pleasure of loving boys], whose very evanescence makes the pleasure so much greater."<sup>9</sup> Regarding this evanescence, the

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<sup>5</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 25.

<sup>6</sup> Stone, *Sex and the Constitution*, 27.

<sup>7</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 30.

<sup>8</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 23.

<sup>9</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 23.

common belief was that “it was wrong to lure a boy into sin in the years before his moral reason was developed, and twice as shameful once the young man was too old.”<sup>10</sup> Much like a fruit that becomes ripe for a short period of time, so was the prepubescent boy in the eyes of the Roman man. This short window in which the older man was to persuade the younger prepubescent boy into joining him in consensual sexual activity was the very ingredient of the courtship which heightened the sexual experience. Much like the hunter who tracks his prey down through a careful stalk over a long course of time, so the older male would seek to elicit the attention of the young male through a courtship of sorts. The longer the courtship, the more heightened the erotic pleasure. The courtship was over as soon as the younger male gave into the sexual intentions of the older male.

Second, pederasty was thought to help mentor young men into manhood. Speaking of this mentorship, Stone writes, “Xenophon attested that in such relationships the older man took pains to develop the pupil, his beloved, and pass on everything he knew to the boy.”<sup>11</sup> This pederastic relationship was thought to be the “true way” to nurture virtue.<sup>12</sup> Greco-Roman culture heavily promoted the belief that the physical world that was experienced was specifically knit together by the gods so that mankind might find salvation. This sexual experience was actually thought to be part of the overall salvation provided by the gods. Pederasty then was seen almost as a philanthropic endeavor for both the older and the younger boy; it was thought to be virtuous. The older man was mentoring the younger boy and the younger boy was helping the older man to be a mentor. This synchronic type relationship was only surpassed by the marriage of a man and a woman, not because heterosexuality was somehow more important or better, but rather, in marriage, procreation was possible, allowing for the male’s family lineage to continue.

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<sup>10</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 29.

<sup>11</sup> Stone, *Sex and the Constitution*, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 30.

It must be noted that in Roman culture, rape was very much frowned upon, regardless of whether it was a woman or a man, boy or a girl, even slave or free. The goal of the pederast was to persuade, not force, sexual activity. In addition, a boy who was a freeborn Roman citizen was not an option regarding pederasty, legally speaking.<sup>13</sup> While this was the law of the land, the practice of the land indicated that it did not really matter if the boy was freeborn or not. If the boy was old enough to have developed a sense of morals and had not started to look and sound like a man, then he was an option for sexual consumption. Harper, speaking to this practice, notes, “Fathers were endlessly anxious about the sexual dangers that lurked in the schools. The ‘lover of boys’, it was conventional to believe, only had to bribe the pedagogue or attendant and entice his beloved [the boy] with a little gift.”<sup>14</sup> Regarding pederasty then, forcing one’s self onto a young boy was frowned upon and in many cases punished. The goal of the older man in the pederastic relationship was to woo the young boy so that he willingly gave himself sexually to the older man. In modern vernacular, the older man needed to groom the younger boy so that the sexual activity was consensual.

In summary, the culture in which the early church arose, Roman mythology was created by men after what man thought was utopic and salvific. Roman gods were created to live in this manmade world and possessed what the average mortal could not possess. These gods were superhuman and the goal of worship was to appease these superhuman gods by emulating them. This emulation, in his mind, would bring about salvation for the Roman worshipper. At the end of the day, the very creation of man and the desires of man created the world of the Roman gods. The desires of man then created what the Roman gods adored and hated. Emulating the gods as often as possible included emulating their sexual activity. Emulating the sexual activity of the gods merely meant

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<sup>13</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 26.

<sup>14</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 29.



fulfilling the desires of those who created the Roman mythologies in the first place. This is exactly what the Psalmist wrote about in Psalm 115:8, yet this is the exact context in which the Christian church was birthed and in which the church was called to navigate. Into this sexualized culture the Church was born, which meant that the men who were called to lead the church would need to address such attitudes and practices.

### **Early Church Fathers regarding Pederasty**

The early church fathers initially faced many challenges, both theological and practical.<sup>15</sup> The most notable challenges were addressed head on at the Councils of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. At these councils, foundational Christian doctrines were defended and debated to preserve vital foundational truths throughout the centuries. At the same time, practical matters also needed to be discussed, debated, and either affirmed or denounced so that the church could continue to walk in a manner worthy of its calling. The pervasive sexual activity that young believers were inundated with was one such practical matter requiring attention. After all, the cities of Corinth and Ephesus contained temples devoted to Roman gods and goddesses that demanded sexual activities as part of the worship process. While the following thoughts and ideas regarding pederasty are not nearly as notable as thoughts and ideas from the councils mentioned, writings from the early church fathers make a convincing argument that holding to a firm biblical ethic regarding sexual practices was extremely important.

For the Christian, salvation was found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This truth not only was a doctrine to believe in, but it was a doctrine to be lived out, even to the point of losing one's own life if called upon. Belief in and practice born out of the gospel of Jesus Christ were one and the same. It could be said that a Christian's actions reflected what he believed. To live as a Roman but claim devotion to

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<sup>15</sup> The terms *theological* and *practical* are not meant to bifurcate what should be united. These terms are used to differentiate debates that were necessary as essential orthodox doctrines established from activities that would have fallen under the modern categories of "Christian living."

Christ simply did not make sense, as is evidenced by Paul's command to the Corinthians regarding the man in the church who was committing adultery with his father's wife. A duplicitous life would result in execution by Romans and ousting from the Christian community. One was either a Christian and lived a life keeping with Christian doctrine, or he was not a Christian.

One notable mark of the early Christians was the extreme departure from Roman sexual practices described previously, of which pederasty existed. Understanding the clear exhortation from Scripture as well as understanding the needs of new Christians to understand the clear exhortations, the early church fathers spoke specifically and clearly about sexual issues. Due in part to their teachings and the clear delineations created between the sexually promiscuous Roman culture and the Christian way of living, sexual activity only within marriage became one of the hallmark features of the Christian community.<sup>16</sup> Any sexual activity outside of the union between one man and one woman was considered a sin and was to be denounced and forsaken by the early Christian church.

Of particular note at this point is not that sexual activity outside of marriage was deemed sinful by the church, as Roman worship also labeled some sexual activity sinful, but any sexual relationship that was not consensual but forced was looked down upon and considered sinful according to Roman law.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it was not the sexual behavior that was sinful, rather, the lack of consent between both parties that was sinful. In stark contrast to the Roman understanding of sin, the Christian understanding of sin did not lie with the consent of both parties. The Christian understanding of sin originated from what the God of the Bible determined was sinful. The Christian understanding of sexual sin went above and beyond the Roman understanding of sexual sin. Harper notes,

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<sup>16</sup> S. Donald Fortson III and Rollin G. Grams, *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 28.

<sup>17</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 28.

“Same-sex love, regardless of age, status, or role was forbidden without remorse.”<sup>18</sup> By relegating all sexual activity to that which happens within the marriage covenant, the Christian understanding of sexual sin not only included consent between a husband and a wife, but it excluded any activity not mutually agreed upon as well as all sexual activity outside of the marriage, consented to or not.<sup>19</sup>

One strong example of how different the Christian sexual ethic was from the Roman sexual ethic is found in the early Christian word *paidophthoreo*. John Martens, in his book entitled *Do Not Sexually Abuse Children*, highlights the use of the word *paidophthoreo* by Christians of late antiquity over and above the Greek use of the word *paiderasteo*. *Paidophthoreo* appears to have originated with the early Christian church in response to the rampant pedophilic culture in which the church found itself. Martens explains that the use of *paidophthoreo* was a term coined by early Christians to highlight at least three different aspects connected to pederasty and pedophilia: seduction, corruption, and destruction. Martens points out that while each of the terms individually would not paint a full and accurate picture regarding sinning sexually against children, in combination, these three terms speak to the sexual nature, effects, as well as impact of pedophilic behavior as described by this one word.<sup>20</sup>

The Greek word *paiderasteo*, in contrast, was exclusively positive and had love as the focus and not destruction. Made up of two words “child” and “eros,” *paiderastero* was understood to mean for an adult to love a child passionately and spoke positively of the relationship that existed between the pedophile and the young child.<sup>21</sup> A simple

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<sup>18</sup> Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 85.

<sup>19</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 29.

<sup>20</sup> John W. Martens, “Do Not Sexually Abuse Children,” in *Children in Late Christian Antiquity*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 58, ed. Cornelia B. Horn and Robert R. Phenix (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 253.

<sup>21</sup> Martens, “Do Not Sexually Abuse Children,” 235.

comparison of the newly formed early Christian term with the well-established Greek term reveals a stark difference in the perceived product of pedophilia. Early Christians understood the destructive nature of pedophilic actions on a young child and took such a stand against it that they created a word to describe just how destructive it was.

With this understanding of how the early Christian church perceived pederastic activity, this chapter will now look at individual statements made by the Early Church Fathers against this activity. In *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition*, Fortson and Grams give a thorough rendering of statements from the early church fathers regarding sexual sin.<sup>22</sup> While the majority of the following statement are highlighted by Fortson and Grams, additional quotes from the Early Church Fathers have been added and all quotations used are from The Ante Nicene Fathers volumes 1-8 to retain original wording and intent. Words and phrases related to pedophilia have been italicized for emphasis:

Thou shalt not commit murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not commit *pæderasty* [sic], thou shalt not commit fornication, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not practice magic, thou shalt not practice [sic]witchcraft, thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill that which is begotten.<sup>23</sup>

Why, the sovereign of the gods, the very “father of gods and men,” not only, as ye say, was an adulterer (this was but a light thing), but even slew his own father, and was a *pæderast* [sic]. . . . Oh! to how many charges is the sovereign of the gods amenable, and how many deaths does he deserve to die, as an adulterer, and as a sorcerer, and as a *pæderast* [sic]! Read to the sovereign of the gods, O men of Greece, the law concerning parricide, and the condemnation pronounced on adultery, and about the shame that attaches to the vile sin of *pæderasty* [sic]. How many adulterers has the sovereign of the gods indoctrinated in sin! Nay, how many *pæderasts* [sic], and sorcerers, and murderers! So that, if a man be found indulging his passions, he must not be put to death: because he has done this that he may become like the sovereign of the gods; and, if he be found a murderer, he has an excuse in the sovereign of the gods; and, if a man be a sorcerer, he has learned it from the sovereign of the gods; and, if he be a *pæderast* [sic], the sovereign of the gods is his apologist.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Fortson and Grams, *Unchanging Witness*, 29-43.

<sup>23</sup> “Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions,” in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 377.

<sup>24</sup> Ambrose, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, 740.

But must not those who are spectators of single combats and are partisans on one side or the other, and he who marries and is a *pæderast* [sic] and an adulterer, who laughs and is angry, who flees and is wounded, be regarded as mortals? For, by whatever actions they manifest to men their characters, by these they prompt their hearers to copy their example. And are not the demons themselves, with Zeus at their head, subjected to Fate, being overpowered by the same passions as men?<sup>25</sup>

Thou shalt not be a *corrupter of boys*, nor like unto such.<sup>26</sup>

These adulterers and *pæderasts* [sic] defame the eunuchs and the once-married (while they themselves live like fishes;<sup>3</sup> for these gulp down whatever falls in their way, and the stronger chases the weaker: and, in fact, this is to feed upon human flesh, to do violence in contravention of the very laws which you and your ancestors, with due care for all that is fair and right, have enacted), so that not even the governors of the provinces sent by you suffice for the hearing of the complaints against those, to whom it even is not lawful, when they are struck, not to offer themselves for more blows, nor when defamed not to bless: for it is not enough to be just (and justice is to return like for like), but it is incumbent on us to be good and patient of evil.<sup>27</sup>

Whether he who committed these crimes can be called Greatest is a matter of question, undoubtedly he is not the Best; to which name *corrupters*, adulterers, and *incestuous persons* have no claim; unless it happens that we men are mistaken in terming those who do such things wicked and abandoned, and in judging them most deserving of every kind of punishment.<sup>28</sup>

But as for us, we have been taught that to expose *newly-born children* is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught lest we should do any one an injury, and lest we should sin against God, first, because we see that almost all *so exposed (not only the girls, but also the males) are brought up to prostitution*. And as the ancients are said to have reared herds of oxen, or goats, or sheep, or grazing horses, so now we see you rear children only for this shameful use; and for this pollution a multitude of females and hermaphrodites, and those who commit unmentionable iniquities, are found in every nation. And you receive the hire of these, and duty and taxes from them, whom you ought to exterminate from your realm. And any one [sic] who uses such persons, besides the godless and infamous and *impure intercourse*, may possibly be having intercourse with his own child, or relative, or brother. And there are some who prostitute even their own children and wives, and some are openly mutilated for the purpose of sodomy; and they refer these mysteries to the mother of the gods, and along with each of those whom you esteem gods there is painted a serpent, a great symbol and mystery. Indeed, the things which you do openly and with applause, as if the divine light were overturned and extinguished, these you lay to our charge; which, in truth, does no harm to us who

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<sup>25</sup> Tatian, "Address of Tatian to the Greeks," 68.

<sup>26</sup> Barnabas, *The Epistle of Barnabas*, 143.

<sup>27</sup> Athenagoras, "A Plea for the Christians," 147.

<sup>28</sup> Lactantius, "The Divine Institutes," 20.

shrink from doing any such things, but only to those who do them and bear false witness against us.<sup>29</sup>

Do you, therefore, show me yourself, whether you are not an adulterer, or a fornicator, or a thief, or a robber, or a purloiner; whether you do not *corrupt boys*; whether you are not insolent, or a slanderer, or passionate, or envious, or proud, or supercilious; whether you are not a brawler, or covetous, or disobedient to parents; and whether you do not sell your children; for to those who do these things God is not manifest, unless they have first cleansed themselves from all impurity.<sup>30</sup>

The Greeks consider intercourse with a mother as unlawful, but this practice is esteemed most becoming by the Persian Magi; *pæderasty* [sic] is condemned by the Barbarians, but by the Romans, who endeavour [sic] to collect herds of boys like grazing horses, it is honoured [sic] with certain privileges.<sup>31</sup>

The Sodomites having, through much luxury, fallen into uncleanness, practicing [sic] adultery shamelessly, and burning with *insane love for boys*; the All-seeing Word, whose notice those who commit impieties cannot escape, cast His eye on them.<sup>32</sup>

But the law given to us enjoins us to shun what are in reality bad things—adultery, uncleanness, *pæderasty* [sic], ignorance, wickedness, soul-disease, death (not that which severs the soul from the body, but that which severs the soul from truth).<sup>33</sup>

It is their unlawful activity that is shameful, and deserving ignominy, and reproach, and punishment. For the only thing that is in reality shameful is wickedness, and what is done through it. In accordance with these remarks, conversation about deeds of wickedness is appropriately termed filthy [shameful] speaking, as talk about adultery and *pæderasty* [sic] and the like. Frivolous prating, too, is to be put to silence<sup>34</sup>

For into this dread place are wont to be cast all who offend against filial piety, and such as are guilty of incest with sisters, and seducers of wives, and ravishers of virgins, and *boy-polluters*, and men of furious tempers, and murderers, and thieves, and deceivers; all, in short, who tread in the footsteps of your gods, not one of whom you can prove free from crime or vice, save by denying that they had ever a human existence.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Justin Martyr, “The First Apology of Justin,” 172.

<sup>30</sup> Theophilus of Antioch, “Theophilus to Autolytus, Book I,” 89.

<sup>31</sup> Tatian, “Address of Tatian to the Greeks,” 77.

<sup>32</sup> Clement of Alexandria, “The Instructor,” 282.

<sup>33</sup> Clement of Alexandria, “The Stromata, or Miscellanies,” 355.

<sup>34</sup> Clement of Alexandria, “The Instructor,” 251.

<sup>35</sup> Tertullian, “The Apology,” 28.

From the quotes on the previous pages, it is clear that the view of the Early Church Fathers on pedophilia was in line with their view on all other sexual activity outside of marriage: they thought it was sinful and destructive. Declaring that pedophilia of all sorts was sinful and wrong had to have been helpful for new Christians coming out of Roman Culture believing that such activity was not only good and right, but also salvific. The Early Church Fathers quickly indicated that pedophilic activity was not only destructive, but it was also damning.

### **Hope from the Early Church Fathers**

While the previous quotes do in fact give clear directions for Christians regarding pedophilia, taken out of the theological context of early Christianity, it would be easy to arrive at some form of works-based legalism. The Early Church Fathers did far more than simply delineate right from wrong for the early Christian church. Indeed, they not only talked about the actions of the outer man (sanctification), but also the state of the inner man (justification). As Clement of Rome stated, “And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”<sup>36</sup> Finding one’s justification in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ meant that the “innocent” verdict handed down by God was *not* based on the perfect keeping of God’s laws, but on Christ’s perfect keeping of His own law. For certain, as the quotes damning pedophilic behavior reveal, the Early Church Fathers did not agree that pedophiles could continue in their actions and be saved any more than the apostle Paul taught that one could be saved and continue in sin (Rom 6:1 ESV). Nonetheless, for the one who had spent a lifetime soaking in the sexual filth of Roman

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<sup>36</sup> Clement of Rome, “The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians,” 238.

culture, finding hope in the accomplished life, death, and resurrection of Christ would have been nothing short of amazing.

Additionally, the modern-day concept of “identity” is thrust to the forefront as the Early Church Fathers clearly identified and defined the foundation of the Christian (justification in Christ alone) out of which the Christian lived his life (sanctification). For the young man or woman struggling with pedophilia during that time to understand union and communion with Christ, meant that the old identity was gone. They were no longer enslaved to the passions of this world; rather, they were free to live in a way that brings God honor and glory. Speaking of this enslavement, Hippolytus of Rome stated, “And as Tartarus, which is situated in a doleful and dark locality, is not touched by a ray of light, so is every one who is the slave of sin in all the passions of the flesh. Like the earth not filled with water, he is never able to come to confession, and to the laver of regeneration, and like water and fire, never says, ‘It is enough.’”<sup>37</sup>

The new identity was that of a Christian, a little Christ, and as such they were free to think, speak, and act in ways that reflected the One who lived, died, and rose again on their behalf. There was immense hope in knowing that the old things had passed away and all things were new (2 Cor 5:17). With regard to this new freedom, Tertullian said, “For they, even by their circumstances, were slaves; but you, the slave of none, in so far as you are the slave of Christ alone, who has freed you likewise from the captivity of the world, will incur the duty of acting after your Lord’s pattern.”<sup>38</sup> They were no longer slaves to Roman culture, Roman thought, or Roman actions. Christian culture, Christian thought, and Christian actions were not only the new norm, but they defined the new Christian identity. When the new Christian would pass by the Roman center of worship and see the temple prostitutes or pass by their neighbor’s home adorned with phallic symbols aimed

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<sup>37</sup> Hippolytus of Rome, “Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture,” 174.

<sup>38</sup> Tertullian, “On Idolatry,” 72.



toward Roman worship, they were no longer drawn toward those thoughts and practices; instead, they were free to identify with Christ's life, death, and resurrection. For the one struggling with pedophilic attractions and desires, this would mean that he no longer saw young boys as objects for personal pleasure; rather, they were image bearers of God for whom Christ lived, died, and rose again. Any interactions with young boys would have had new motivations; motivations toward a selfless Christlike love instead of a selfish predatory type of love.

In addition to having a new identity, a new morality was given that contained clear guidelines allowing the new Christian the ability to imitate the God of the Bible instead of the Greek and Roman gods they were used to imitating. As stated previously in this chapter, a new sexual ethic erupted from Christianity that called for all sexual activity to be limited within the bounds of Christian marriage.<sup>39</sup> While new motives were needed for the new Jewish converts to Christianity, both motive and behavior were needed for the new Roman converts to Christianity. The new Christian sexual ethic very much reflected the Old Testament sexual ethic mandating that sexual activity be limited to one man and one woman within the confines of marriage. This limited context for sexual activity would not have been much of a behavior change for the Jewish convert. However, for the Roman convert use to all kinds of culturally sanctioned sexual activity, limiting sexual activity to the confines of a marriage between one man and one woman for life would have been very new and very different. For the true convert, boundaries would have been a welcome gift. The Holy Spirit, now living within them, would have been grieved had they continued in their sexual sin, bringing guilt and causing shame. Without the new morality expressed in oral form and written form, the new Christian engaging in sexual sin would have experienced guilt and shame yet been left to wonder why he was

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<sup>39</sup> This new Christian sexual ethic very much reflected the Jewish sexual ethic that demanded all sexual activity be limited to the marriage covenant. The term *new Christian ethic* is intended to differentiate the Christian ethic from the Roman sexual ethic.

feeling guilt and shame. God graciously provided objective guidance through the thoughts and words of the Early Church Fathers to help guide new Christian converts regarding sexual activity.

### **A Key Missing Element**

As right and good as those statements are, detailed instructions regarding the change process for those engaged in pedophilic activity or who had pedophilic attractions were not given. A few hypotheses exist regarding this seeming lack of instruction away from pedophilia and toward a biblical heterosexual ethic. First, there were simply bigger fish to fry, proverbially speaking. Matters such as Christ being both God and man, the role of the Holy Spirit, the existence of the Trinity and other orthodox doctrines were being discussed. Energy that might be used to detail instructions for repentance could have simply been used on more vital issues of doctrine. Having said this, bifurcating orthodoxy from orthopraxy would not appear to be in the best interest of the Early Church Fathers. To state what is true but disregard how that truth should impact one's life does not appear to be a plausible explanation for why the Early Church Fathers did not spend time explaining causes for and repentance from sin.

