BIBLICAL THEOLOGY TRAINING FOR BIBLICAL

COUNSELORS IN THE TRI-CITIES

REGION OF TENNESSEE

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

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Doctor of Ministry

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by

Nathan Charles Moore

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APPROVAL SHEET

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY TRAINING FOR BIBLICAL

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This work is dedicated to my wife, Haley, who has made many sacrifices for my educational pursuits. She has shown me Jesus in so many ways.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DBI   Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*

NDBT   T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, Graeme Goldsworthy, eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture*

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PREFACE

Everything I have–I have been given (Jas 1:17). Everything I have accomplished is because I have been supported by others. All is grace.

As I reach another milestone in my life, I am indebted to many who have helped me along the way. First my family. My parents Stan and Ruth have encouraged and supported my educational pursuits since childhood. I am mindful of the sacrifices they have made. My wife has held up my arms in more ways than I can tell. More than anyone, she has sacrificed for me and has done so joyfully and without complaint. Haley, I will forever marvel at God's kindness to me in the gift of you as my wife.

For much of my academic career, I did not enjoy or value learning. This changed while studying under Dr. Rhonda Parker at Samford University. Thank you for challenging me to work hard and to consider the power of words. I learned lessons from you that have permanently shaped the way I view the world. I can trace my insatiable appetite for learning back to one conversation we had after a research methods class. Thank you to my supervisor and former pastor, Dr. Robert Jones. You have influenced my life in ministry in ways I see every day. Much of my fruit is your fruit.

I would also like to say thank you to the staff and members of Trinity Baptist Church in Jonesborough, TN, who have supported me and permitted me to continue my education. May we continue to grow in grace together.

Nathan Moore

Jonesborough, Tennessee

December 2020

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Some pastors faithfully serve in a local church while simultaneously contributing to ministries outside the immediate scope of their congregations. These are strategic efforts designed to advance God's kingdom and strengthen the local church. The Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC) is "an association of Christians who have been called together by God to *help the Church* of Jesus Christ excel in the ministry of biblical counseling."[1] As a local pastor, I share this vision of excellence in biblical counseling and see my participation in ACBC as strategic for the strengthening of my local church, as well as for the church of Jesus Christ. Thus, I am eager to see pastors and laypersons better equipped to offer biblical counsel for increasingly complex issues as they appear in local church life. Yet in order for counselors to handle complex counseling situations, they must also be able to handle the Scriptures with skill and care. I stand in solidarity with the biblical counseling movement and share the conviction that the Bible is sufficient for counseling. However, I want to emphasize that this is true only insofar as the Bible is correctly interpreted and applied. This project argues that biblical theology, which is concerned with the interpretative perspective of the biblical authors, is one of the tools necessary for correct interpretation.[2] Though the training provided by organizations such as ACBC is sufficient in many aspects, counselors would benefit from learning the discipline of biblical theology and how its insights apply to biblical

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[1] "Standards of Doctrine," Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, accessed April 23, 2020, https://biblicalcounseling.com/certification/standards-of-doctrine/. Emphasis added.

[2] The contours of biblical theology will be further developed below. The phrase "interpretative perspective" was introduced and expounded by James M. Hamilton, Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 15.

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counseling.

Context

Trinity Baptist Church (TBC) was established in 1984 and is located in the Tri-Cities region of northeast Tennessee. Since its founding, TBC has grown from a church plant of sixty-eight to over five hundred members and has since called a senior pastor, associate pastor, and other ministerial staff to serve the church. TBC had not practiced biblical counseling until I began serving as the associate pastor in 2015.

The general absence of biblical counseling at TBC is indicative of the Tri-Cities region. Only six counselors within a fifty-mile radius have been certified by ACBC. Five of these counselors serve in Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) churches. Many of these counselors regularly receive requests from local pastors to help provide basic pastoral counseling. TBC is a member of the Holston Baptist Association (HBA) which consists of 103 member churches. Of these churches, I am the only certified counselor.

Though growth is needed, there is nascent interest in biblical counseling. An informal group of those interested in biblical counseling has been meeting at TBC for three years. The group of about fifteen meets monthly and provides counselors and prospective counselors with fellowship, resources, and assists in the ACBC certification process. The group also functions as a regional, inter-denominational network that helps pair those seeking counsel with available counselors.

The interest group contains people with varying levels of competency, training, and experience. All have completed either ACBC's basics of biblical counseling course or have received some other comparable instruction in biblical counseling, but only several have been certified. Most have attended the Biblical Counseling Training Conference at Faith Lafayette, and some have completed multiple tracks there. Most of the group is female, and most of the participants