Another hypothesis is that it was simply expected that Christians change. As quoted previously, the apostle Paul clearly stated in Romans 12:1-2 that the Christian life was that of a living sacrifice. A living sacrifice does not live according to his or her own desires; rather, he or she lives for the glory of God. Therefore, whatever God says to do and how He says one should live, that is what one should do. Digging into motives of the heart, temptations of the flesh, desires of the mind, and any other topic discussed today would not have been on the radar. Simply stop doing certain actions and start doing other actions could have been the order of the day. If this were the case, then this sets up a situation in which God is pleased with someone because of their obedience and displeased with them because of their disobedience. While this is a plausible hypothesis since it flies

in the face of the gospel as clearly identified in Galatians 2:8-9, this does not seem like a valid answer for the lack of details regarding change.

A third hypothesis is that the Early Church Fathers did indeed spend time helping those struggling with pedophilic attractions and actions, it simply was not recorded. As exemplified by many of the Apostolic letters in the New Testament, while containing specifics to those whom they are writing, the writings of the Early Church Fathers that were saved and passed on were writings that contained orthodox yet general truths that applied to the broader population of those whom would read the letters. The specifics, the how-to's, do not appear to be recorded. With the exhausting and time-consuming activities involved in writing at that time, it makes sense that only the most important ideas and thoughts that were required were in fact the ideas that were recorded and passed along. The specifics that would have been orally spoken most likely remained with those who received them.

It should also be noted that orthodox doctrine has continued to be refined and deepened as time has continued. The ideas and thoughts solidified by the Early Church Fathers have been refined, clarified, and in some cases, reformed. The dichotomous syncretism of man, how the inner and outer parts of man work together, understandably, was not at the top of the doctrine list for the early church fathers.

Still for those struggling with pedophilic attraction and action during this time, it appears that they were left with a “just stop it” instruction. That kind of instruction, which is tantamount to pulling one's self up by his or her own bootstraps, would have been just as frustrating to the pedophile today who is told to “stop it.” That kind of instruction might perhaps stop the actions, but it does not change the man. As Ephesians 4:28 instructs the changed thief to do more than not steal, so the changed pedophile must do more than not be sexually attracted to children.

Having explored how the Early Church Fathers responded to the idea of pedophilia and those who would struggle with pedophilic attractions and actions, the

discussion now turns toward the more modern approach regarding the general term of Christian psychology. As noted in chapter 1, this category is not comprised of one singular psychological approach, but instead there are many different approaches of which three will be considered in this chapter: integrational psychology, Christian psychology, and transformational psychology.

### **Christian Psychology and Pedophilia**

Beginning with views regarding pedophilia from the early Christian church, this discussion will turn toward the modern Christian psychological approach regarding addictive sexual sin, of which pedophilia is considered.<sup>40</sup> Just as the secular world contains myriad thoughts and perspectives regarding origins and treatment for sexual addictions, the world of Christian psychology also contains more than one or even two perspectives on the genesis and treatment of sexual addictions.<sup>41</sup> As a reminder, chapter 1 briefly highlighted the different categories of therapy found under the banner of Christian psychology that will be explored in this section: integrationism, Christian psychology, and transformational psychology.

### **Christian Integrationism**

The first major category to be examined, which is found within Christian psychology, is the Christian integrationist (CI) approach. Applying general definitions to both the terms “Christian” and “integration” would indicate that Christian integrationism is simply an integration of the Bible and psychological ideals and practices. Stanton Jones gives a clear and concise definition when he states that CIs “seek to integrate [science

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<sup>40</sup> As a reminder, just as there are no resources from the biblical counseling community regarding pedophilia, there is also a lack of resources from the Christian psychological community regarding pedophilia. Therefore, the broader category of addictive sexual behavior will be examined.

<sup>41</sup> The broader category of sexual addictions is being addressed in this section due to the lack of resources available specifically addressing the issue of pedophilia. Since one of the prominent therapies used by secular psychologists is an adapted addiction model for sexual activity, sexual addictions as viewed through the lens of Christian psychologists will be explored in this section.

and Christianity]<sup>42</sup> because, in a perfect world, that which would go together seamlessly is now, in this world, dis-integrated and fragmented.”<sup>43</sup> In other words, due to the effects of sin, what would have been naturally understood to go hand in hand, Christianity and science, has now been seriously convoluted, making the connections between science and Christianity much harder to understand, if not impossible. Prior to sin entering the world, how a child normally and naturally develops would not have been up for debate. The connections would have been properly understood. Prior to Adam and Eve eating the fruit in the Garden of Eden, issues such as depression, anxiety, bipolar, anti-social personality disorder, and most other issues addressed by the *DSM-5* would either not exist due to the non-existence of sin, or they would have been easily understood because sin would not have made such understanding hard. One could also deduce that if sin had not entered the world, man’s relationship with God would not have been destroyed and mankind could have gone directly to God for answers.

For the CI, the fact that sin entered the world and man’s relationship with God was permanently changed, indicates that part of man’s job is to observe the world around him, use scientific means, and come to conclusions about his observations. Using this scientific method allows man to find out truth that can then be put into practice to help when issues of sin or brokenness become apparent in someone’s life; issues such as pedophilia. CI proponents believe that the scientific method used to collect data devise theories that ultimately help mankind but should be governed by a strong biblical philosophy and ethic. Regarding use of the scientific method as applied to psychological concepts, Jones goes on to say,

The Christian psychologist should draw on the resource of God’s answers to these ultimate questions as the foundation both for how we engage the science of

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<sup>42</sup> While Jones does not specifically state *science* and *Christianity* in this particular quote, he does specifically state that integrationists specifically seek to integrate these two entities.

<sup>43</sup> Stanton L. Jones, “An Integrated View,” in *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, ed. Eric L. Johnson, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010), 102.

psychology and how we structure our practice in the profession of psychology. 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 tools for understanding and improving the human condition.<sup>44</sup>

Unlike the secular world, which mandates that religion and science cannot and should not overlap one another, the Christian integrationist absolutely believes that science and religion, specifically Christianity, should overlap and intermingle. Science uncovers the world as God has designed it while Christianity, specifically the Bible, reveals how to have a full life in Christ. Jones, as representing the CI movement, is clear in stating that it is not vital to have a relationship with Christ to uncover the facts about humanity and science, but a relationship with Christ is vital if one is to accurately apply those facts in a way that is biblically authentic and humanly helpful.<sup>45</sup>

As one interacts with CI writings, especially when descriptions for psychological disorders are given, it can be somewhat difficult to distinguish between secular psychological descriptions and Christian integrated descriptions. One example of this is found in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*, when M. A. Champion states,

Sexual activity, actual or fantasized, with prepubescent children, usually 13 years or younger. The offender must be at least 16 years old and 5 years older than the child. This does not include a person in late adolescence who is sexually involved in an ongoing relationship with a 12- or 13-year old. The pedophile's preferred or exclusive method of achieving sexual arousal is with children. Most incidents are initiated by adult males who are known to the child.

In general the younger the victim, the more profound the pedophile tendencies in the adult and the more the offender fits the diagnosis of pedophile. The *DSM-IV* (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) appears to minimize the dysfunctional nature of pedophilia when compared to the *DSM-III-R*, published in 1987. The more recent edition suggests that pedophilia is a problem if it causes significant distress or impairment. The performance of the sex act itself does not appear to be as significant. This may suggest an effort toward normalizing pedophilia.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 101-2.

<sup>45</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 113-15.

<sup>46</sup> M. A. Champion, "Pedophilia," in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 841.

As one is interacting with CI writings, it can become difficult to see where CI's might differ in thought and practice from those in the Biblical Counseling movement, after all, both camps subscribe to the validity of Scripture when it comes to understanding psychological issues such as pedophilia and other sexual sins. Highlighting this truth, Jones states,

Earlier, I offered a working definition of *integration*: Integrating Christianity and psychology is living out of the lordship of Christ over all of existence by giving his special revelation—God's true Word—it's appropriate place of authority in determining our fundamental beliefs about and practices toward all of reality, and toward our academic subject matter in particular.<sup>47</sup>

This statement from Jones can read in such a way that Christians might subscribe without objection. Highlighting one portion of this statement will help to exhibit one junction where CI's differ from biblical counselors in their approach toward psychological issues such as pedophilia. This should cause Christians to pause and think about what course a CI might take when approaching the issue of pedophilia. While Jones states that God's Word does have a place of authority in determining the CI's beliefs and practices, he uses the qualifying term "appropriate" to delineate or lessen the amount of authority God's Word has over beliefs and practices. Applying this definition toward issues of psychology, the CI would understand that Scripture has authority over issues of sin, repentance, guilt, certain controllable behaviors, as well as numerous other areas. However, the authority of Scripture would not extend to issues such as how the brain works, how the brain and mind cooperate, how personality is established and develops, the role that early childhood experiences play in the formation of human development, as well as a host of other issues.<sup>48</sup> CI's state that Scripture has no more authority over those areas than open-heart surgery. Regarding open-heart surgery, Scripture would not indicate whether a surgeon should begin with this routine or that routine. That is not an ethical moral question

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<sup>47</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 115.

<sup>48</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 116.

requiring scriptural insight. In the same way, the CI approach would say that scriptural insight is not required to observe, understand, and apply the effects of being abused as a child. How someone should respond to their abuser, what behaviors need to stop, what behaviors need to start, and other ethical moral issues would require scriptural guidance. It is with this understanding that CI's seek to integrate that which God has revealed in His Word with what psychological science has discovered.

A pivotal Scripture that CI's must navigate relating to the authority of Scripture is 2 Peter 1:3. This Scripture, taken at face value, indicates that God has given everything needed for life and godliness. Life and godliness for the CI would include salvation, sanctification,<sup>49</sup> and other theological concepts and ideas. CI's make the claim that the word "everything" is not literally everything that has come to be understood by man; rather, just those areas to which Scripture speaks. CI's would claim that 2 Peter 1:3 would not apply in situations such as "child development, human personality, schizophrenia or depression."<sup>50</sup> For these situations, psychological observations and insight are required.

While the scope of this discussion does not allow for an extensive and comprehensive exploration of Christian integrationism, Jones does apply his CI approach toward homosexuality, which not only gives a tangible example of the CI understanding, but also gives an applicable example which can provide direct application for the issue of pedophilia. Jones provides a comprehensive statement regarding homosexuality and the tension that exists between the traditional view of homosexuality being sinful and modern scientific research when he states, "As an integrationist, I approach this complex topic believing that the Bible and Christian tradition are normative and foundational for my

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<sup>49</sup> The term *sanctification* here is used to indicate growth in holiness and not the position that a Christian finds himself in due to the holiness of Christ. While positional sanctification is a legitimate, orthodox, biblical concept, the use of the term in this sentence should be understood as progressive sanctification.

<sup>50</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 110.



understanding of human sexuality, but also that science can provide much useful information about human sexuality.”<sup>51</sup>

In a brief unpacking of his understanding of “normative Christian tradition,” Jones says, “It [homosexuality] is wrong logically because the Bible does not condemn “homosexuality” but condemns homosexual acts.”<sup>52</sup> In other words, the Bible does not speak to the root “ethical” question of homosexuality which asks, “why do I do what I do”; rather, Scripture speaks to the question of should I do what I want to do.<sup>53</sup> The “why” of homosexual behavior needs to be uncovered through some other means than Scripture. Scripture gives the directive, “Don’t commit homosexual acts.” The CI perspective would claim that the “why” needs to be uncovered or discovered through psychological means of research guided by biblical assumptions and guidelines. Regarding the scientific evident for a pro-homosexual understanding, Jones states that simply all of the scientific evidence is inconclusive at best.<sup>54</sup> Jones’ conclusion regarding homosexuality is summed up in his statement, “Our Christian convictions, for example, lead us necessarily to view homosexual conduct, and hence the desires that give rise to such conduct, as distortions of God’s will and of our intended human natures.”<sup>55</sup> While it is somewhat difficult from Jones’ writings to conclude if he would address the heart or core issues of why someone would struggle with homosexuality, it is clear that he would address the sinfulness of homosexual activity as well as the insufficient scientific evidence for a pro-homosexual mindset. As this brief overview of Christian integrationism comes to a conclusion, two questions are apparent: (1) what hope does a CI approach provide for

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<sup>51</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 120.

<sup>52</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 121.

<sup>53</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 125.

<sup>54</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 123-24.

<sup>55</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 125.

those struggling with pedophilia and (2) what is lacking in the CI approach with regard to those struggling with pedophilia.

**Hope of Christian integrationism.** The Christian integrationism movement provides hope in at least three ways. First and foremost, the Christian integrationism movement provides hope in giving guidelines to the one struggling with sexual sin. While the secular therapist tends to follow the guidelines of the *DSM*, which has changed dramatically over the course of the last fifty years, the CI holds to the biblical standards that all sexual activity outside of the marriage bed is not what God intended. Regarding the commitment of the CI towards a biblical sexual ethic, Jones states, “Christian convictions, for example, lead us necessarily to view homosexual conduct, and hence the desires that give rise to such conduct, as distortions of God’s will and of our intended human natures.”<sup>56</sup> For the one struggling with sinful sexual desires, hope can be found by simply knowing right from wrong. This hopeful clarification does not subdue a guilty conscience that can arise from sinful desires, but at least there is a sense of which direction one should proverbially swim even if the tide feels impossible to swim against.

Closely connected to a biblical sexual ethic is a strong commitment to Scripture itself. When it comes to issues of ethics and morality, secular therapy does not see any connection to the Christian tradition and the Bible, whereas the CI approach not only holds onto a strong scriptural foundation, but mandates that all scientific research submit to the mandates of God’s Word. Regarding a strong commitment to Scripture, Jones points the struggling homosexual toward Genesis 1-2 regarding God’s creation of both male and female as well as God’s design for both to be in relationship.<sup>57</sup> This strong commitment to Scripture provides objective hope that is not only outside of the one struggling, but this objective hope is anchored in God’s Word that has maintained the same sexual ethic for

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<sup>56</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 125.

<sup>57</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 120.

thousands of years. God's Word has not changed, and that immutability can provide hope for the one desperately seeking to do the right thing.

Finally, the CI approach provides hope in that it upholds a relationship with Jesus as a key component to any kind of change that takes place in the life of one struggling with sexual sin. In speaking about key components regarding human sexuality, Jones states, "God has also offered us a living relationship with him through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ, so that we are actually capable of living our lives in a way that gives him pleasure and moves us toward the blessedness he intended for us."<sup>58</sup> A biblical orthodox understanding of sin being removed as far as the east is from the west upon having a relationship with Jesus cannot be underscored nor highlighted enough. For the struggling sexual sinner, the one trapped by sin and desperately wanting freedom, verses such as 2 Corinthians 3:12-18 hold out the ultimate hope that he or she is being changed from one degree of glory to another.

**Dangers of Christian integrationism.** While the CI approach does hold out different aspects of hope for the struggling pedophile, this approach proves lacking in some significant areas as well. While the CI approach does hold to a strong biblical sexual ethic regarding sexual activity, it appears to allow Scripture to take the proverbial backseat when it comes to desires. Regarding homosexuality, Jones makes a confusing statement when he says that "It [homosexuality is a genetic predisposition and not a voluntary choice] is wrong logically because the Bible does not condemn 'homosexuality' but condemns homosexual acts."<sup>59</sup> With this one statement, the one struggling with homosexuality is led to believe that what he is doing is wrong, but not what he desires and/or feels. This is tantamount to telling the serial killer that it is not his desire to take a life or even the feelings associated with that which are wrong, simply the act of killing

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<sup>58</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 121.

<sup>59</sup> Jones, "An Integrated View," 121.

itself. Jesus denounced that idea when he declared that it was not only wrong to murder, but it just as wrong to get angry with someone (Matt 5:21-26). For the one struggling with pedophilia, this would be a most defeating idea to adopt. To say, “It is okay to have desires and feelings for children, however, once you cross the line and act on those thoughts and feelings it is wrong” would be overwhelmingly frustrating. The pedophile must be given more help than a simple, “stop doing the actions.” The Holy Spirit as well as the conscience will still work at the level of desires and feelings, even if actions are not taken.

Christian integrationism also does not appear to use the same language that Scripture uses when it comes to sexual sin. One example is found when Jones states that homosexual acts are “distortions of God’s will and of our intended human natures.”<sup>60</sup> While Jones might have been insinuating that homosexuality was sinful, the use of the word “distortion” does not bear the same weight as the word “sin.” A distorted image still bears a semblance of the original image. Sexual sin such as homosexuality and pedophilia do not reflect the original image nor design in any way, shape, or form. Biblical sexuality between a man and a woman is all about freely giving to one another, producing a biblical witness unlike any other relationship on the earth. Pornography, homosexuality, pedophilia, and every other sexual sin do not portray that kind of selfless giving. To use language other than scriptural language for all sin, but sexual sin particularly, has a strong tendency to downplay the seriousness of the sin as well as God’s treatment of those captivated by such sins.

Finally, the Christian integration approach does appear to give a strong weight to scientific evidence requiring the CI to constantly readdress his understanding and application of Scripture. This appears to be the reverse of what should take place, i.e., a

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<sup>60</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 125.

strong commitment to Scripture should cause intense scrutiny of all scientific research.

One example is found when Jones states,

Logically, the Christian sexual ethic claims that Scripture teaches it is immoral to engage in homosexual intercourse (1 Cor 6:9-10) and that some who once engaged in such behavior were freed from their bondage to that sinful pattern (1 Cor 6:11). The passage is unclear whether these were homosexually oriented persons who became heterosexuals or who became celibate. In either case, the change allowed them to live lives pleasing to God and evidencing his transforming grace.<sup>61</sup>

Jones is clear in this statement that he believes God is pleased when the actions and behaviors come to an end. Jones confirms this a few paragraphs later: “The core ethical question is not ‘Why do I want to do the things that I want to do?’ The core ethical question is “Should I do the things that I want to do? How should I live given the claim God has on my life?’ God has given us our sexuality as a gift and has given us his rules for our good.”<sup>62</sup> While Jones is arguing against the secular idea that change is impossible, he is highlighting that behavioral change is the primary focus of God’s commands. He seems to diminish the importance of repentance at the heart level through making statements such as these. After all, secular science has never disagreed that someone can alter the behavior of people through one aspect or another. All elementary psychology students are introduced to Pavlov’s salivating dog who learns to salivate at the sound of a bell. Changing behavior through some sort of external stimuli is nothing new nor Christian. For the one struggling with pedophilic attractions, he must be given something more than “learn to love adults or not give into your sexual desires.” He needs to hear that he can change from the level of heart desires which will work out into behavior. The “why” (heart motivations/desires) is just as important as the “what” (behavior/actions). With this understanding of Christian integration, the discussion will now turn toward another avenue of Christian psychology aptly named Christian psychology.

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<sup>61</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 124.

<sup>62</sup> Jones, “An Integrated View,” 125.

## **Christian Psychology**

While CIs seek to take psychological ideas and conform them or integrate them according to the biblical scriptures, Christian psychologists (CPs) in contrast do not seek to integrate and conform what already exists in the secular world of psychology. In stark contrast, CPs claim that there exists a psychology within the Christian faith that is just as valid and helpful as any secular therapy already in existence. It is a different kind of psychology than what the secular world offers, but it is a psychological approach nonetheless.<sup>63</sup> Regarding a distinct and valid form of psychotherapy, Eric Johnson states,

To even begin to be taken seriously by MPC (modern psychotherapy and counseling), Christian psychotherapy and counseling (CPC) first has to deepen its own Christian psychological and therapeutic identity and understanding by retrieving, reinvesting in, and rearticulating the distinct resources of its own community/tradition in light of the best work of MPC.” There are three main distinctives which separate CP from other forms of Christian psychology as well as secular psychology.<sup>64</sup>

While one conclusion from Johnson’s statement is that Christian psychology seeks to integrate or repackage secular thoughts and methods, he goes on to state that Christian psychology is not in the business of repackaging the “rules of secular discourse and therapy.”<sup>65</sup> Instead, Christian psychology believes that Christianity, through Scripture, provides a therapeutic approach toward psychological issues that is free from the foundational presuppositions upon which secular psychotherapies stand. Christian psychology proclaims to be separate from all other forms of psychology and counseling in two different areas: a strong commitment to both science and Scripture as well as the goal of therapy.

**Commitment to Scripture and science.** There is no doubt in reading through works produced by CPs of their strong commitment to Scripture. This erupts out of the

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<sup>63</sup> Robert C. Roberts and P. J. Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 158.

<sup>64</sup> Eric L. Johnson, *God and Soul Care: The Therapeutic Resources of the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2017), 9.

<sup>65</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 9.

strong belief that Christianity has an inherent existent psychology and the only resource found within Christianity containing authority is the Bible itself, as has already been cited. Due to this belief, Christian psychology promotes that one does not need to develop a Christian psychology; rather, one simply needs to discover where this psychology is evidenced on the pages of Scripture. Discovering psychological goals and methods within the pages of Scripture is what sets Christian psychology apart from Christian integrationism as well as transformational psychology. With regard to this aspect of Christian psychology, Robert Roberts and P. J. Watson state, “Much of the foundational work in Christian psychology will therefore require a careful rereading of Scripture.”<sup>66</sup> Christian integrationism, by contrast, takes secular psychological approaches and evaluates them according to Scripture, keeping what agrees with Scripture and rejecting that which does not. While Transformational psychology will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs, it is sufficient to say that Christian psychology and Transformational psychology, while both claiming to discover psychology truths, are not different terms for the same kind of psychology. Christian psychology’s unique approach embraces and makes vital the Christian faith by mining the depths of Scripture for psychological discoveries hoping to help those suffering from psychopathologies and other forms of suffering, much like secular psychology.

Regarding a strong commitment to science, Christian psychology espouses that every thought, idea, and discovery must be run through the grid of Scripture and evaluated by someone committed to the business of psychology.<sup>67</sup> Someone committed to the business of psychology is not the theologian who is well versed in all aspects of Scripture; instead, it is someone well versed in all aspects of psychology. Further endorsing the need for commitment to the “business” of psychology, Roberts and Watson

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<sup>66</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 155.

<sup>67</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 155.

state, “This is the business of psychologically informed Bible scholars, philosophers and theologians, as well as biblically informed professional psychologists and counselors.”<sup>68</sup>

From Roberts and Watson’s perspective, a strong commitment to the scientific approach is evidenced through the following procedures: (1) direct rational analysis, (2) correlational marker procedures, (3) empirical translation schemes, (4) comparative rationality analysis, and (5) statistical control procedures.<sup>69</sup> While each of these scientific processes deserve a thorough discussion, it is sufficient for this point to state that Christian psychology highly values the scientific process when addressing issues within the scope of psychology. Highly valuing a scientific approach is very different from any other Christian psychological approaches thus becoming a defining marker of the Christian psychological approach.

Through a strong commitment to a scientific approach, Christian psychology seeks validity from the empirical data which is believed to reveal a psychological approach on par or better than that which secular psychology can provide. Regarding the strength of empirical data, Roberts and Watson state, “A Christian empirical psychology can and should take its place as a worthy intellectual competitor to the secular psychologies (whether naturalistic, humanistic or postmodern) with their usually unacknowledged metaphysical assumptions about human nature and flourishing.”<sup>70</sup> CPs believe that with this strong commitment to an empirical scientist approach that CPs will be able to engage in positive dialogue with secular psychologists as well as genuinely help those in need.<sup>71</sup> This open dialogue will allow for both Christian psychologists and

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<sup>68</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 155.

<sup>69</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 168-73.

<sup>70</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 165.

<sup>71</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 5.



those working in the modern psychotherapeutic and counseling world to better cooperate, which would allow for better soul care.

**The therapeutic goal.** A strong commitment to Scripture is not the only distinct area of difference for Christian psychology. The main goal of Christian psychology is to be a well-balanced person, which means looking like Christ. As Roberts and Watson state, “A person who is given to or mired in such dispositions [issues addressed in Matt 5-6] will be functioning poorly as a human being, and he or she will not be mature, happy or solidly grounded.”<sup>72</sup> Continuing to unpack the “well-balanced” or “happy” person from the perspective of Christian psychology, Roberts and Watson state, “From the point of view of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, ‘happiness’ is grounded in the new creation that comes in Jesus. The new order is one that supports people who are poor in spirit, gentle, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who are merciful and so forth. The new order is one in which they can function so as to be ‘happy.’”<sup>73</sup> While “well-being” is the goal of most therapies, the definition of well-being for the CP is becoming more and more like Jesus. One may ask, “what does this mean for those who are not Christians.” The answer to this question is found in a combination of what Roberts and Watson call “conceptual-historical and empirical research.”<sup>74</sup> Taking a look back through the annals of mankind, considering the specific history of the counselee as well as empirical data gathered from the psychological community, could provide an answer for those who are not Christians regarding their psychopathologies. In any case, becoming more like Jesus in attitude, thought, and deed is believed to bring about the greatest amount of happiness for anyone, thus becoming the primary goal for any Christian psychologist. While most Christian counselors, including biblical counselors, would not disagree that the primacy of wanting

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<sup>72</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 157.

<sup>73</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 159.

<sup>74</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 160.

counselees to become more like Christ, the motivation behind Christlikeness is where there is a unique difference. Christlikeness, for the CP, is what will arrive at the greatest amount of happiness. Therefore, the primary motivation behind the goal of Christlikeness could be happiness, i.e., Christlikeness is the goal to happiness which more closely identifies with secular motivations than biblical motivations. This primary motivation of happiness, then, makes Christian psychology drastically different from Biblical counseling and tends to cause those of the Christian psychology community to view Scripture as a *DSM* of sorts, reading secular psychological motives into the words of Scripture. More will be said regarding this idea in subsequent paragraphs.

### **Hope of Christian Psychology**

In describing and evaluating the Christian psychology movement at a general level, the fact that those involved in the movement endeavor to genuinely help others should be highlighted. The Christian faith calls all men everywhere who have been saved by Christ to love others as they have been loved by God, i.e., unconditionally. The call to love all of humanity, both friend and foe, have been the motivations behind philanthropic endeavors of all sorts (Matt 22:37-39). That love extends into various types of situation, including situations that fall underneath the category of psychology. From the one suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder to the one who suffers from Schizophrenia, CPs attempt to help those who are suffering from living in a sin-cursed world with sin-cursed bodies as well as those experiencing the effects of committing sinful acts. Out of love for all mankind, one can deduce that those who practice Christian psychology would extend a loving hand to those who struggle with pedophilia.

Christian psychology also acknowledges that the risk of individuals to abandon their Christian faith is significantly increased when those who are teaching and/or practicing the psychology are not Christian. In speaking to this, Roberts and Watson state, "If the experience of churches in the past one hundred years is any indication of the future, we can expect that in the measure that we lose touch with our own [Christian]

psychology and replace it with the psychologies of the establishment [secular], we will also lose touch with the apostolic faith.”<sup>75</sup> Christian psychology understands that the soul or psyche is not a portion of the human body that can be examined, understood, and cared for without effecting the rest of the person, both spiritually and often physically. Understanding this truth is one aspect that drives CPs to go back to Scripture time and again. Wishing for all counselees who are Christian to remain Christian is a good endeavor, an endeavor which secular psychologists do not have as part of the counseling agenda.

Regarding those with pedophilic attractions, those who are committed to Christian psychology would seek to genuinely help those struggling not only retain their faith but possibly grow in their faith as well. For those who already profess to be a Christians, this agenda item would no doubt include the counselor asking faith-based questions such as “How is your relationship with Christ” and “How much time have you spent with Christ over the past week.” These questions would not be asked by the secular counselor, as maintaining a strong relationship with Christ would not necessarily be part of the agenda.

Christian psychology also strives to help others become more like Jesus. Becoming more like Jesus means that someone must know Jesus to become more like Him. It should be the goal of all Christians, psychologists or not, to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who need salvation. Whether the gospel message is the first, the middle, or the last agenda item, the fact that it is an agenda item deserves to be highlighted. For the struggling pedophile, this agenda item not only has earthly merit but also carries with it an eternal blessing.

CPs, while using a different vocabulary, do hold to issues of sin and repentance, making biblical change part of the agenda in some cases. Speaking to this issue, Roberts

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<sup>75</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 174.

and Watson state, “More specifically, belief in sin may promote a form of self-reflection that helps one more honestly evaluate one’s needs for improvement (i.e. repentance), and this process can occur without defensiveness because truthful discovery of transgressions will be covered by God’s grace.”<sup>76</sup> While this point harkens back to the previous paragraph, the fact that Christian psychology holds to the fact that people possess the ability to change and own their sin is a positive aspect to Christian psychology. Roberts and Watson are not 100 percent absolute when they say, “may promote,” but the fact that they highlight the ability to change is very hopeful, especially for those struggling with addiction and other life enslaving sins, such as pedophilia. As with Christian integrationism, there are some positive aspects related to hope and change, but some serious dangers need to be highlighted and discussed.

### **Dangers of Christian Psychology**

**Convoluting terms.**<sup>77</sup> As mentioned in the previous section, Christian psychology does promote the idea that change is possible. However, the terminology used can often be interpreted differently depending upon who is using the language and what the motivations are behind the therapist. For instance, Roberts and Watson state, “Beliefs in sin may promote a form of self-reflection that helps one more honestly evaluate one’s need for improvement.”<sup>78</sup> While this sentence could be understood to say, “Belief in the concept of sin could lead someone to repent of their thoughts and actions and change,” it could also be understood to mean “if someone buys into the idea of sin, this could lead someone to think about how they are not living up to their potential and cause them to become a better person.” The terms used by Roberts and Watson are the

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<sup>76</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 167.

<sup>77</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 162.

<sup>78</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 167.

same terms often espoused by secular psychologists to promote a form of self-help, which is different from help that comes from the Holy Spirit.

In addition to sounding very similar to secular psychologists, telling someone that they could self-reflect and become more improved does not seem to fit with the biblical understanding of the heart and the new creation. More will be said about this in chapter 4, but for now it is enough to say that Jeremiah 17:9 claims that no one can know the heart. Second Corinthians 5:17 states that there is a new creation, not an improved creation. These concepts are very important for the one struggling with pedophilia. Biblical lasting change, i.e., a new creation, is more than an improvement of the old self. The pedophile does not change because he understands and even believes in the concept of sin. Something different—something supernatural—must happen for the one struggling with pedophilic attractions to permanently change. Christian psychology does not appear to offer that kind of hope.

**Misuse of Scripture.** Roberts and Watson offer a prominent example of a misuse of Scripture:

The Sermon does have much to say about actions, but it is also, and more deeply, about character—about the form of persons. It is about how to live, by being a person of a certain kind of character who acts well as part of living well. And it is about the transformation of persons from being one kind of character and living less well to being another kind who lives well. But the study of character, the aspects of well-being and the change of character for the better, seem to be a sort of psychology.<sup>79</sup>

It is one thing to say that Matthew 5 reveals how flawed humanity is, what a picture of perfection looks like, and why humanity needs a savior. This is the message of the gospel. Human beings cannot be the people Jesus describes in Matthew 5. The saved and the unsaved cannot ascend to the standard that Jesus commands. Whether the thoughts are present without the actions, or the actions keep in step with the thoughts, no man can maintain the standard set forth by Jesus in Matthew 5. It is quite another issue to turn

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<sup>79</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 156.

Matthew 5 into a therapeutic agenda and read into it psychological issues, such as personality, dysfunction, emotion, therapy, self-object, drive, defense mechanisms, schema, congruence, and selfhood as Roberts and Watson do, which is a blatant misuse of Scripture.<sup>80</sup> To arrive at many Christian psychological conclusions, one must read psychological concepts and ideas into the Bible, i.e., deductive reasoning, as opposed to pulling such ideas out of it, i.e., inductive reasoning.

If the message of Matthew 5 is how to be well-balanced and mature, it offers no hope for the pedophile, or anyone else for that matter, who struggles with the sinful flesh. It may offer a standard to which someone can hold him or herself against, but there is no hope of attaining the standard of Matthew 5 in and of someone's own self. The only option is to pretend or imagine that one has reached that level. Perhaps this is why Roberts and Watson state, "People who are being persecuted [suffering of all sorts] will not be immediately inclined to see themselves as happy, and there can be something therapeutic in having Jesus remind them that they are actually functioning better than may outwardly appear."<sup>81</sup> This statement alone; however, does not provide any more hope for the pedophile. For the pedophile to imagine him or herself as happy in the face of conviction from the conscience and the Holy Spirit is nothing more than pretending. Matthew 5 is not a Christian self-help agenda and to treat it as such does not bring about salvation nor sanctification.

**Diminishing God's standard.** In addition to misusing Scripture, Christian psychology tends to diminish God's standard at the least, and at its worst, change God's standard all together. Speaking to the issue of adultery addressed by Jesus in Matthew 5:29-30, Roberts and Watson state that one of the agenda items for the CP is to help his counselee or patient learn to manage his lust as well as mitigate the circumstances that

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<sup>80</sup> Roberts and Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," 156.

<sup>81</sup> Roberts and Watson, "A Christian Psychology View," 160.

promote his lust.<sup>82</sup> The biblical standard for sin is never “management”; rather, it is mortification. Management of sin and mitigation of circumstances will never help the pedophile change.

Another example of diminishing God’s Standard is found in Eric Johnson’s explanation of Same-Sex Attraction (SSA):

The concept of sexual orientation was a helpful scientific advance from a Christian standpoint, because it provides a label for two phenomena: first, the biopsychosocial predisposition most people have toward opposite-sex sexual expression—largely taken for granted prior to the nineteenth century—and second, the disordered predisposition toward same-sex sexual expression, previously attributed personal agency.<sup>83</sup>

In this statement, Johnson’s use of the terms *biopsychosocial predisposition* and *disordered predisposition* can severely diminish personal responsibility for homosexual attraction and turns it into a form of suffering.<sup>84</sup> By this same logic, then, someone could have a biopsychosocial predisposition toward children, but so long as they never intentionally act upon those attractions, they have not sinned. This leaves the one with any sinful attraction in the lurch. They have an attraction due to a broken predisposition for which there seems to be no cure. Johnson appears to agree that there is no cure when he states, “But like all forms of significant suffering it also creates a personal Gethsemane—in this case, ongoing—and therefore an opportunity, particularly challenging in the present day, to display the supremacy of the glory of God over all other values.”<sup>85</sup> Stating that SSA is a form of personal suffering that could be on-going does not seem to fit with what the apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 6:11: “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” Seeing sinful desires and attractions as suffering also does not

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<sup>82</sup> Roberts and Watson, “A Christian Psychology View,” 161.

<sup>83</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 294.

<sup>84</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 295.

<sup>85</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 295.

seem to fit what Paul said in Romans 6:11: “So you must also consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Paul does not appear to show compassion in either passage toward sinful actions or sin attractions.

On a slightly different but connected note, if someone struggling with SSA loses his battle with what Johnson is labeling a weakness, sin happens but not to the same degree as if someone struggling with pedophilic attractions succumbs to his desires. Treating sinful desires, temptations, attractions, or actions with anything other than hatred leaves room for great destruction to take place.

Getting back to the discussion of diminishing God’s standard, Johnson’s answer for SSA is to treat SSA as a temptation and not a sin.<sup>86</sup> If SSA is a temptation, then there is no need for repentance. One just needs to fight the temptation. Johnson states that the temptation turns into the sin when one gives intentional consent, i.e., action.<sup>87</sup> Up until this moment, there might be room to agree with Johnson. However, he solidifies his argument and diminishes God’s standard when he states, “Having SSA by itself fits the category of weakness, whereas consenting to and pursuing one’s SSA would constitute personal sin, together warranting the designation of fault.”<sup>88</sup> If Johnson’s statement is true regarding SSA, then he must hold that the same would be true for someone struggling with pedophilic attraction. By this standard, the only time sin would occur is when it went from thought to action. This does not seem to fit the standard Christ set up in Matthew 5:27-30 in which He stated that even thinking about a woman sexually is tantamount to acting out with a woman. Christ does not spend time dissecting at what point someone crosses the line between temptation and sin; rather, He simply states that sin has been committed. Diminishing God’s standard by reducing sin to “actions only” is

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<sup>86</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 294.

<sup>87</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 295.

<sup>88</sup> Johnson, *God and Soul Care*, 295.



the only course of action if one is to find a well-balanced and happy life as reported by Roberts and Watson when writing about Matthew 5. In other words, one will struggle to have a happy and well-balanced life if he is forced to believe that thoughts, desires, motives, and actions can all be sinful. Drawing a line at “actions only” is a much easier approach if the goal is happiness. To say the least, diminishing God’s standard is not helpful for the one struggling with pedophilia. Having briefly examined Christian integrationism as well as Christian psychology, this chapter will now look at one final counseling approach underneath the banner of Christian psychology: transformational psychology.

### **Transformational Psychology**

While Christian integrationism seeks to use secular psychological concepts using Scripture to guard that process and Christian psychology seeks to reveal a completely different psychology found in Scripture, transformational psychology is a different form of psychology altogether. While the conclusions arrived at by Christian integrationism and Christian psychology are not what biblical counselors would agree with, both camps use objective material to arrive at their conclusions, i.e., secular psychology and the Bible. Transformational psychologists (TPs) combine Scripture, historical psychologies, as well as the spiritual formation of the counselor to provide help and hope for those that they are counseling. In other words, like CIs and CPs, TPs use Scripture and secular psychological information. The difference for TPs, however, is the spiritual condition of the psychologist. John Coe and Todd Hall speak to the focus being primarily on the counselor when they state,

Our goal is to argue for a spiritual formation approach to psychology and Christianity, which takes the spiritual-emotional transformation of the *psychologist* as the foundation for understanding, developing, and preserving the (1) process, (2) methodology and (3) product of doing psychology in the Spirit, which will all, in

turn, open a new horizon into the doing of science in general and psychology in particular.<sup>89</sup>

Transformational psychology is distinct in its approach by making the psychologist the authoritative fountainhead in the counseling process. Using Scripture to vet psychological principles, Christian integrationism uses secular psychological principles and methods as the foundational material when training and practicing psychology. Mining Scripture to discover psychological principles, Christian psychology uses Scripture as foundational material for the training and practicing of psychology. Both camps, Christian integrationism and Christian psychology, use material which exists outside of the psychologist that can be evaluated, accepted, or rejected by others. Transformational psychology, in stark contrast, makes the psychologist the foundation when it comes to the training and practice of psychology. Making the inner thoughts and motivations of the counselor the very foundation of the counseling model is a very subjective approach making outside evaluation much harder to accomplish. Transformational psychology teaches that this transformation of psychology is what should be done out of faith and in love.<sup>90</sup>

Coe and Hall give the following list of foundational principles for transformational psychology:<sup>91</sup>

1. The person doing psychology has a history or tradition within psychology, i.e. the one who is dispensing psychology has been educated and trained in psychology from the past. The goal is to be mindful of psychological principles and practices while, at the same time, not allowing those principles and practices to dictate how psychology is done by the psychologist.<sup>92</sup>
2. The person doing psychology has been made new in the Holy Spirit. The psychologist, while acknowledging the role that historical psychologies have played, seeks to “reexperience and redesign the process of doing psychology and its

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<sup>89</sup> John C. Coe and Todd W. Hall, “A Transformational Psychology,” in Johnson, *Psychology and Christianity*, 200, emphasis added.

<sup>90</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 200.

<sup>91</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 200-201.

<sup>92</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 201.

end product.”<sup>93</sup> As the psychologist “does science” by opening him or herself up to “experience the Spirit,” remains open to the truths of Scripture, as well as open to the truths about humanity which comes from observing others and self-reflection, the psychologist actually is engaging in science as he or she discovers the psychology of the person.<sup>94</sup>

3. The person doing psychology is grounded in reality, including the realities known to those with faith. This foundational principle is the attempt of transformational psychology to divert away from the modern scientific approach which uses quantifiable measurements as the standard for science, and, instead, reverts back to a premodern idea that science is best done through the lens of the scientist.<sup>95</sup> In the case of transformational psychology, the scientist is the psychologist, thus making the scientist the epicenter of truth and not an accepted collection of truths purported by a scientist in the past.
4. The person doing psychology as one, single, yet complex, study of reality in faith. Again, this foundational principle places the transformational psychologist as the epicenter of truth. This psychologist is not simply doing science as separate from theology. Neither is he doing theology separate from science. Instead, he is doing both theology and science simultaneously as he takes his knowledge of Scripture, historical psychological approaches, observations of himself and humanity, and in the power of the Holy Spirit decides what is “real and true, and minimizes any pathological need to distort reality and falsify the truth.”<sup>96</sup>
5. The person doing psychology does so as a science which is descriptive and prescriptive in nature. Since psychology is description and prescriptive, the truths found in Scripture by the psychologist allow him or her to help his patient navigate the ebb and flow of life by informing him or her of what is right and wrong, good and bad, helpful and unhelpful, or mature or immature. The patient does not need to be a Christian in order for those descriptions and prescriptions to be true because the psychologists conclusions have come not only from Scripture but also from historical psychological information, observations of humanity, as well as insight from the Spirit. The psychologist, from the transformational psychology perspective, can move forward with confidence and authority.<sup>97</sup>

**Hope related to transformational psychology.** As this brief discussion of transformational psychology comes to a close, it should be noted, if not already observed, that the major emphasis of transformational psychology is on the character of the psychologist over and above anything else. Coe and Hall pointedly state,

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<sup>93</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 202.

<sup>94</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 203-4.

<sup>95</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 203.

<sup>96</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 206-7.

<sup>97</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 209-11.

The psychologist does psychology well to the degree that the psychologist as a person is more and more transformed into the image of Christ by the filling of the Holy Spirit (the *person* as foundational), the psychologist is using his or her abilities in God to observe and reflect correctly on the reality of the person (the *process*), and that the psychologist is capable of producing a body of knowledge and wisdom concerning the nature of persons, sin and well-being, for the sake of the world and the church, that corresponds to reality (the *theoretical product*), as well as for the end of the transformation of the psychologist (the *existential product*).<sup>98</sup>

The character and development of the psychologist as being primary is what makes transformational psychology very distinct from Christian integrationism and Christian psychology. Where Christian integrationism and Christian psychology focus on and make primary the process and product of the individual psychologies, transformational psychology makes the one doing the psychology the focus of the system. While many different psychological approaches and counseling techniques caution the practitioner to examine him or herself, especially past experiences, transformational psychology appears to be one of the only psychological practices which mandates that the practitioner be a Christian and filled with the Spirit. For the one struggling with pedophilia, a strong Christian who is filled with and led by the Holy Spirit is going to be vital to the success of the counseling. Ideals, principles, and even practices which are devoid of a loving relationship guided by the Bible and the Spirit simply will not work. The pedophile needs a discipler/mentor/shepherd who is led by God Himself as he seeks to help lead the pedophile. On this particular note, transformational psychology appears to have a proverbial leg up on Christian integrationism and Christian psychology.

Another hopeful aspect of transformational psychology is the goal. The goal of transformational psychology, as stated by Coe and Hall, is “love through union with the Holy Spirit, by which one loves God and neighbor and glorifies God.”<sup>99</sup> Whether transformational psychology meets this goal is up for debate, but the stated goal of loving God and neighbor through a union with the Holy Spirit is a noble goal to strive for. In the

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<sup>98</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 212.

<sup>99</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 212.

case of those struggling with pedophilic attractions and temptations, loving God and loving neighbor is a vital component. The psychologist must love God, which means loving and obeying God's Word as Jesus commanded in John 14:15. As a "sage"<sup>100</sup> who longs to help others understand the best way to live according to God, the one practicing transformational psychology will look to the wisdom literature of the Bible and give not only descriptions but prescriptions, which are both authoritative as well as helpful.

Transformational psychology also offers a different goal from Christian integrationism and Christian psychology. Both Christian integrationism and Christian psychology offer becoming a well-balanced person as the goal of therapy. The goal appears to be self-focused. On the other hand, transformational psychology has the glory of God through loving God and loving neighbor as the goal.<sup>101</sup> This is a root and fruit type of distinction. For Christian integrationism and Christian psychology, the root or primary goal of counseling is to produce a counselee or patient who is well-being and well-balanced. To arrive at that goal, one might do things which are loving toward God and others, but the actions are carried out to accomplish well-being. For the TP, the root or primary goal is loving God and loving others. Becoming a well-balanced person could perhaps be a fruit of that goal, but it is not the goal in and of itself.

Correct primary goals are vital for someone struggling with pedophilia who wants to change. The goal cannot be to become a well-balanced being. The goal must be outside of the person struggling. The goal must not be connected to the sin or the self; instead, it must have as its goal something outside of self. Transformational psychology attempts to offer that kind of selfless goal.

Finally, transformational psychology is intensely relational in its approach to counseling. Because transformational psychology believes and teaches that

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<sup>100</sup> Coe and Hall, "A Transformational Psychology View," 208.

<sup>101</sup> Coe and Hall, "A Transformational Psychology View," 212.

science/psychology and Christianity are one singular “Christian reality,” the idea of “doctor/patient” are not prevalent nor are the practices which accompany such ideas.<sup>102</sup> With Christian integrationism and Christian psychology there is the tendency to approach counseling from a “professional” perspective, keeping doctor and patient separate relationally speaking. The relationship that tends to exist between the transformational psychologist and counselee is one of sage and follower. This style of relationship has care and community built into it from the start. For the one struggling with pedophilic attractions, the sterile doctor/patient relationship will not be helpful. The pedophile will need someone who genuinely cares for and loves him as well as God.

**Dangers related to transformational psychology.** While transformational psychology does appear to offer a different kind of psychology from Christian integrationism, Christian psychology, and secular psychology, at least two primary dangers accompany transformational psychology. The first and most significant danger is the mystical approach toward truth. Transformational psychology strongly emphasizes objective Scripture, but also puts a strong emphasis on personal experience. Regarding this personal experience, Coe and Hall state, “God has taken special care to reveal these truths in Scripture and, in part, in the believer’s experience.”<sup>103</sup> Continuing this line of reasoning, Coe and Hall write, “In our view, the character of the person doing psychology discovers and preserves the process and product of doing psychology by helping the said psychologist stay open to what is *real and true* [emphasis added].”<sup>104</sup> In describing mysticism, Norm Geisler says, “The word ‘mysticism’ is derived from the Greek word *mustikos*, meaning one initiated into the mysteries. Eventually, it was used in Christian circles as the branch of Christian theology that believes in the direct

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<sup>102</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 207.

<sup>103</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 205.

<sup>104</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 207.

communion of the soul with God.”<sup>105</sup> However, direct communion with God is something that is subjective and cannot be confirmed by anyone other than the one who experiences this communion. At this point, authority lies within the one claiming communion with God.

There are two dangers regarding this approach. First, every man born after Adam, apart from Christ, has been infected with sin. Theologically speaking, this is referred to as the Noetic effects of sin. Second, this approach gives ultimate authority to the “sage” or psychologist. The one with authority, the psychologist, can tell the one without authority, the patient, anything they wish. The options for the one without authority are blind acceptance or outright disobedience. For instance, if someone said, “God told me that you are to marry me,” the three options for the recipient are (1) accept the statement as truth and get married; (2) accept the statement as truth and disobey a command of God; or (3) reject the statement as truth, thus calling the one making the statement a liar. Combining the Noetic effects of sin with absolute authority is a recipe for disaster. For those struggling with pedophilic attractions, objective authoritative material existing outside of both the counselor and the counselee is needed. The pedophile needs to know the problem, the prognosis, the prescription, and the plan. If the knowledge of those categories only exists within the life of the psychologist, then the pedophile is dependent upon that person for everything needed for life and godliness. This seems to fly in the face of 2 Peter 1:3.

Transformational psychology also promotes using one’s imagination on the part of the psychologist when it comes to understanding historical psychological approaches. Transformational psychology refers to this practice as “getting behind the veil.”<sup>106</sup> “Getting behind the veil” means going behind the scenes, so to speak, to see

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<sup>105</sup> Norman L. Geisler, “Mysticism,” in Benner and Hill, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, 516.

<sup>106</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 201.

what the original authors of Christian and psychological ideas would have been thinking in their day and age. One might argue that this is done through different hermeneutical process, but that is not what transformational psychology promotes. Regarding the phrase “getting behind the veil,” Coe and Hall state, “So this means, as a thought experiment, we suspend our commitment to historical approaches to doing psychology—secular and Christian.”<sup>107</sup> With this statement, transformational psychology is attempting to state that its proponents are able to put aside any thoughts or preconceived ideas that they may have based on what they have learned and observed and perceive unbiased thoughts afresh and anew. Coe and Hall admit that this is practically impossible: “Of course, it is impossible to do psychology a new, entirely apart from some tradition, as there is clearly a learning spiral between dependence on a tradition and learning from one’s mentors verses working behind the veil and doing one’s own observation and reflection.”<sup>108</sup> The reason for getting behind the veil is so that the psychologist does not get stuck in his approach toward the client by simply doing what someone in the past did at the particular time and place with a particular person who had a similar circumstance. However, to pretend or imagine how psychology was done by Aristotle, Aquinas, Calvin, Freud, Skinner, Ellis, Rogers, Bowlby, or Winnicott is an effort in futility. There simply is no way to know how psychology was done, if it was done at all.

So, what is the danger in this approach? The answer to the question once again harkens back to the idea of authority. If the psychologist can claim that he has some kind of approach toward any given problem that has not been tainted by anyone from the past, Christian or secular, then he has discovered/stumbled upon some sort of superior unadulterated answer. This is tantamount to Gnosticism which promoted a “special

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<sup>107</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 201.

<sup>108</sup> Coe and Hall, “A Transformational Psychology View,” 202.



knowledge” that only certain people had.<sup>109</sup> Without restating the dangers of transformational psychology and its mystical claim on authority, it is sufficient to say that the imaginative “being the veil” approach carries with it the ability to lead people astray and make false claims regarding truth which no one can deny due to the fact that the authority lies within the psychologist.

Once again, for those struggling with pedophilia, this is not a helpful approach at all. The pedophile needs to clearly understand, believe, and trust/obey God’s Word by the power of God’s Spirit. The pedophile will need someone to help him understand what God has commanded, but none of that information should reside within the counselor; rather, it should reside within the Bible.

Having examined the beliefs and practices of secular psychology as well as three different forms of Christian psychology, the discussion will now turn toward a biblical counseling approach toward pedophilia. This discussion will include the biblical counseling understanding of the problem, the prognosis, the prescription, and the plan.

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<sup>109</sup> Harold W. Attridge, “Gnosticism,” in *The Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*, ed. Paul J. Achtemeier (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1985), 349.

CHAPTER 4  
BIBLICAL COUNSELING APPROACH  
TOWARD PEDOPHILIA

A Biblical Counseling (BC) approach toward helping those struggling with pedophilic attraction will be examined in this chapter. A few good books need to be highlighted which clearly define BC, the practices and principles of BC, as well as the historical path of BC beginning with Jay Adams. For brevity's sake, this chapter will only speak to the main differences of BC as compared to the previous counseling approaches mentioned thus far.

**Definition of Biblical Counseling**

As with other systems of counseling, a spectrum exists within the BC world. Each point on the spectrum represents slightly different emphases ranging from who should “practice”<sup>1</sup> BC, all the way to how one should interact or not interact with those who ascribe to other forms of counseling.<sup>2</sup> For instance, some biblical counselors offer paid counseling services, while others do not receive payment for services rendered. Some biblical counselors perform all counseling underneath the authority of the local church, while others have a private practice with no ecclesiastical authority. Some counselors are certified in the state in which they live and practice, while other counselors choose to not engage with state certification. While there are some minor

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<sup>1</sup> Practice is in quotations because the use of the word “practice” would be offensive to some counselors in the BC movement. The word is used to denote those who are actively involved in counseling from those who might promote BC but not necessarily be involved in counseling.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Kellemen published an abbreviated transcript from a Biblical Counseling Coalition discussion in which key leaders from the BC movement gave definitions of what constitutes BC. These fourteen definitions can be found at Bob Kellemen, “15 Definitions of Biblical Counseling,” *RPM Ministries*, September 12, 2011, <https://rpmministries.org/2011/09/15-definitions-of-biblical-counseling/>.

differences, three key unifying principles are distinct to BC. David Powlison, former executive director of the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation (CCEF), offers the following definition, which serves to best incorporate what BC is as well as key elements found within BC:

Counseling is one part of the overall ministry of Christ that meets us publicly, privately, and interpersonally. The public means of grace—preaching, teaching, the Lord’s Supper, worship, and fellowship—meet people in crowds. You never have to attach anyone’s name to it, but the Holy Spirit is able to personalize the public ministry of the gospel and the truth of the Lord. Then there is the private ministry of the Word of Truth. This is your own prayer life, meditation on and study of Scripture, application, journaling, and your own implementation and meditations of the heart. Finally, biblical counseling is part of the interpersonal ministry of the Word. God means for us to bear each other’s burdens. It’s a good goal to become more competent at self-counsel, the private ministry, but we always need other people. We need their prayers, encouragement, and insight. There may be something you have said to yourself a hundred times, but then you hear it from the lips of someone else, and the Holy Spirit chooses to work. Hearing it from another person’s voice makes it come to life. Wise counseling brings that personalized relevance of interpersonal ministry of the eternal Word of Truth that turns our lives upside down and inside out.<sup>3</sup>

While this definition is longer than some definitions given by other members of the BC movement, Powlison highlights three key components that comprise all types of BC: Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and the church. Each of these key elements will be examined as well as how these elements differ from each of the psychological approaches examined thus far.

### **The Sufficiency of Scripture**

One of the most prominent features of BC is the belief that Scripture is completely sufficient when dealing with issues of suffering and sin, i.e., the types of issues most commonly dealt with in counseling. While sources that fall outside of Scripture might be helpful for BC, belief in the sufficiency of Scripture means that one is fully convinced that Scripture contains all that is necessary for both the counselor and the

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<sup>3</sup> Bob Kellemen, “David Powlison’s Definition of Biblical Counseling,” RPM Ministries, March 11, 2013, <https://rpmministries.org/2013/03/5-definitions-of-biblical-counseling>.

counselee for lasting, permanent, Christ-like change to take place.<sup>4</sup> In his book *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, Heath Lambert mentions four different categories of sufficiency that allow for the Bible to be the only source needed for biblical counselors: progressive sufficiency, completed sufficiency, formal sufficiency, and material sufficiency.<sup>5</sup>

Of these four categories, Lambert states that material sufficiency is the only category which has been the primary area of disagreement between biblical counselors and all other forms of Christian psychologists.<sup>6</sup> In unpacking the idea of material sufficiency, Lambert refers to general and particular forms of material sufficiency. General material sufficiency refers to the idea that “God has told us everything we need to know about his perspective on every single topic we could consider.”<sup>7</sup> This is not saying that everything there is to know about any given subject is found in Scripture, rather, God had told Christians everything they need to know about his perspective on any given issue. For instance, all of the information regarding flowers is not found in the Bible; however, all of the information regarding how a florist should do his job for the glory of God is found in the Bible. Topics such as motivations, desires, goals, and other ideas are clearly spoken about in Scripture. Additionally, topics such as how to treat customers, employees, and other such personnel issues are found in Scripture. While the list could go on, it is enough to state that Scripture is sufficient enough to give the reader

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the word *change* might be defined differently within each of the different psychologies examined in this thesis. Due to the fact that this thesis is not a comparison of the different psychologies, time will not be devoted to examining the differences regarding the changes sought, but it is necessary to mention that each counseling theory defines *change* differently.

<sup>5</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 43-48.

<sup>6</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 48.

<sup>7</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 49.

“God’s perspective on any issue.”<sup>8</sup> In addition to a general aspect of material sufficiency, Lambert highlights a particular aspect of material sufficiency. Lambert states that particular material sufficiency indicates that while God has sufficiently given his thoughts on all of life, he has given much more detailed information in his Word on a few specific or particular issues, such as the doctrine of God, how to become saved, and issues of morality.<sup>9</sup> A cursory reading of Scripture would allow any reader to see that this is a true observation. Deciding which items fall within the purview of particular material might be up for debate, but it is fairly easy to conclude that God has given much more detailed thoughts regarding some issues over and above other issues. While more could be said regarding the sufficiency of Scripture, it is enough to state that biblical counselors believe that Scripture is completely sufficient for everything pertaining to life and godliness, as 2 Peter 1:3 states.<sup>10</sup>

Three major implications regarding the sufficiency of Scripture need to be highlighted as these three implications are what allow for BC to be the better approach when it comes to helping those struggling with pedophilia. First and foremost, sufficiency of Scripture means that biblical counselors have God’s very thoughts on what is right and what is wrong. Having God’s very thoughts grants divine authority to the counseling given in the room; authority which exists outside the counselor as well as outside the counselee. God’s views regarding sexual thoughts, words, and behavior pertaining to pedophilia will never change, regardless of what direction the *DSM* or society decide to take.

Additionally, believing in the sufficiency of Scripture allows the one struggling with pedophilia to know the best course of action for his life. The first question of the

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<sup>8</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 49.

<sup>9</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 51.

<sup>10</sup> Lambert has written in much more detail regarding the sufficiency of Scripture in chap. 2 of *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*. To keep this chapter focused on a biblical counseling approach toward pedophilia, an extensive discussion of this key component of biblical counseling has been shortened.

Westminster Confession of Faith asks, “What is the chief end of man.” Another way to ask that question would be, “What is a person supposed to do in this life.” The answer is, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”<sup>11</sup> His answer has a solid Scripture base of 1 Corinthians 10:31 and 2 Corinthians 5:9 as an undergirding. God’s thoughts regarding a well-functioning human are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Believing in the sufficiency of Scripture allows for the pedophile to look beyond his pedophilic struggles and aim for not only bringing God honor and glory, but also to enjoy God. Both of those goals will have a massive effect on his ability to fight pedophilic sin.

Finally, believing in the sufficiency of Scripture also gives direction to the counseling. Direction can come in the form of how one should live (holiness), but it can also come in the form of what should be done when someone thinks, says, or does something that God says not to do, i.e., repentance. While obedience to what God states in his Word can be harder at times than at others, it is not hard to figure out what he has commanded and what he has not commanded. God’s Word is very clear regarding sexual sin.<sup>12</sup> For the one struggling with pedophilia, knowing that pedophilia is a sin to be avoided at all costs is at the very least a standard to live by. Not only is God’s Word clear regarding a sexual standard, God’s Word is also clear regarding repentance.<sup>13</sup> Knowing that God has provided clear instructions for the pedophile when sin has been committed on one level or another allows for the pedophile to respond in humility and openness instead of hiding in shame.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Edinburgh ed. (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 165.

<sup>12</sup> Matt 5:27-30; Col 3:5-7; Matt 15:19-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Eph 5:3-17; Rom 6:15-23; 1 Thess 4:3-6.

<sup>13</sup> Luke 7:27-32; Matt 4:17; Mark 7:20-23; 2 Cor 7:10-11; Isa 55:6-7; Ezek 14:1-11, 18:30-32, Rom 2:5-11; Mal 3:7, Matt 5:4; 2 Chron 7:14.

<sup>14</sup> More will be said regarding holiness and repentance later in this chapter.

**How BC differs from secular psychology.** BC differs from secular psychology regarding the application of the sufficiency of Scripture in two very different ways. Most notably, secular psychology does not recognize Scripture as authoritative for anything scientific. With that in mind, not much needs to be said with regard to secular psychology and its view on the sufficiency of Scripture. Referencing back to chapter 1, religion and science, from a secular perspective, are not only opposites, but religion and all books associated with it can often cause issues that secular psychology is trying to fix. Therefore, secular psychology would not agree with BC that Scripture is sufficient for anything that falls within the sphere of psychology and counseling, especially issues related to pedophilia.

Second, without a sufficient authoritative source defining what is right and wrong without immutability, secular psychology will always be shooting for a target that it simply cannot hit. The reason is that the minds of man change from one age to another. A good example of this was referenced in chapter 1 under the section entitled “Understanding Pedophilia.” That section gave a brief unpacking of the term *paraphilia*. Of the five different paraphilia’s mentioned, four had moved away from being viewed as “disorders” and had become widely accepted and even celebrated. The one paraphilia which is still taboo and not accepted is pedophilia. Should the one struggling simply hold on, wait, and hope that this too changes in the minds of those around him? Does a change in the minds of culture actually move thoughts, words, and actions from wrong to right? And if so, should the one struggling simply make plans to find a culture in which those thoughts, words, and activities are accepted or at least not punished as severely? Those are valid questions to ask when standards of conduct are on the thoughts of those in the majority. BC offers a standard that simply does not change. It is a holy immutable standard, i.e., it offers a way of life which does not change. BC also holds an answer when that standard is broken, i.e., it offers hope.

## **Vital Importance of the Holy Spirit**

Not only is the Bible a key component of BC, but the role of the Holy Spirit is also viewed as vital for success when it comes to BC. From the earliest outset of formalized BC,<sup>15</sup> the role of the Holy Spirit in the counseling process has been highlighted as vital. In speaking to this, Jay Adams states, “Counseling is the work of the Holy Spirit. Effective counseling cannot be done apart from him.”<sup>16</sup> Adding to the concrete statement from Adams, Lambert writes, “The Bible does not work automatically and on its own as the sacred words wash over people. The Word of God is only effective when the Spirit of God renders it effective in the lives of individuals.”<sup>17</sup> True biblical change takes place only when the Spirit of God takes the Word of God and, in effect, turns the light bulb on or illuminates the mind of both the counselor and the counselee. In short, the Holy Spirit living in the counselor and the counselee is actually the moving force in the counseling office causing changes to happen in thoughts, affections, and behaviors. This does not in any way, shape, or form remove responsibility from the counselor or the counselee from doing the hard work.

This concept is highlighted in Philippians 2:12-13 when the apostle Paul states, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” In these two verses both God’s efforts as well as man’s efforts are highlighted as vital for obedience. If God, through the Holy Spirit, does not work, then change will not happen. Likewise, if man does not actively take a role in working out his salvation, change will not take place. Both the Spirit and man’s efforts are needed for change to take place.

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<sup>15</sup> Formalized biblical counseling refers to the initial works of Jay Adams in his books *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970); and *The Christian Counselor’s Manual* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973).

<sup>16</sup> Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 161.



Lambert emphasizes six different roles of the Holy Spirit in the counseling office which deserve to be highlighted: conviction, indwelling, teaching, empowering, gifting, and glorifying.<sup>18</sup> Each of these roles is vital to the overall change process for the counselee. If the Holy Spirit does not convict, then there is no hope of change. Guilt and consequences will only go so far in keeping someone from going back to their sin. This is especially true with sexual sin, including pedophilia. The apostle Paul also speaks to this in 1 Corinthians 6: 18 when he isolates sexual sin from all other sins by stating that the one who commits sexual sin sins against his own body.

A massive implication regarding this aspect of BC is that not just anyone can sit down using whatever method desired and bring about Christ-like change. This is true for both the counselor and the counselee. Unless the Holy Spirit is at work in the life of the counselor illuminating the Scriptures in such a way as to allow the counselor to understand how the biblical truths connect to the issue at hand, the thoughts and words of the counselor will be nothing more than his own thoughts and ideas. Those personal thoughts might have been learned from others, as in the case of students of psychology, or they could be one's own creative and imaginative thoughts. Likewise, if the Holy Spirit is not at work within the counselee, then there is no hope of Christ-like change, regardless of how bad the counselee wants to change. He could try and implement many different psychological techniques, but true change simply will not take place unless the Holy Spirit changes the heart.

**How BC differs from secular psychology.** As with the role of Scripture, SP does not place any value on the role of the Holy Spirit in the change process as the Holy Spirit is purely a religious concept that has no bearing on science. Keeping with the devaluation of Scripture, not much needs to be said with regard to SP and its view on the role of the Holy Spirit. Plain and simple, the role of the Holy Spirit has no place in SP.

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<sup>18</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 160-74.

Before moving on from SP, however, two important differences need to be emphasized that make BC a better option for pedophiles. First and foremost, BC offers a far superior counselor than SP. As God Himself is responsible to convict, indwell, teach, empower, gift, and glorify, the roles of the counselor and counselee shift from trying to understand causality to understanding what it looks like to live a new life in Christ. This does not mean that BC ignores past suffering, broken bodies, and other such issues that might influence someone toward pedophilic attractions. Indeed, biblical counselors should work hard to figure out what role the past has played in the life of the pedophile. However, unlike leading counselors within the secular psychological community that admit to not knowing what causes pedophilia (see chap. 1, “Michael Seto”), BC proclaims to have a Counselor who knows the cause of pedophilia as well as the answer for those who struggle with such sins.

Another massive difference is the amount of weight applied to both the counselor and the counselee in the change process. SP requires that an expert in the field of pedophilia and sexual addiction be the one responsible for all of the counseling. The success of the counseling process lies with the knowledge and experience of the one in charge of the counseling. Since SP admits that it does not know the origins of pedophilia, there is a lot of room left for error to take place. Past experiences not correctly understood, behaviors not fully unpacked, hidden desires left unchecked, and much more create a situation in which the counselor must spend large amounts of time and energy hoping to uncover all that needs to be uncovered so that change can take place. Likewise, all of the energy required for the change process is required of the counselee. There can be no “off” days; days in which all protocols are not followed meticulously, moments when children are closer than they are supposed to be, or probationary mandates are not kept flawlessly. While BC does not pretend to know what SP does not know, BC does have the omniscient Holy Spirit who is convicting, indwelling, teaching, empowering, gifting, and glorifying

within the counseling. To have that kind of Counselor at work, especially with complex sins such as pedophilia, is a superior kind of counseling.

### **Vital Importance of the Church**

One final vital distinguishing aspect of BC from SP, as well as other Christian psychologies, is the importance of the church for the success of counseling. By way of clarification, the church should be understood to be the collection of the body of believers who have been called unto salvation by Jesus Christ. The Greek word for church is *ekklēsia* and carries with it the meaning of an assembly of Christians with leaders who conform to standards, contain worship practices, and have local active members.<sup>19</sup> The church is not a building nor a denomination, although believers very often meet in buildings and belong to denominations. The church should be understood to be diverse, universal, and eternal.

Being diverse means that the church contains members of humanity both male and female, from all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds. Being diverse also means that the church consists of people who were raised with different standards of living both within the immediate family structure as well as within differing political structures. Some Christians were raised in relatively strict homes with very little opportunity to divert from parental oversight while others existed in very permissive homes allowing many different types of thoughts and activities to co-exist. Diversity also points to differing socio-economic situations. Some Christians understand life with little economic means while others have lived life with great means. Diversity also speaks to different aspects of brokenness. Some Christians come into the world with different types of brokenness, such as Down Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and other genetic dysfunctions. Others are broken as a result of sin and suffering in this world, such as living in a war-torn region

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<sup>19</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), s.v. “ekklēsia.”

of the world with vast amounts of violence or growing up in an urban setting with gang warfare.

For the one struggling with pedophilia, or any other sexual addiction for that matter, diversity amongst the Christian church is actually a breath of fresh air. Diversity lives in Romans 3:23 when the apostle Paul says, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Paul does not exclude anyone nor any kind of sin from this all-inclusive passage. The one who has gossiped is just as guilty as the one who lied. The one who murdered is just as guilty as the one who got sinfully angry. The one who thought about committing adultery is just as guilty as the one who committed adultery. Diversity, then, places everyone in the same boat regarding sin. To be sure, not everyone committed the same sin to the same degree. The end result, however, is the same; namely, falling short of the glory of God. When fully embraced by the church, this communal atmosphere is actually one of great inclusivity as opposed to exclusivity. The one struggling with pedophilic attractions should feel embraced and included in the church as opposed to shunned and excluded.

The church is also universal. The church contains people from all over the world with all kinds of traditions, political affiliations, governmental ideations, and so forth. Some Christians come from the tradition of singing hymns on Sunday morning with thousands of other believers in open freedom while others are forced to meet in small groups on any day of the week that will allow them to remain unseen by the political powers who rule over them. Some Christians do not believe in the use of any kind of music that has a syncopated beat while others use tribal drums and dance as their form of worship. Some Christians believe in cremating the dead out of being a good steward toward the earth while other believers would never cremate deceased Christians because of the message it would send to their Buddhist and Hindu neighbors. Believing the church to be diverse and universal means that there are believers from all over the world with myriad

different backgrounds with a broad swath of beliefs yet still unified around the central message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For the one struggling with pedophilia, the church being universal is also a breath of fresh air. Understanding, accepting, and applying the truth that there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus is a game changer for those struggling with pedophilic attractions (Gal 3:28). The universality that is true of the Christian church means that the pedophilic struggler is never far from a fellow believer. As has already been stated in chapter 1 in multiple locations, shame and isolation are part of the experience for the one struggling with pedophilic attractions. Understanding the universality of the church means that when someone feels shame, isolation, or even temptation, that person can literally find a fellow believer regardless of what city, state, or country in which they find themselves.<sup>20</sup>

Not only is the church diverse and universal, but it is also eternal. Believers past, present, and future will one day spend eternity with Jesus.<sup>21</sup> This eternity will be devoid of anything connected to brokenness and sin. The eternity means that those who once persecuted the church, as the apostle Paul did, will be together with those who struggle with pedophilic attractions. Those who committed sinful acts of the worst kind will live together with those who committed sinful acts of the common kind. Eternity does not begin one day in the future; instead, it begins the day one places his/her faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the gospel. Current struggles with pedophilic attractions and all of the associated shame and isolation that accompanies such a struggle

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<sup>20</sup> This statement does not discount the fact that many professing Christians would not respond biblically to someone confessing their struggles with pedophilia. More than likely, some professing Christians would respond in one unbiblical form or another when faced with someone sharing their pedophilic struggles. This is one of the very reasons for the writing of this thesis—to make the church aware of what a proper response should be when someone confesses to pedophilic struggles of shame, isolation, or even temptation. A negative response by some does not negate the hope found in the universality of the church.

<sup>21</sup> Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25; John 17:3; 2 Pet 1:11; John 5:24; John 3:15; 1 John 5:11; Jude 21; 1 Tim 6:12; Titus 3:7.

will come to an end. Life with Jesus and fellow brothers and sisters is all that will remain. All believers anticipate and hope for eternal community with Jesus and other believers devoid of anything selfish.

The church being eternal, universal, and diverse means that the church offers the great chance of inclusivity for the one struggling with pedophilic attraction. as Figure 1 expresses. The Christian pedophilic struggler could place himself within the three circles at any point within the diagram and he is included. In opposition, there is no point in time in which he would fall outside of any of these three circles. Inclusion creates a great amount of hope. Hope that he is included and identifies with a diverse, universal, eternal group of believers who are all progressing in their holiness. The identity of those within this group is not in what they have done; rather, who they are seeking to emulate.

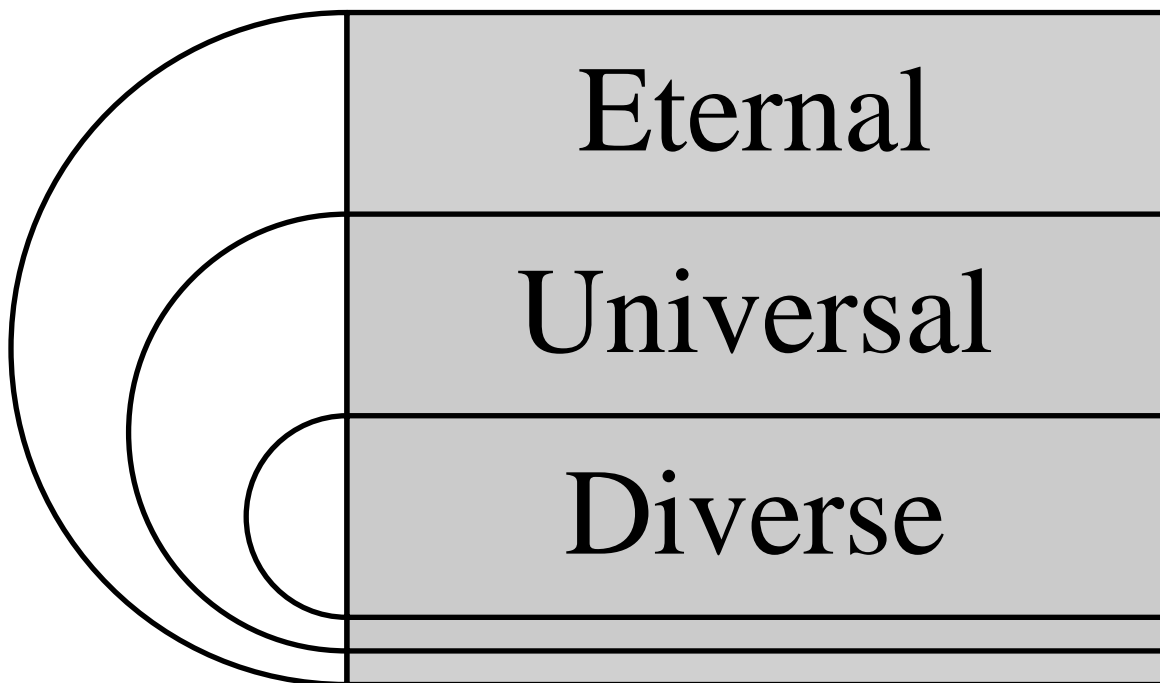


Figure 1. Inclusivity of the church

**How BC differs from secular psychology.** In short, when community is offered, SP offers a community which is the opposite of the church. Therapeutic groups are not diverse, universal, and eternal. Instead, they tend to be homogenous, limited, and

antiquated. They are homogenous in that the groups consist of men who basically struggle identically. The group is limited in that the struggling pedophile cannot reach out to anyone else other than those in the group and/or the counselor/therapist who runs the group. The group is antiquated in that it exists for those in the group and that is it. The idea of the group moving on into eternity does not factor in a goal for the group. SP and the communal groups associated with SP are exclusive, not inclusive. The identity assumed by those in the group can be nothing short of a pedophile in remission. While this condition is more hopeful than a pedophile acting on his temptations, it is hardly hopeful for the struggling Christian.

### **Pedophilic Origins**

The discussion will now turn from a comparison of BC and all other forms of psychology toward how BC approaches the concept of pedophilia and those who struggle with attractions to pre-pubescent children. The first part of this discussion will be broken down into two different categories: primary causes and secondary influences. Primary causes refer to those things that directly *cause* pedophilic tendencies. Secondary *influences*, on the other hand, refer to circumstances or situations that influence and exacerbate the temptation toward pedophilic behavior. While it will be important for the pedophilic struggler to repent when it comes to issues of sin in both categories of primary causality as well as secondary influences, it is important for the counselee to understand what he is responsible for (sin) as opposed to what he is not responsible for (suffering). Steve Viars explains this difference well in his book *Putting Your Past In Its Place*. In attempting to parse out the importance of these differences, Viars presents a graph that allows the counselee to see where he or she is guilty of sin needing repentance and where he or she is persevering under suffering and needs encouragement.<sup>22</sup> Requiring repentance

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<sup>22</sup> Steven Viars, *Putting Your Past in Its Place* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011), 68.

when encouragement is needed and giving encouragement when repentance is needed could be devastating in both this life as well as the life to come (see figure 2).

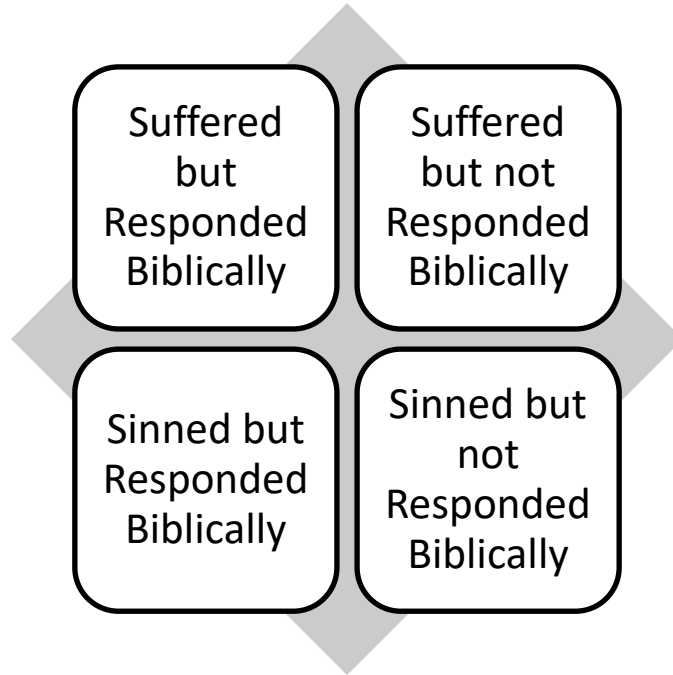


Figure 2. Responses to suffering and sin

### Primary Causes

**Original sin.** Generally speaking, the reason one struggles with pedophilic attractions is because he was created with a disposition toward sin. Original sin refers to the state that all mankind has been born into as a result of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. To understand this condition, two different verses in the book of Genesis need to be examined: Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 5:3. In Genesis 1:27, God declares that he made man in His own image. The man that he made, who was representative of all of mankind, both male and female, was Adam. Shortly after the creation of Adam, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and He created Eve. Both Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden and communed with God and one another without sin. Genesis 3 is the account of sin entering into the world through the actions of Adam and Eve, thus bringing sin to all mankind. Generally speaking, there was a fundamental change in the disposition of Adam



and Eve toward God. Lambert states, “Sin is a disposition of human beings that leads to a failure to conform to the moral law of God. Notice that sin is a disposition. Human beings have a nature that is oriented away from God. Sin does not just describe the bad things human beings do or fail to do. More fundamentally, it describes who we are as wicked people.”<sup>23</sup>

Genesis 3 also describes the consequences of the sinful disobedience of Adam and Eve; namely, having selfish, blaming, deceitful hearts that avoid the presence of God. Genesis 4, then, gives an account of what this new heart looks like as seen through the jealous and murderous experience of Cain toward Abel. Cain’s disposition reflected the sinful disposition created in Adam when he ate the fruit.

In case one was left to wonder if the disposition seen in Cain was the new normal, God highlights this fundamental change in Genesis 5. Genesis 5:1 starts to read just like Genesis 1:27 when it says, “When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.” One would expect to read the following sentence to read, “When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in *God’s* likeness.” If Adam was made to image God, then Adam’s offspring would have been made to image God as well, unless a fundamental change had taken place in Adam thus tainting the image, rendering it different than the original image. Such was the case with Adam, which is why Genesis 5:3 states, “When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in *his own* image.” This new image did not reflect the original Maker; instead, it imaged someone new, someone different. This new image was passed on from parent to parent, generation after generation. This new disposition is mentioned again in Romans 5:12-14 when Paul states that through one man (Adam) sin and death entered into the world.

For the one struggling with pedophilic attractions then, the origin of those attractions ultimately stems back to the disposition toward God he inherited as a result of

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<sup>23</sup> Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 216.

Adam's sin in the garden. Having this disposition from conception does not in any way, shape, or form remove responsibility from the one struggling with pedophilic attractions (Ps 51:4). Instead, this allows the pedophile to own this disposition, ask for forgiveness, and repent. One does not have to spend time wondering if conditioning from the past, sexual abuse, neurological defects, or any other circumstance outside of one's own control are to blame for the attractions. This would in effect make one a slave to one's past. Additionally, understanding and owning the idea of original sin includes all of humanity. All of humanity struggles with a sinful disposition. As Steve Gallagher, a biblical counselor specializing in sexual sin, states, "There's not a person alive who doesn't have to overcome some inherent attraction to sin. The fact that some individuals have a propensity towards homosexual lust shouldn't surprise us. Homosexual lust is a result—either directly or indirectly—of the fall."<sup>24</sup> Original sin frees someone up to own when they sin and make the appropriate confessions and changes, i.e., repent, without feeling like he is the only sinner in the world.

### **The Human Heart**

The truth of original sin, while freeing in many respects, is just too general a concept to be helpful in a particular way. The concept of original sin points one in the right direction, but more particular material is needed for clarity to be given to the one who is struggling. Clarity comes as one understands the role his heart plays moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day regarding the decisions he makes.

**How the heart operates.** While many verses speak to the manner in which the human heart operates, two verses stand out as primary: Jeremiah 17:9 and Mark 7:14-21. Jeremiah 17:9 declares that the human heart is deceitful above all things, desperately

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<sup>24</sup> Steve Gallagher, *A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict* (Dry Ridge, KY: Pure Life Ministries, 2004), 107.

sick, and unknowable.<sup>25</sup> The deceitfulness of the human heart means that it will conceal real motives behind thoughts and actions. This is perhaps one of the scariest truths regarding the human heart. Unless God changes the disposition of the heart, words and actions might change, but *they might not*. Words and actions might change for a while if enough pressure is applied, but when the pressure is relaxed and life returns to normal, the disposition behind the pedophilic attractions will return as well. As Proverbs 26:11 states, “Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.” Jeremiah 17:9, therefore, serves as a strong warning. If words and behaviors change, but the disposition toward God does not, the likelihood of a reversion back toward pedophilic attractions is very high. Often, a return of the attractions will give way to acting on those attractions as highlighted by Matthew 12:43-45. In this verse, an evicted unclean spirit returns with seven other unclean spirits making the “state of that person worse than the first.”

Not only is the heart deceitful, but it is desperately sick. The idea presented here is that the heart is incurable. Just as the patient with Congestive Heart Failure needs a new heart, so each human born needs a new spiritual heart. The condition is terminal and without cure, apart from a new heart. F. B. Huey states, “The human heart has an unlimited capacity for wickedness and deceit so that human resources are incapable of dealing with it. The only remedy is radical change, nothing less than rebirth.”<sup>26</sup> While SP might try CBT or some form of chemical castration (see chap. 1, “Treatment of Pedophilia”), the truth of Jeremiah 17:9 is that the heart is incurable. Nothing can be done to save it from the sinful disposition in which it was created.

Finally, the human heart is unknowable. When applied to the one with pedophilic attractions, Jeremiah 17:9 paints an utterly hopeless outcome for the pedophile

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<sup>25</sup> Benjamin Wallace Marshall, “Teenagers and Homosexuality: An Aid for Parents” (MABC thesis, The Master’s University, 2007), 44-46.

<sup>26</sup> F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, The New American Commentary, vol. 16 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 174.

when approached from all other forms of therapy. This verse claims that everyone ever made in the image of Adam is born deceitful and wicked with the inability to understand their own heart. There is not a person alive who has the ability to understand why someone has the lusts and attractions that they have, let alone why others have specific desires and attractions. The counselor's heart is deceitful and sick as well as the counselee's, and both are unable to understand why they do what they do. Jeremiah 17:10 clarifies this truth by stating, "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruits of his deeds." Aside from God changing the disposition of the heart, there simply is no hope for the one who struggles with pedophilic attractions.

If Jeremiah 17:9 was not clear enough, Jesus makes the role of the human heart crystal clear in Mark 7:14-21. In these verses, Jesus says that everything anyone does comes from inside the person. The inner man, the spiritual heart, is control central for each and every person. This means that there are no slips of the tongue, accidental decisions, nor actions taken that did not first go through the filter of that person's heart receiving the "okay" signal to proceed. If someone is cut off while driving, and he responds with the middle finger, that behavior originated in the heart. If one returns hateful words with a slap on the face, that action originated in the heart. Many more verses could be examined to prove the truth that the heart is control central for every human being, but these two verses will suffice.<sup>27</sup>

For the pedophile, then, his desires, attractions, and lusts all originate within his heart. This is the area that he must examine according to Scripture and change by the power of the Holy Spirit and with the help of the church. Attempting to change the heart aside from this recipe will only rearrange a heart that is deceitful, incurable, and unknowable. Much like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic will not stop the ship

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<sup>27</sup> First Sam 16:7; Prov 4:23, 27:19; Jer 11:20; Matt 6:21, 12:34; 1 Cor 4:5; Rev 2:23.

from sinking, rearranging the desires of a heart that has an anti-God disposition will not change selfish, blaming-shifting, deceitful hearts.

**Exchange of worship.** In continuing to expose how the spiritual heart operates, it is key to note that the heart's primary function is that of worship. The idea of worship is mentioned multiple times throughout Scripture and false worship appears to be one of the primary problems that Scripture addresses over and over.<sup>28</sup> First Corinthians 10:31 as well as 2 Corinthians 5:9 both speak to the primacy of worship in every person's life. It has been said that worship is not what humans do but it is who humans are. One does not necessarily need to believe in the Bible to understand that it is a basic operation for the human to worship. Consider a quote attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson which states,

A person will worship something, have no doubt about that. We may think that our tribute is paid in secret in the dark recesses of our heart, but it will [come] out. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming.<sup>29</sup>

While this quote is not inerrant Scripture, it does seem to agree with the psalmist who, when talking about those who make idols out of silver and gold, states, "Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them" (Ps 115:4-8). Worship is the primary operation of the spiritual heart, therefore what the heart worships will be a primary factor when seeking to help someone change. Paul Tripp expresses this primary function of the heart: "Human beings by their very nature are worshippers. Worship is not something we do; it defines who we are. You cannot divide human beings into those who worship and those who don't. Everybody worships; it's just a matter of what, or whom, we serve."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> David Powlison, "Idols of the Heart and Vanity Fair," *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 35.

<sup>29</sup> Chaim Stern, *Gates of Prayer: The New Union of Prayer* (Philadelphia: CCAR Press, 1975), 240.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002), 44.

Before particularly applying this understanding of the heart to those struggling with pedophilia, it is important to highlight Romans 1:18-32 as this passage speaks to the ultimate reason people struggle with addictive types of sin. This passage outlines five distinct steps for everyone who exchanges the worship of God for the worship of an idol.<sup>31</sup> Step 1, found in Romans 1:21, is a denial of honor and thanks, or a lack of worshipping God. Tom Schreiner highlights, “The fundamental sin is a failure to worship. All other sin is a consequence of this one. The fundamental truth of the universe is that God exists and that he should be worshipped and served and his name should be praised.”<sup>32</sup> It is important to note that Paul does not state when this denial of worship can first happen. If the spiritual heart functions from the point of conception, as David indicates in Psalm 51:4, then it is possible that this denial of worship could happen at any age. And if this is true, then the following four steps could very conceivably happen before someone is even a year, a month, or even a day old. For this reason alone someone could have early onset pedophilic attractions.

Step 2, found in Romans 1:21, is an exchanged reality. Paul moves on to state that the result of a refusal to worship is a futile mind with darkened hearts. This once again reflects the reality spoken of Jeremiah 17:9. A futile mind is one that is incapable of comprehending reality as it truly is. A darkened heart cannot spiritually see reality as it truly is. Combine these two concepts together and the outcome is devastating. The choice to leave the path one has chosen and turn to worship God simply is not an option. It is a hopeless trajectory. It should also be noted that this “futility of the mind” and “darkening of the heart” echoes the fact that an exchange of worship is what has taken place.<sup>33</sup> It is important to see the connectedness of all that happens in Romans 1:18-32 and the genesis

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<sup>31</sup> Marshall, “Teenagers and Homosexuality,” 50-54.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 91.

<sup>33</sup> Schreiner, *Romans*, 87.

being an exchange of worship. These are not random culturally spurred thoughts from Paul; rather, he is giving a strong warning regarding the outcome of this exchange of worship.

Step 3, found in Romans 1:24, is an exchanged function. Having denied God the worship He is due, as well as becoming futile and blind in their mind and heart, the natural outcome, then, is to function differently. This natural outflow of futility of mind and darkness of heart is best understood as a natural reaction of God to such a horrible sin and not the natural outcome of man's actions apart from God's intervention. The latter understanding would remove God's involvement from this situation and make him a spectator watching the natural progression of man's choices take place. In stark contrast, God responds to the lack of worship with an intentional blinding of the heart and mind so as to make both the heart and the mind useless in functioning correctly. As C. E. B. Cranfield correctly states, "The thrice-repeated παρέδωκεν αὐτοῦς ὁ θεός is surely so emphatic as to suggest that a deliberate, positive act of God is meant."<sup>34</sup> Leon Morris in his commentary of Romans agrees with Cranfield: "God is active in the process whereby sins' consequences follow sin."<sup>35</sup> This is an important aspect when it comes to understanding that change cannot take place apart from the intervention of God Himself. No amount of therapy or even self-will can undo the condition that God Himself has placed on such a person.

Step 4, found in Romans 1:28-29, is an exchanged standard. As the descent into depravity continues, a new standard is erected. The new standard is the antithesis of the old standard, God's natural standard. The new standard appears to take God's original design and flip it on its head. Whatever was left, is now right. Whatever was up, is now down. In speaking to this aspect of worship exchange, John Stott says, "On the contrary,

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<sup>34</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of Romans*, International Critical Commentary (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2004), 120.

<sup>35</sup> Morris, *Epistle to the Romans*, 88.

*physis* ('natural') means God's created order. To act 'against nature' means to violate the order which God has established, whereas to act 'according to nature' means to behave in accordance with the intention of the Creator."<sup>36</sup> Specifically, women became attracted to women, men became attracted to men, and they were filled with all manner of unrighteousness. The equation to figure out the new standard was simple: whatever God said to do, do the opposite. To top it off, this standard was not a forced standard that they needed to force themselves to do. Instead, their inner man consisting of heart, mind, and conscience became convinced that this new standard was good and right. Morris speaks to this aspect of Romans 1:28:

Mind is the usual word for the thinking faculty, but it can mean the intellectual part of the conscience. It is sometimes combined with "conscience", as when we read of certain people that "both their minds and consciences are corrupted" (Titus 1:15). The result, then, of their refusal to accept the knowledge of God is seen in the way they came to think and the things that their consciences came to approve.<sup>37</sup>

This presents a devastating reality for those who have exchanged the worship of God for the worship of something else; namely, they are absolutely in love with what they are worshipping and have no inclination to move away from what they love. Unless God changes the inner structure of who they are, they will remain magnetically attached to that which they have come to worship.

Step 5, found in Romans 1:32, is an exchange of roles. This final step reveals the ultimate goal regarding the exchange of worship; namely, to become just like the gods they have erected. Romans 1:32 states, "Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them." This is an attempted role reversal on the part of those who refuse to worship God. They themselves want to become a sovereign god declaring good from bad, right from wrong, light from dark, i.e., a whole new world different from the

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<sup>36</sup> John Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 78.

<sup>37</sup> Morris, *Epistle to the Romans*, 94.



one God created. In this attempt to be godlike, they give hearty approval to those who partake in the actions that they themselves enjoy. Creating this whole new world order would then prove to be the final step that seeks to squeeze God out of every corner.

Highlighting this aspect, Cranfield states,

There is also the fact that those who condone and applaud such vicious actions of others are actually making a deliberate contribution to the setting up of a public opinion favourable [sic] to vice, and so to the corruption of an indefinite number of other people. So, for example, to excuse or gloss over the use of torture by security forces of the cruel injustices of racial discrimination and oppression, while not being involved in them directly, is to help to cloak monstrous evil with an appearance of respectability and so to contribute most effectively to its firmer entrenchment.<sup>38</sup>

A new world order, in fact, what has been seen in the United States over the past thirty plus years with the sexual revolution and paraphilias. Paul's depiction of what happens when the worship of God is exchanged for the worship of something else is just as valid today as it was in Paul's day.

**Conclusions regarding the origins of pedophilic attractions.** It is clear, then, that pedophilic attractions are caused by the worship of the human heart. This conclusion can perhaps be devastating upon first hearing, but actually proves to be the most hopeful when fully understood. For one to understand and accept that pedophilic attractions are not the result of anything outside of himself can bring intense shame and guilt. This is what Adam and Eve experienced in the Garden the moment that they sinned by eating the fruit. Their response was to hide from God and blame each other. Pedophilic attractions can provide the same kind of response for those who experience such attractions. It might seem kind and loving to blame the attractions on something outside of the person. However, that simply enslaves the pedophile to what has been outside of his control. Instead, embracing the truth of original sin and owning an exchange of worship is the beginning of truly changing into the image of Christ.

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<sup>38</sup> Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of Romans*, 135.

## Secondary Influences

While the primary cause of pedophilic attractions is the human heart tainted by original sin, secondary influences cannot be ignored as having a role in such attractions. As a reminder, these secondary influences are more akin to pouring gasoline on a fire that has already been lit. The result is a brighter more intense fire. However, if the fire had not first existed, the gasoline would have not produced a single thing. In similar fashion, if original sin had not created an exchange of worship, the following secondary influences would have a net zero effect.

The world in which the struggling pedophile lives is ruled by Satan and inhabited by billions of people who have exchanged the worship of God for the worship of something or someone else. This kind of influence is strong to say the least. While the following paragraphs include many different influences of the world, this is not an all-inclusive list.

**Philosophies of the world.** This world offers many different philosophies explaining ideas such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, and mind in myriad ways. While the scope of this thesis does not allow for the proper unpacking of even a small portion of the different philosophies found in the world, two philosophies are most problematic when it comes to issues dealing with pedophilia: postmodernism and hedonism. Gary Aylesworth defines Postmodernism as “a set of critical, strategic and rhetorical practices employing concepts such as difference, repetition, the trace, the simulacrum, and hyper-reality to destabilize other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning.”<sup>39</sup>

Summarizing what post-modernists believe, Dan Story states,

Postmodernists, on the other hand, see truth as wholly pluralistic and relativistic. They reject the concept of a universe where reality can be apprehended entirely through rational processes—human reasoning. There is no universal or absolute truth in any

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<sup>39</sup> Gary Aylesworth, “Postmodernism,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed September 2, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/postmodernism/>.

area of knowledge, including science, history, psychology, sociology, ethics, and religion. Postmodernists believe that truth has its source in human ideas and experiences, as interpreted through individual cultures, rather than in a source outside human thoughts and feelings—such as God. They assume that contradicting beliefs can be true at the same time—as they must, if truth depends on people, and people have different opinions on what is truth.<sup>40</sup>

When applied to the struggling pedophile, postmodernism would claim that there is no absolute truth, such as the truth proclaimed in Scripture. Specifically, there is no such thing as sexual sin outside of what the modernist Christian populace forced upon the surrounding culture. In the face of temptation, this kind of thought adds gasoline to the proverbial fire when believed because it does not make the desires wrong, it simply makes them untimely, i.e., if the struggling pedophile lived in a different time or a different place, he would not feel such guilt and shame.

Hedonism, on the other hand, as defined in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, is “the group of ethical systems that hold, with various modifications, that feelings of pleasure or happiness are the highest and final aim of conduct; that, consequently those actions which increase the sum of pleasure are thereby constituted right, and, conversely, what increases pain is wrong.”<sup>41</sup> In unpacking hedonism, Norm Geisler writes,

The Epicureans gave impetus to a relativistic ethic by making pleasure the essence of good and pain the essence of evil. Pleasures are relative to individuals and their taste. A roller coaster ride is pleasure for some and sheer agony for others. If, then, the good is the pleasurable and pleasure is relative, then what is good is relative to the time, place, and tastes of particular persons. What is morally good for one may be evil for another, and vice versa.<sup>42</sup>

Just as with postmodernism, right and wrong, good and evil, light and dark are not issues to be solidified for all eternity; instead, they are subjective conclusions that are as momentary and mutable as emotions. If postmodernism is equivalent to pouring gasoline

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<sup>40</sup> Dan Story, *Christianity on the Offense: Responding to the Beliefs and Assumptions of Spiritual Seekers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 159.

<sup>41</sup> The Catholic Encyclopedia, “Hedonism,” accessed September 2, 2020, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07187a.htm>.

<sup>42</sup> Norman L. Geisler and Paul D. Feinberg, *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 400.

on the fire of temptation, then hedonism is the equivalent of white gas, an extremely flammable and highly explosive gas that is not easily extinguished. If the struggling pedophile adopts the hedonistic philosophy that seems to undergird much of Western civilization, he is only a short distance away from acting on his desires.

In short, these two prominent philosophies working in cooperation provide a way of living which questions every “norm” from the past and judges what is right and true according to what feels good in the moment. For the struggling pedophile, these two philosophies do not help in any way, shape, or form.

**Hyper sexualization.** Another highly influential aspect of the world for the struggling pedophile is that of hyper sexualization. This term is used to describe the fact that sex seems to be the venue through which most western culture is viewed. This practice makes sense from a postmodern hedonistic perspective as well as from a Romans 1:18-32 perspective as has already been discussed. For the struggling pedophile who views the world around him that seems to portray the picture that the fulfilling of one’s particular sexual experience is the ultimate prize, opportunities will be sought to acquire just such an opportunity. This speaks to the amount of men who are caught each year seeking to fulfill pedophilic desires with underage children as well as the vast amount of child pornography produced and viewed.<sup>43</sup> While it could be argued that hyper sexualization is the result of both postmodern and hedonistic philosophies, it must be noted that living in a hypersexualized culture that preaches a relativistic truth based on what feels good in the moment is highly influential for the one struggling with pedophilic desires.

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<sup>43</sup> According to the 2018 Federal Human Trafficking Report, of the 1,649 victims of sex trafficking, 50.1 percent were underage children. The report admits that the number cited in the report is well below the actual number of individuals exploited. They only cited situations in which criminal charges were brought and a guilty plea was found. The Human Trafficking Institute,” 2018 Federal Human Trafficking Report,” 2019, <https://www.traffickingmatters.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2018-Federal-Human-Trafficking-Report-High-Res.pdf>.

**Past experiences.** While philosophies and hyper sexualization are influences that absolutely must be factored in as weighing heavy on the struggling pedophile, perhaps no other broken world experience is as weighty as experiencing sexual abuse. As stated, childhood sexual abuse has been linked to pedophilic attractions. Referencing this influential aspect, Gallagher recounts the experience of a man named Matt: “When he was nine years old, Matt was molested by his friend’s older brother. After that experience, he initiated homosexual encounters with other boys his age. He continued this habit throughout his teenager years and on into adulthood. Matt also cannot remember ever having any attraction to men before his first experience.”<sup>44</sup> Childhood sexual abuse cannot be causal or else the vast majority of those who are the victims of child abuse would struggle with pedophilic attractions. At the same time, it is reasonable to believe that an introduction to sexual activity at a very early age would have an influential effect of one degree or another.

**Satan.** A discussion regarding the influence of a broken world would not be complete without mentioning the role of Satan. While not much needs to be stated regarding the influential effects of Satan on mankind, the fact that he is an influential presence in the world cannot go unmentioned. Two influential tactics have a bearing to this discussion. The first and most obvious tactic is that of temptation. Much has been said about the role original sin and the heart play within the individual, but through a heavy influence in the world, Satan also plays an influential role on the one struggling with pedophilic thoughts. Whether it is the postmodern hedonistic philosophy encouraging the struggling pedophile to partake in whatever feels good, the advertising venues inciting lust of the flesh, or the role of a child abuser taking advantage of a situation, Satan is behind it all. Scripture refers to him as the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2) and the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4). His influence upon those struggling with

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<sup>44</sup> Steve Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry* (Dry Ridge, KY: Pure Life, 1986), 104.

pedophilic attractions cannot be underscored enough. This is especially true for those who do not know Christ as their savior.

Additionally, Satan is known as the accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:10). For those who do know Christ as Lord, it is important to highlight the fact that Satan can often tempt a struggling Christian to question or doubt his salvation due to the struggles he is having regarding pedophilic attractions. In situations where salvation cannot be thwarted, as with the case of the believer, then doubting one's salvation or accusing him of failing at some point regarding the standards of heaven in an attempt to make him ineffective in using his gifts is the next best tactic. Speaking to this issue, Lewis Chafer states,

To fail in them [heavenly standards] at any point, will not unsave one but that failure will profane the heavenly citizenship, dishonor God in whose grace he is standing and give the enemy occasion to accuse the brethren before God; for Satan judges the Christian on the basis of the heavenly ideals rather than the standards of earth. No one can contemplate these impossible responsibilities without a sense of utter helplessness and insufficiency.<sup>45</sup>

Chafer rightly points out that in Satan's scheming, he knows it is impossible for Christians to keep a biblical standard of living 100 percent of the time. In moments of failure, if he can influence and cause the Christian to think upon his failures instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ, there is a good chance that the Christian will continue to fail in the biblical standard by hiding, living in shame, staying away from the body of Christ, avoiding prayer, or any other number of common responses of Christians to sin (1 Cor 10:31). With this understanding regarding the influence of Satan, the strong influences of this world's philosophies, and the hyper sexualization of most things, this discussion will now turn to the only answer for the struggling pedophile: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Power of the Gospel**

If the heart is the primary causal factor in the life of the one struggling with pedophilic desires, then the plan of change must have as the primary focus a change of

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<sup>45</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Satan* (New York: Gospel Publishing House, 1909), 153.

motives, desires, dispositions, i.e., change must be at a heart level. From a biblical counseling perspective, salvation is the first step that needs to take place for true Christlike change to occur in the heart. The gospel, then, becomes the primary focus both for the counselor as well as the one who is desperate to change. This discussion will now turn toward a brief understanding and application of the gospel as it pertains to one struggling with pedophilic attractions.

### **Definition of the Gospel**

The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news for all who have a disposition away from God and wish to have a disposition toward God instead. The following section is a brief understanding and application of the gospel of Jesus. This description is needed since there are myriad different understandings regarding the gospel and its application. The gospel of Jesus needs to be understood from three different vantage points: past, present, and future. All three of these vantage points play a vital role for those struggling with pedophilic attractions. The first vantage point is from the past and is commonly known as justification. Justification is the declaration of God that one is not guilty based on the righteousness of Christ.<sup>46</sup> Justification, being declared righteous, is something that the struggling pedophile cannot do on his own. The standard for holiness begins at conception and is broken shortly after birth (Ps 51:4). Even if one were able to remain sinless and maintain the biblical standard of holiness, the issue of original sin still remains. A new disposition must be given to the struggling pedophile so that his wicked unbelieving disposition does not continue to lead him into darkness. One is not just given any new disposition; rather, he is given the disposition of Christ. His spiritual eyes are open to what Christ's spiritual eyes were open to. His mind is open to what Christ's mind was open to. He is not stuck in spiritual blindness. He can see reality for what it truly is as God has designed it.

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<sup>46</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 787.

For the struggling pedophile, being declared innocent and gaining a new disposition brings a flood of hope. Depending upon who he has confessed his desires to and how far he gone in acting upon them, there is a good chance that the struggling pedophile has come to believe that there is simply no hope. He is guilty of being a pedophile and deserves all of the shame and isolation that accompanies such belief. In short, the title “pedophile” has become his identity.

Before moving onto the second vantage point, it is proper to speak about one of the nasty side effects of sin, namely, isolation. Vertical isolation is initially seen in Adam and Eve’s response to their sinful action by hiding and isolating from God. Genesis 4 reveals a horizontal and vertical isolation as Cain decides he is going to kill his brother out of jealousy. From that point on in history, sin has had a massive isolating effect. As God often does throughout His Word, He gave a vivid example through comparing the effects of sin to the ravaging effects of leprosy. In describing the effects of leprosy, Rosaria Butterfield states, “With a pop of white pus, a beloved family member overnight became abhorrent. Lepers—moral and social outcasts, isolated, rejected, feared, despised—banded together in pain, waiting to die, bereft of hope.”<sup>47</sup> Adding to this bleak picture, Jacob Milgrom writes, “In conclusion, the appearance of the disease, and not so much the disease itself, is the source of impurity.”<sup>48</sup> This appearance of Leprosy, then, was something to be feared above all else. Anyone was capable of developing the appearance, and the consequences were complete shunning and loss of everything important: immediate family, extended family, friends, employment, corporate worship, etc. The isolation was for the protection of the rest of the community, but it was a life-sentence, nonetheless.

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<sup>47</sup> Rosaria Champagne Butterfield, *The Gospel with a House Key* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 26.

<sup>48</sup> Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, Continental Commentary Series (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 129.



The parallels are unmistakable when it comes to pedophilia. At the appearance of pedophilia, one is presumed unsafe until proven otherwise. If suspicions are not subdued, then isolation commences until isolation is complete. In the most severe circumstances, one's name is placed on a sex offender registry so that the whole world can know who the person is and what they have done. Guilt and shame are on the convicted pedophile for life. This isolation is done to protect the innocent, which reflects the laws given in Leviticus 13 and 14. The point of this section is not to build some sort of empathy for the pedophile whereby all protective measures are removed so as to put children at risk. On the contrary, those protective measures are necessary and for the one who truly hates his sinful desires, he would welcome such protective measures. The goal of this section is to highlight the freedom that comes to the struggling pedophile when he hears the words "innocent" and "welcome." Innocent of the sins that one was previously guilty of and welcome to the family of God. No form of therapy, secular or Christian, offers such a promise. Justification is truly the foundational hope needed for the struggling pedophile and it is the foundation upon which Christ-like change can take place. With hope being firmly established, the second vantage point fans the flame of hope so as to further incite change in the struggling pedophile.

The second vantage point with which to understand the gospel is the present, which is known as sanctification.<sup>49</sup> Progressive sanctification is the process whereby one becomes more and more like Christ in his thoughts, desires, motives, words, and actions. This process is illustrated in figure 3.<sup>50</sup> Once someone is justified through faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the process of becoming more like Christ begins.

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<sup>49</sup> For clarification, this vantage point is not position sanctification in which God sees one as holy because of his position in Christ; rather, it is progressive sanctification or the process of becoming more like Christ.

<sup>50</sup> Kevin Martin, "Bringing the Bible to Life: Discipleship Classes," accessed August 29, 2020, [https://www.bethanycommunitychurch.org/userfiles/file/BtBtL/-I 6%20video\(KM\)%20\(10-12-12\)%20.pdf](https://www.bethanycommunitychurch.org/userfiles/file/BtBtL/-I%206%20video(KM)%20(10-12-12)%20.pdf).

Any attempt at holiness prior to justification will only be attempts at self-righteousness. The hope of this second vantage point is that as time progresses one becomes more and more like Christ. This does not mean that one is perfect in all thoughts, desires, motives, words, and actions. However, it does mean that he continues to walk in the direction of Christ through the process of repentance, which will be discussed momentarily.

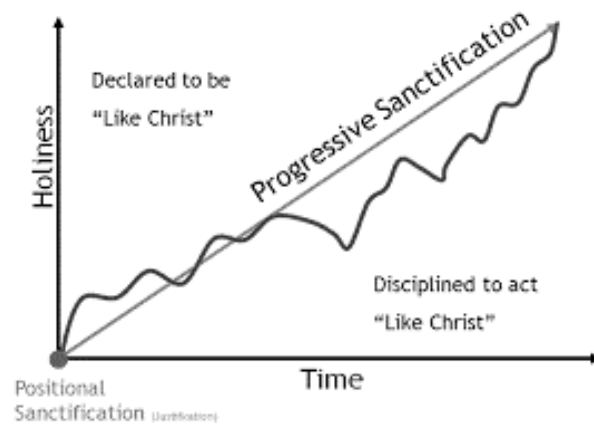


Figure 3. Progressive sanctification

In this progressive sanctification one moves away from the old man and puts on the new man, whose mind has been transformed.<sup>51</sup> Because of the promise of this progression the apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 6:11, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” This is in effect what Jesus said to the leper in Luke 17:19: “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.” Through Jesus’ touch, the leper was given back his family, friends, community, and corporate worship. He could look at those who knew him as a leper and state, “That is who I was.” Paul is making a very similar conclusion for the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 6:9, Paul reminds the Corinthians that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Then in verse 11 he uses the past tense “were” when he says, “but such were some of you.” They were

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<sup>51</sup> Eph 4:22-24; Rom 12:1-2, 8:28-30; 2 Cor 3:17-18; Col 3:5-17.

to consider themselves as changed because they were actually changed. David Garland speaks eloquently to this truth: “The implication is that Christianity not only offers a completely new sexual ethos and a new ethos regarding material possessions but also bring about a complete transformation of individuals.”<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Gordon Fee states, “Now in Christ Jesus you are something different, so live like it.”<sup>53</sup> Hope is given in hearing the past tense regarding one’s sinful disposition.

For the one struggling with pedophilic attractions, especially those who have lost all sorts of community, more hope could not be given than to hear, “Your disposition has changed, you are a new person, now go and live differently.” This is what progressive sanctification fosters, and this is an aspect that no other form of therapy or counseling can offer.

The final vantage point is that of the future, often referred to as glorification. As Kelly Kapic and Wesley Lugt clearly articulate, glorification is when one “being dependent on union with Christ, is considered a future reality yet to be experienced while also a secure reality grounded on the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of bodily resurrection for those in union with Christ.”<sup>54</sup> As expressed by the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:20-21, glorification is the future day when believers will be transformed completely into the same image as Jesus Christ. On that day the power of the flesh is completely broken renders the believer completely free from the presence of sin. That day will render the influences of the world and Satan obsolete because they will cease to be a factor. This is the day all believers look forward to with great anticipation.

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<sup>52</sup> David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 215.

<sup>53</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 270.

<sup>54</sup> Kelly M. Kapic and Wesley Vander Lugt, *Pocket Dictionary of the Reformed Tradition*, The IVP Pocket Reference Series (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 56.

For the struggling pedophile, this is the ultimate hope. One day temptations will be done away with. The inner man and the outer man will work in cooperation without weakness or failure. Postmodern and Hedonistic philosophies along with hyper sexualization will be done away with. Worshiping God for all eternity with glorified sinless bodies will be all that is left. This goal is much different than what any other form of therapy offers. The three vantage points from which the struggling pedophile can look paints a hopeful picture regardless of whether one is looking back toward the past, looking around in the present, or looking ahead to the future.

### **Application of the Gospel**

While the previous section does present an extremely hopeful outlook for the struggling pedophile, unless the gospel is appropriated or put into use, that same hope is not actually offered. The gospel is appropriated when the struggling pedophile understands, believes, and trusts in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>55</sup> Understanding the gospel has to do with the factual knowledge regarding one's own sinful condition as well as God's answer for that sinful condition, which is only found in the perfect life Christ lived, the full and complete debt Christ paid in his crucifixion, and his glorious resurrection from the dead. Tedd Tripp speaks to this aspect of evangelism: "There is a corpus of knowledge about themselves, God, and God's created order that they must know and, in some sense, understand if they are to be children of faith. They can only believe in that which they know."<sup>56</sup> While this knowledge is required for salvation, it is not all that is required for salvation.

Belief in said knowledge is also required for salvation. If belief was not required, then one could attain the knowledge but not believe it to be true, and still be saved. As it

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<sup>55</sup> Tedd Tripp, "A Child's Call to Conversion: Faith as a Christian Mark," Ligonier.org, accessed September 2, 2020, <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/childs-call-conversion-faith-christian-mark/>.

<sup>56</sup> Tripp, "A Child's Call to Conversion."

is, one must believe the knowledge of who he is as a sinner as well as what Jesus accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection. Again speaking to this aspect of evangelism, Tripp states, “To know all the historical facts about Jesus, to possess thorough knowledge of the facts about salvation, will do our children no good if they do not believe those facts to be true.”<sup>57</sup> James speaks to the issue of belief not being sufficient when he states, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!” (Jas 2:19). Having correct knowledge is required as well as belief in that knowledge, yet it still is not sufficient for salvation.

The final aspect of salvation is trust. This last aspect of trust is somewhat illusive due to the English language. Use of the words rest in, cling to, and turn toward help to dial in a full and robust meaning. At the end of the day, trusting in Jesus means that all of one’s hopes lie in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The truth of trust shows up as someone is transformed more and more into the image of Jesus. Referencing back to a concept expressed in chapter 3 underneath the section entitled “Exchange of Worship,” one becomes like what one worships. When a struggling pedophile understands, believes, and trusts in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, it will become evident in how he lives his life. He will start to think, speak, and act in ways that reflect the One whom he is worshipping, namely, Jesus Christ. In short, this process is the biblical process of repentance.

### **Product of Gospel Regeneration**

Repentance involves cognition, affections, speech, and physical action. Just as original sin affects the entire person, so a new life in Christ affects the entire person. The product of gospel regeneration, then, is a completely changed person. Repentance holds a hopeful promise for the struggling pedophile. A repentant response allows for the counselor

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<sup>57</sup> Tripp, “A Child’s Call to Conversion.”

as well as the counselee some visual proof that true change is taking place, which in turn promotes hope.

### **Cognitive Response**

Repentance means that the struggling pedophile can and will think different thoughts. He is not doomed to continually think about sexual encounters with children for the rest of his life. As he dwells on Scripture and as the Holy Spirit works in his life, his thought life will change. Life will not be one continual struggle to avoid tempting thoughts and situations. The new disposition toward Christ and the things of Christ will cause him to naturally dwell on what is Christ-like. A new cognitive response points back to the statements by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Paul Tripp regarding worshippers becoming like what they worship. This new image involves new thoughts.

### **Emotional Response**

Thought life is not the only change, however. New emotional responses toward both sin and holiness should be expected as well. Jesus speaks to these new affects in His Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matt 5:4). While there has been some debate as to what Jesus is specifically speaking to in this verse, he definitely uses emotive terms. For the struggling pedophile who has lived with almost overpowering urges to act on desires, he can expect new emotions to be present. He should expect negative emotions to what God condemns and positive emotions toward what God promotes.<sup>58</sup> And in moments when he might give way to sin, he should

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<sup>58</sup> The scope of this thesis does not permit a comprehensive treatment of the biblical view of emotions. It is sufficient to say that emotions do not always respond in the manner hoped for. One can feel bad for being obedient. One can also feel good for being disobedient. This paragraph is not intending to communicate that when someone is saved, he will no longer be faced with lusts of the flesh. There could still be moments where temptation arises, but there should be an emotive desire wanting to be obedient to God that was not present prior to salvation.

emotionally respond by running back to God seeking forgiveness and a restored relationship.<sup>59</sup>

### **Verbal Response**

Jesus clearly indicates that the words proceed up and out of the heart (Luke 6:45). With this in mind, the struggling pedophile will have a changed vocabulary as well. As his disposition changes, so will the language he uses. While this change might involve moving from vulgar to holy language, this change could also involve moving from speaking out of defeat to speaking with hope and victory. This verbal change could move away from a victim mentality and toward one of owning one's sin. Most notably, the vocabulary should change from one devoid of the gospel to a vocabulary filled with the gospel. Tying this aspect back into the discussion surrounding Romans 1:18-32 on in chapter 3 underneath the section entitled "Exchange of Worship," the repentant pedophile should begin to honor and thank God for all God did to save him. After all, that is what exasperated his descent into sin.

### **Physical Response**

Finally, there should be a physical response. This physical response should involve acts of putting off the old man or mortifying the flesh, including any kinds of activities that promote sexual sin and other acts of disobedience as well. Mind renewal and practices that aim at renewing the mind would also become evident, including daily Scripture reading, meditation, and memorization, and some kind of steady worship music diet; perhaps a diet that replaces an old music diet that fed sinful desires of one kind or another. Rounding out a biblical response would be actions that reflect the new man; namely, actions that involve loving God and loving others (Matt 22:37-39) with a selfless Christ-like love (Phil 2:3-5). Actions of this sort would include going to church, being in

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<sup>59</sup> Jeremy Pierre has written well on the subject of the emotions in his book *The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life: Connecting Christ to Human Experience* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2016).

some sort of small group community, activities in which others are served, giving to those in need, etc. This list is endless when one's disposition has become like Christ. Every moment of every day becomes a moment to bring God honor and glory and love others.

Repentance, based on knowledge and belief in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, is the hope for the struggling pedophile. This chapter has been devoted to what must happen to the struggling pedophile if true change is going to take place. This thesis will now conclude with what this means regarding the body of Christ in preparing to help those struggling pedophiles that God saves and brings to the local body of believers.



## CHAPTER 5

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH: FOUR COMMITMENTS AND ONE CONSIDERATION

Help and hope for the struggling pedophile would not be complete without mentioning implications for the church. After all, if the gospel offers the only hope for pedophiles and the church has been called to preach the gospel, then it only makes sense to mention how preaching the gospel to struggling pedophiles will affect the church. This chapter will cover four different commitments the church will need to consider, evaluate itself accordingly, and make necessary changes where and when needed. These four commitments are not conclusive by any means, but represent the minimum commitments required to be an effective tool in the hands of God regarding the struggling pedophile. Additionally, the church needs to consider how to minister to those who would oppose bring pedophilic struggles into the family of God.

#### **Commitment to the Ordinary Means of Grace**

The ordinary means refers to activities given by God to the church allowing individual Christians to continue to grow and mature in faith.<sup>1</sup> These ordinary means of grace usually include gathering with the corporate body for the ministry of the Word, participation in communion and baptism, prayer, and church discipline.<sup>2</sup> Historically speaking, from the Reformation onward, if a body of believers did not regularly participate

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<sup>1</sup> Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *What Is a Healthy Church Member?*, 9Marks (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 90.

<sup>2</sup> J. Carl Laney, *A Guide to Church Discipline* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 11.

in all four of the means of grace, that body was not considered part of the universal body of Christ, i.e., the church.<sup>3</sup> Each of these four means of grace will briefly be addressed.

### **Ministry of the Word**

Ministry of the Word refers to all activities in which the Word of God is put on display for members of the body of Christ to consume. This would include the preaching of God's Word, reciting God's Word, confessing God's Word, and singing God's Word. Regarding this first commitment, a church needs to be committed to making ministry of the Word a primary goal (2 Tim 4:1-4). The church committed to helping the struggling pedophile needs to ensure that the Word of God is presented as often as possible in as many ways as possible.

**Hope for the pedophile.**<sup>4</sup> A repentant pedophile will find overwhelming hope in a church that focuses on ministering God's Word. In experiencing this ministry of the Word, the repentant pedophile will find an abundance of spiritual food to feast upon that will allow him to progress from a spiritual infant to a spiritual adult (1 Pet 2:2; 1 Cor 3:1-3). Additionally, hope is found in biblical confession, not only sins directly related to his pedophilic struggles, but even sins that God brings to light that are not directly related to his pedophilic struggles. The freedom that the repentant pedophile experiences as he is ministered to through the body of Christ as it ministers the Word of God cannot be underscored enough.

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<sup>3</sup> Burk Parsons, "What Is an Ordinary Means of Grace Ministry?" Ligonier.org, accessed September 3, 2020, <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/ordinary-means-of-grace-ministry/>.

<sup>4</sup>A church open to including struggling pedophiles yet closed to opening up God's Word will prove to be a dangerous church. It is dangerous on two accounts. The church could allow the struggling pedophile to remain unchanged and content with his sin, which would not only be dangerous and discouraging in this life but could also prove to be damning in the life to come. The church could also open up the younger saints to circumstances in which the struggling pedophile could act upon his or her desires. A commitment to a ministry of the Word is paramount as a church considers opening up the doors to struggling pedophiles.

## **Communion**

Another means of grace required for adequate ministry to the struggling pedophile is a consistent offering of communion. At the very least, communion involves the corporate remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ for the removal of sin. Jesus and Paul both make communion vital for believers (Matt 26:26-29; 1 Cor 11:17-34).

**Hope for the pedophile.** Offering communion on a consistent basis provides a visual reminder of Christ's sacrifice that made salvation and sanctification possible for the repentant pedophile. Additionally, he is reminded of the larger body of believers experiencing the same salvation/sanctification reality found in the death and resurrection of Christ. Communion, then, battles the shame and guilt often associated with the name "pedophile." No other system of therapy or counseling can offer the struggling pedophile this kind of hope. He is not the odd man out who forever will struggle with something horrible and disgusting. Instead, he is part of the larger universal body of Christ which has been redeemed from the old disposition and way of living and freed to live a life that brings God honor and glory through imaging Jesus. There is immense hope for the struggling pedophile when he partakes of communion.

## **Baptism**

The third ordinance of grace that a church needs to offer is the sacrament of baptism. Baptism refers to the act of a professing believer being placed underwater and then being brought up out of the water, representing that one is buried with Christ (going under water) and raised again to walk in newness of life (being raised up out of the water). Along with communion, baptism offers yet another visual reminder of the salvation experience. The old man is buried and put off while the new man is put on.

**Hope for the pedophile.** For the struggling pedophile, baptism, and all that it represents, fights the worldly concept, stating, "once a pedophile always a pedophile." Instead, baptism promotes the biblical concept of true and lasting change as expressed by

the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:11 when Paul says, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” Additionally, as one is baptized into Christ, he is eternally connected to the body of Christ as his new community. More will be said regarding this community in subsequent paragraphs, but for now it is sufficient to acknowledge that baptism brings immense hope for the repentant pedophile.

### **Church Discipline**

The final ordinary means of grace that the church needs to seriously consider is that of church discipline. Church discipline should be understood as a loving act whereby Christians hold one another accountable for obedience to God’s Word.<sup>5</sup> In short, the church discipline process consists of individual confrontation followed by incorporating more people into the confrontation as the sinner persists in his sin. The culmination of church discipline is the removal of the defiant sinner from the church.

**Hope for the pedophile.** J. Carl Laney lists three negative results when a church decides to ignore the discipline process: lack of *purity*, lack of *power*, and lack of *progress* or growth.<sup>6</sup> One additional negative result that should be noted is a lack of *protection* for the body. Looking at these four negative aspects when a church does not practice church discipline should give a struggling pedophile great hope when he finds a church that does practice church discipline. When involved in a church that practices church discipline, the pedophile can know that his *purity* will be examined and encouraged. Additionally, he can be confident that a supernatural *power* exists further enabling him to grow or *progress* in his sanctification. Finally, the saved pedophile can know that he is *protected* in a church that practices church discipline. He is protected from his own

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<sup>5</sup> The process of church discipline is specifically outlined in Matt 18:15-21. Other passages such as Gal 6:1-3, 1 Cor 5:9-12, and 1 Tim 5:20 speak to different aspects of church discipline as well.

<sup>6</sup> Laney, *A Guide to Church Discipline*, 21-25.

deceitful heart as loving brothers and sisters provide the necessary feedback he needs should he start to slip back into sinful practices.

### **Commitment to Holiness**

The commitment to the ordinary means of grace should lead to a commitment toward holiness. First Peter 1:15-16 states, “But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” Holiness is not an option for individual Christians; therefore, it is not an option for the church. Holiness should be understood to be other than what is to be found in the world.<sup>7</sup> The church should not look nor sound like the world in any way, shape, or form; rather, the church should image its King in motivations, methods, and modes. Practically speaking, the church should be filled with Christians who are determined to do things which love God and love others (Matt 22:37-39). The church should fight against those things for which Christ died, such as selfishness, man-centeredness, abuse, racism, oppression, greed, pride, lust, bitterness, unforgiveness, and other forms of sin. In instances when the church finds occasions of these sins, one of two options should be taken. In situations where the church has been complicit in sin, public confession and repentance needs to be sought. In occurrences where individuals have been living in sin, the use of church discipline is required. In short, the church needs to be committed to a standard of holiness that reflects God and not the world.

**Hope for the pedophile.** This standard is vital for the struggling pedophile. The world outside of the church has already been described as postmodern, hedonistic, and hypersexual. The church needs to be a reprieve for the struggling pedophile, not another warzone for which he needs to prepare. This means that the church will need to be committed to evaluating its motivations, methods, and modes on a consistent basis so

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<sup>7</sup> R. C. Sproul, “The Holiness of God,” Ligonier.org, accessed September 3, 2020, [https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/holiness\\_of\\_god/the-meaning-of-holiness/](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/holiness_of_god/the-meaning-of-holiness/).

as not to blend in with the culture, rather to stand in stark contrast to the culture. The church's leaders need to be humble and open to feedback from those who might become aware of some aspect of the church that does not square up with the standard of holiness. This commitment is non-negotiable if the church is to be an effective tool in coming alongside those who struggle with pedophilic attractions.

### **Commitment to Community**

Not only does the church need to be committed to the ordinary means of grace and holiness, but the church also needs to be committed to the concept of community. If there is one common experience for the repentant pedophile, it is that of veiled transparency and shame that has led to isolation. From the beginning of creation, God declared that it was not good for man to be alone (Gen 2:18). While God's declaration in Genesis 2:18 resulted in the first woman being created and the first wedding taking place, marriage between a man and a woman is not the only truth to be found. Community built around being honest and transparent is a gracious gift given by God to His creation. Due to the birth of sin, just a chapter later in Genesis 3, honesty and transparency became much harder. However, that does not negate the fact that humans were created to be in community with one another. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer stated in his book *Life Together*,

The measure with which God gives the gift of visible community is varied. Christians who live dispersed from one another are comforted by a brief visit of another Christian, a prayer together, and another Christian's blessing. Indeed, they are strengthened by letters written by the hands of other Christians. Paul's greetings in his letters written in own hand were no doubt tokens of such community. Others have given the gift of Sundays of the community of the worship service. Still others have the privilege of living a Christian life in the community of their families. Before their ordination you seminarians receive the gift of a common life with their brothers for a certain length of time. Among serious Christians in congregations today there is a growing desire to meet with other Christians during the midday from work for life together under the Word. Life together is again being understood by Christians

today as the grace that it is, as the extraordinary aspect, the “roses and lilies” of the Christian life.<sup>8</sup>

Community and Christianity go hand in hand because God created it to be so.

**Hope for the pedophile.** The need for Christian community cannot be underscored enough for the repentant pedophile. Having struggled with the common themes of hiding sin, guilt, shame, and isolation, the repentant pedophile will need to have more than just a cognitive understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He will need to have as many opportunities as possible to put into practice the gospel of Jesus Christ as he relates to other brothers and sisters who have been freed from the same sinful themes. In highlighting the need for Christian community, Milton Vincent states, “Hence, the more I comprehend the full scope of the gospel, the more I value the church for which Christ died, the more I value the role that I play in the lives of my fellow-Christians, and the more I appreciate the role that they must be allowed to play in mine.”<sup>9</sup> As the repentant pedophile continues to grow in his understanding of the gospel and the freedom from the power of sin becomes his new reality, he will need a context in which to live out his new freedom in order to best love God and others. The church needs to be committed to providing such a context for the repentant believer.

### **Commitment to Biblical Counseling**

The final commitment the church needs to make if it is going to be helpful to those struggling with pedophilia is a commitment to biblical counseling. This entire thesis has aimed at proving the truth of this statement. As a reminder, however, biblical counseling offers the following aspects which make it far more effective than anything the world has to offer:

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<sup>8</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*, ed. Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Albrecht Schönherr, and Geoffrey B. Kelly, trans. Daniel W. Bloesch and James H. Burtness (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 5:27.

<sup>9</sup> Milton Vincent, *A Gospel Primer for Christians: Learning to See the Glories of God's Love* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2008), 24.

1. An answer for the origin of pedophilic attractions (see chap. 4, “Primary Causes”).
2. A sympathetic and empathetic understanding for the influences of the world (see chap. 4, “Secondary Influences”).
3. A robust answer for the sin of pedophilic attractions (see chap. 4, “The Power of the Gospel”).
4. A community committed to all that the struggling pedophile needs to grow in holiness, namely consummation of the Word, communion, baptism, confrontation, and a standard of holiness (see chap. 5).

The struggling pedophile needs more than an hour a week with a therapist who does not have answers nor a concrete direction. The struggling pedophile needs more than a therapeutic group who can sympathize with his struggles but lacks the power to help him change. The struggling pedophile needs more than the mere guesses of man regarding how to change or if change can happen at all. Biblical counseling offers the struggling pedophile all that he needs for life and godliness, which is why the church needs to be committed to biblical counseling.

### **Consideration and Care for Those Who Oppose**

So far, this discussion regarding the implications for the church has focused on what the church will need to consider as a means of helping the repentant pedophile in his or her walk through this life into the next. This discussion would not be complete without a brief consideration of the needs of the congregation as they think about bringing repentant pedophiles into the church. Given the statement and statistics given in chapter 1 of this thesis, there is no doubt that great concerns and fears can rise up in different members of the congregation as they ponder what it could mean if sinners of this sort are brought into the church.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that those fears are understandable and should be addressed. Fears can arise for various reasons ranging from those who have been sexually abused to those who have a steady diet current events fed through the lens of modern media.



## **Fears**

**Re-offense.** While most Christians understand that re-offense or falling back into sin is part of the sanctification process, Christians also understand that falling back into some sins will bring about more dramatic consequences. For a pedophile to reoffend carries with it greater consequences for those who might fall prey to pedophilic actions being committed against them. This is not making one sin worse than another; rather, it is a realization that pedophilic sins carry consequences that will likely be felt for a lifetime. As such, there is great fear and concern when thinking about integrating someone into the church who has had pedophilic attractions in the past. Additionally, for Christians who have thought through the implications of Jeremiah 17:9, Mark 7:14-31, and Luke 6:43-45, as well as other verses dealing with the heart, a strong concern could exist regarding the deceitful heart that might still be prone toward pedophilic actions. Finally, given the statistics mentioned in chapter 1 regarding those who have fallen victim to sexual abuse, the likelihood exists that a member within the church has sexual abuse as part of their past. These three fears, at the very least, need to be considered and addressed by church leadership.

**Litigation.** Another fear and concern needing attention is the fear of litigation. It is wise and loving for church leaders to think through and address potential thoughts such as, “What if we let a pedophile into the church and he re-offends? Will we be held liable for letting someone like that into the church?. With the highly litigious society in which the church exists, this concern is not unfounded.

**Attracting predatory pedophiles.** One final common concern requiring attention is that accepting a pedophile into the church could cause more pedophiles to join the church, making for an unsafe or uncomfortable situation for minors. There are Scriptures which would point to this concern being valid. First Corinthians 15:33 states, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals.’” Likewise, 1 Corinthians 5:6 states, “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole

lump?” It is easy to see why there would be some opposition to introducing repentant pedophiles into the fold of the congregation given warnings such as these.

### **Options to Mitigate Fears and Provide Protection**

Having highlighted a few fears and concerns that are common among members of church congregations, church leaders can take actions that would address and potentially mitigate these fears. These concerns only address and mitigate as opposed to eradicating the fears and concerns. Ultimately, the eradication of fears will take place as the Holy Spirit empowers believers to live out 1 John 4:18. As the one who fears moves toward the repentant pedophile in love, this new relational context will most likely provide new information from which the fearful church member can operate. Church leaders can provide lots of teaching from God’s Word giving the Holy Spirit opportunity to work. Church leaders can also facilitate opportunities to foster relationships that will provide new information through which the repentant pedophile can be viewed.

**Accountability.** Adequate and appropriate accountability is one important step that church leadership can take to aid church members who might be resistant to having those with a pedophilic past join the church. Church leadership should consider three different areas of accountability: church leadership, individual and specific members, and civil authorities when required. A primary area of accountability is with church leadership. In many churches, this level of leadership will be fulfilled by pastor and lay elders. It is important that this group of leaders be aware of the repentant pedophile’s past actions, generally speaking, so that they are able to answer general questions such as, “Did you know that so and so is here at the church and is a pedophile?” As shepherds of the church, church leadership could minister Scripture, proclaim the power of the gospel, and encourage those who are fearful.

Individual and specific members of the church also need to be involved in the repentant pedophile’s accountability. This group of people should be a small group of

people who could keep information confidential yet have enough wisdom and discernment to know when to contact church authority should there be any suspicion regarding the actions of the repentant pedophile. These specific and individual members need to have more than just general information regarding the sins of the repentant pedophile. They will need to know what the sins consisted of, if those sins were ever acted upon, and what specific repentance process was undertaken. In many cases, members of this group could be local counselors, law enforcement officers, and other church members who struggled with sexual sin but have repented. Knowing that there exists a group of people who know the extent of the pedophile's struggles will work against fearful thoughts from other members of the church.<sup>11</sup>

In cases where criminal activities were committed, it might be advisable for these specific church members to meet with the repentant pedophile's parole officer to hear the details of the crimes committed. While this action should be reserved for those who are best equipped to hear such details, knowing that a group of accountability partners has talked with local law enforcement regarding the specific sins of the repentant pedophile is another step to assuage the fearful church member.

**Understanding the nature of the pedophilic sin.** Another avenue to help quell fears with church members as a church moves in the direction of bringing repentant pedophiles into the fold is to give information regarding pedophilic sin in general. When appropriate, a church might decide to bring in a professional, Christian or secular, to teach about struggles regarding pedophilia. If presented in a positive light, this teaching could re-educate those who misunderstand that all pedophiles are predators looking for their next victim. In instances where no education or minimal education exists, bringing

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<sup>11</sup> Appendix 1 contains instructions for members of this group to whom the repentant pedophile needs to be accountable.

a professional in to train could instill a love for those who have repented of pedophilic sins.

**Meet and Greet.** Additionally, creating opportunities for fearful and concerned church members to put a name to a face potentially could deescalate fears that a church members might have. Of course, great discernment and protections need to be put in place such as leadership members being at the meeting, discussions with the fearful church member prior to them meeting to ensure of proper motivations, and other such considerations should be taken. The goal of this meeting would be to aid the fearful church member in developing a love for the repentant pedophile as a fellow brother or sister in Christ as 1 John 4:18 would instruct. A Christlike love for the repentant pedophile will never occur unless there is a genuine relationship in place.

**Intentional community integration.** Finally, church leadership can help to fight against the fears of church membership by encouraging and facilitating small groups that incorporate all facets of life, including different facets of temptation and sin. Church leadership and repentant pedophiles alike might be tempted to create homogenous groups containing members who have similar life experiences, such as groups for men who have struggled with pedophilia. The temptation in creating such groups is to mitigate or eliminate any awkward or uncomfortable moments that might happen as non-pedophilic church members interact with repentant pedophiles. While a loving motivation could exist behind creating homogenous groups such as this, the full picture of the gospel is truncated, so to speak, because homogenous groups will only imagine how far the grace of gospel has gone in its salvific effects. Homogenous groups will almost think less of their own sin as they look around in comparison to other sins of the world.

In contrast, the church that wishes to reach out to and incorporate repentant pedophiles would serve both the repentant pedophile as well as the fearful church member by having heterogenous groups involving members of different demographics as well as

different sin struggles. Heterogenous groups allow for a more grand view of the work of Jesus Christ as different members get to hear the extent to which God saved others as relationships develop and grow. Prior to the formation of heterogenous groups of this nature, much prep work would need to be done regarding all of what has been mentioned in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis. The effects of this kind of approach could be powerful as God is glorified and others are loved per the command of Jesus in Matthew 22:37-39.

This thesis has been the first work in the area of biblical counseling which specifically addresses the issue of pedophilia. Much more in-depth and specific work needs to be done by those in the field of biblical counseling as the swell of the sexual revolution continues to rise. It is my hope that the work comprised in this thesis will aid future endeavors comprising of men and woman who struggle with pedophilic attractions to hear the gospel, respond to the gospel, be changed by the gospel, and join the family of God for all eternity. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDELINES FOR CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER AT CANYON HILLS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Canyon Hills Community Church understands that there are members of our community who wish to attend our weekly church services, but because of a history that includes gross sexual immorality, their involvement in our church requires special attention. While we do not want to turn anyone away from hearing the Word of God, we also have a responsibility to guard the those in the church who expect Canyon Hills to be a safe place to worship. The following is our understanding of and response to those who have are guilty of sexual crimes, including our plan to safely incorporate them into our church.

The Bible states that humanity is sinful from conception. Some act out the sin, while others leave it in their minds only. The only way that a person can change who they are is to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Once that is established, they are no longer the person that they used to be. The goal of their life changes from serving their lusts to serving God. This change allows anyone who has committed any sort of sin, including sexually immoral sin, to live his or her life without the fear of being trapped in that sin again. This form of change is not just behavioral; it is also a heart change. It is this sort of change that is crucial to living a transformed a life.

Because we see the potential for a person with a sexually immoral history to have a transformed life, we are happy to have them attend our church. However, we are also acutely aware that while outer actions may lead one to think that a change has occurred, there still may reside within the person motivations that would lead them to act out in their sin to the detriment of others who would attend our church. For Canyon Hills Community Church to affirm and accept them into the body of our church, we have developed policies and procedures to help us set apart those who have only changed behavior from those who have transformed their lives. These policies and procedures, while not set in stone, ensure accountability for the convicted persons and safety for those who attend our church.

The following is a list of our procedures and policies for those wishing to attend our weekly church services which are guilty of crimes against minors, elderly, disabled, or any other groups of people who are at risk:

1. Each person will meet with one of the staff pastors before attending any church services.
2. Pastor Marshall or the pastor immediately involved will meet with the Corrections Officer assigned to the case and keep in contact with the Corrections Officer periodically.
3. Each person will submit all information about their criminal charges to the counseling department in writing, as well as meet with the Counseling Pastor within one month of attending any church function.

4. Each person must submit to a background check from the Washington State Patrol or the FBI.
5. The Elders, Ushers, and any other personnel who need to know the information about the person above are notified with the appropriate information.
6. Each person will have an accountability partner (AP hereafter) whom they will sit with each Sunday service who will be aware of their background and who is helping them to change. (The AP is responsible for them always, while they are at the church, including trips to the bathroom, Adult Educational classes, as well as worship services.)
7. The AP will be responsible for the following:
  - a. The assigning of a parking spot
  - b. The designation of entrance and exit doors to be used
  - c. The assigning of a seat while at church
  - d. Designating appropriate bathrooms
  - e. Parts of the building that are to be avoided at all costs
8. Each person will be allowed to go to any church function provided their AP is attending the same church service with them.
9. If a person's actions are in question at any time, the Elders of Canyon Hills Community Church reserve the right to ask that person to leave the premises.

We fully believe that Jesus Christ can take someone with a sexually immoral lifestyle and transform his or her life from something gross and detestable to something that can be used by God for His glory. We do not want to discourage anyone with a sinful background, including gross sexual sin, from coming and finding out how to start a relationship with Christ or how to grow in their relationship with Christ. Thank you for your time and understanding. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Pastor Marshall.

## APPENDIX 2

### SEX OFFENDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following is a list of questions comprise of an interview that might help someone who is struggling with thoughts, fantasies, urges, arousals, and behavior of a pedophilic nature. These questions were provided by Michael Seto his book Pedophilia and Sexual Offending Against Children pages 213-215.

1. How old were you when you began going through puberty (voice change, facial hair, growth spurt, etc.)?
2. How old were you when you first started having sexual thoughts or feelings? What did you think about? What was your reaction to these thoughts or feelings?
3. Have you ever masturbated? How old were you the first time you masturbated? What were you thinking about at the time? What do you typically think about when masturbating? How frequently do you masturbate? What is the most times you have ever masturbated in a week? How old were you at that time?
4. Have you ever had sexual contact (any genital contact) with someone of the opposite sex? How old were you? How old was she [for male respondents]? How did you know her?
5. Have you ever had sexual contact (any genital contact) with someone of the same sex? How old were you? How old was he [for male respondents]? How did you know him?
6. How many female sexual partners have you had? What proportion would you consider to be casual or short term (e.g. one-night stands or short flings)? What was the longest sexual relationship you've had with a woman? What is the shortest?
7. How many male sexual partners have you had? What proportion would you consider to be casual or short term (e.g. 1-night stands or short flings)? What is the shortest?
8. Did you ever cheat on a sexual partner (i.e., had sex with someone else without the partner's knowledge or permission)? How many times? Have you ever been involved in multiple sexual relationships at the same time?
9. Are you currently involved in a sexual relationship? Tell me about the person. How long have you been in this relationship? What do you find attractive about your partner?
10. Do you have any children? (Distinguish between genetic and sociolegal children.)



11. Have you ever had sexual contact with a girl who was below the age of 14 [or the legal age of consent in the local jurisdiction]? How old were you at the time? How old was she? What kind of sexual behavior took place?
12. Have you ever had sexual contact with a boy who was below the age of 14 [or the legal age of consent in the local jurisdiction]? How old were you at the time? How old was he? What kind of sexual behavior took place?
13. How often do you sexually fantasize in a typical day? What do you fantasize about? Do you masturbate when you fantasize? What proportion of the times you masturbate involve fantasies?
14. Do you ever have sexual fantasies about prepubescent girls? Teenage girls who are under the legal age but sexually maturing? How long have you been having these fantasies? How often do you have these fantasies? What are the arousing or attractive features of the girls in these fantasies?
15. Do you ever have sexual fantasies about prepubescent boys? Teenage boys who are under the legal age but sexually maturing? How long have you been having these fantasies? How often do you have these fantasies? What are the arousing or attractive features of the boys in these fantasies?
16. Do you ever have sexual fantasies about uncommon or unusual activities (e.g., bondage, spanking, masochism, exhibitionism, or voyeurism)? How often do you have these fantasies? Have you ever engaged in these activities? How old were the first time? How often?
17. Do you ever have sexual fantasies about unusual kinds of persons or objects (e.g., amputees or fetishism)? Have you ever engaged in sexual behaviors involving these persons or objects? How often?
18. Have you ever hired a prostitute? Gone to a strip club, massage parlor, or used a telephone sex line? What about cybersex (sex chat with someone you meet online)?
19. Have you ever tried to stop having fantasies about children, kinky activities, or other uncommon content? What did you try to do? Were you successful? For how long?
20. How frequently do you want to masturbate? How frequently do you masturbate? How satisfied are you with this level of sexual activity?
21. How frequently do you want to have sex with another person? How frequently do actually have sex with another person? How satisfied are you with this level of sexual activity?
22. Do you ever use pornography (sexually explicit pictures, videos, or text)? How often? Since what age? What kinds of pornography? How do you access pornography? How much do you spend on pornography in a typical month? Have you ever used child pornography?

## APPENDIX 3

### MULTIPHASIC SEX INVENTORY

Your Agency CASE: Client

TEST DATE: Yesterday SCORE DATE: Today

## MSI II

( ) Omissions

[ ADULT MALE FORM ]

( )

<- Score Suppressed  
by omissions

### MULTIPHASIC SEX INVENTORY II PROFILE INFORMATION and REFERRAL ISSUES

( )

<b>ACCUSSIONS</b>	Physical Abuse	Sexual Misconduct	Porn Offense	OC NS	Peeping Behavior	Exposing Behavior	Sex Offense Involving Child	Sexual Harass	Attempted Rape	Charged with Sex Offense 2X
<b>ADMISSIONS</b>	Sexual Harassment	Obscene Calls	Peeping Behavior	Exposed to Adult(s)	Exposed to Child(ren)	Molested Child(ren)	Molested Pre-schooler	Molested During Rape	Molested Several Children	Raped
<i>Admits Committing Sex Offense</i>	Could Not Stop Doing Offense	Raped or Attempted	Raped Someone He Knows	Raped a Stranger	Raped a Date	Raped a Male	Assaulted Helpless	Gang Rape	Oral/Anal Rape	Used Weapon During Rape
<b>SUICIDE (S) INDEX</b>	Poor Body Image [ _ / 2 ]		Depressed Mood Tone [ _ / 5 ]	Past Suicide Attempt	Life Not Worth Living	Current Suicide Plan	Current Suicide Plan			
<b>SEX KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS (SKB) SCALE</b>	A score of 17 or less indicates a need for more accurate information about sexual anatomy and physiology. Higher scores tend to be a crude measure of general ability.						<b>SEXUAL ETHICS (SE) INDICES</b>	Believes it Unethical to Engage in	Child Sex [ _ / 2 ]	Forced Sex [ _ / 2 ]

#### RELIABILITY and VALIDITY INDICES and SCALES

TOTAL OMITTS <u> </u> / 560 - ALLOWABLE OMITTS ( Dn, Ju, Sc & Su <u> </u> / 64 + SKB <u> </u> / 24 + O <u> </u> / 12 ) = NET OMITTS (NO) <u> </u>					
SHIFT <u> </u> = ( First Half F% <u> </u> - Last Half F% <u> </u> ) • CONSECUTIVE ( T <u> </u> F <u> </u> TF <u> </u> O <u> </u> )					
INCONSISTENCY (I) Index <u> </u> / 16 • TOTAL F% <u> </u> • INFREQUENCY* (IF) Index <u> </u> / 8					
ACCEPTABLE RANGE			DEVIANT RANGE		
INDICES / SCALES	1ST σ	2ND σ	3RD σ	4TH σ	5TH σ+
<b>REPEATED ITEMS</b>	RELIABLE RESULTS	ACCEPTABLE INCONSISTENCY RANGE	INCONSISTENT TENDENCIES	INCONSISTENT RESPONDING	HIGHLY INCONSISTENT RESPONDING
<b>(RI) INDEX</b>	<u> </u> / 15 ( )	0 - 2 3	4	5	6 - 15
<b>PARALLEL ITEMS</b>	RELIABLE RESULTS	ACCEPTABLE INCONSISTENCY RANGE	INCONSISTENT TENDENCIES	INCONSISTENT RESPONDING	HIGHLY INCONSISTENT RESPONDING
<b>(PI) INDEX</b>	<u> </u> / 16 ( )	0 - 2 3 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 16
<b>SOCIAL SEXUAL DESIRABILITY</b>	VALID RESULTS	ACCEPTABLE DISCLOSING RANGE	FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS TENDENCIES	PRESENTS "LOOK GOOD" SEX IMAGE	"LOOK GOOD" PRESENTS AS ASEXUAL
<b>(SSD) SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 30 ( )	30 - 26 25 - 24	23 - 22	21 - 20	19 - 0
<b>SEXUAL OBSESSIONS Past Tense Items ( / 5 )</b>	ACCEPTABLE SO RANGE	SEXUALLY OBSESSED	HIGHLY SEXUALLY OBSESSED	ACQUIESCENT / MARKED SEX OBSESSIONS	"LOOK GOOD" RESPONSE SET *
<b>(SO) SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 20 ( )	3 - 9 10 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 20	2 - 0
<b>DISSIMULATION</b>	VALID RESULTS	ACCEPTABLE DISCLOSING RANGE	FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS TENDENCIES	"LOOK GOOD" RESPONSE SET	"FAKE GOOD" DISSIMULATED RESULTS
<b>(D) SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 20 ( )	0 - 9 10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20
<b>LIE</b>	VALID RESULTS	ACCEPTABLE DISCLOSING RANGE	CM. R OR EX SCALE SCORES SOMEWHAT SUPPRESSED	CM. R OR EX SCALE SCORES SUPPRESSED	CM. R OR EX SCALE SCORES HIGHLY SUPPRESSED
<b>(L) SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 14 ( )	0 - 2 3 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 14

\* For interpretive purposes SO range 2-0 is placed in the fifth column

#### EMPIRICALLY DERIVED OFFENDER SCALES

	←----- SEX DEVIANCE ATTRIBUTE ----->										
MALE OFFENDER T Score Standardization	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75
		Low	Moderate		Average		High		Marked		
<b>MOLESTER COMPARISON' (MC') SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 35 ( )										
<b>RAPIST COMPARISON (RC) SCALE</b>	<u> </u> / 40 ( )										

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## ABSTRACT

### THE CHRISTIAN AND PEDOPHILIA: APPLYING BIBLICAL COUNSELING TO CHRISTIANS STRUGGLING WITH PEDOPHILIA

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This thesis argues that biblical counseling is the only form of counseling that offers hope of true lasting change in life for Christians who struggle with sexual attraction to children labeled as Pedophilia. Chapter 2 examines the secular approaches taken by the world toward those who struggle with pedophilia. While a brief history is given to the broader category under which pedophilia falls, the majority of the chapter is given to the development of the idea as well as current treatment philosophies and practices by the secular psychological community with regard to those who have pedophilic tendencies.

Chapter 3 discusses the Christian response toward pedophilia. Beginning with the Early Church Fathers, this chapter highlights statements from the early church fathers as they directly speak about the common practice of pedophilia by the Roman society in which the early church was birthed. This chapter also discusses Puritan thoughts and treatments regarding those considered to have illicit sexual attractions. Chapter 3 ends with an examination of modern Christian psychology's treatment of pedophilia.

Chapter 4 transitions into a biblical approach toward pedophilia. This chapter speaks to the primary cause of pedophilia as well as secondary influences on those who struggle. Chapter 5 examines implications for both the one struggling with pedophilia as well as the church that welcomes such struggles into communion with the saints.

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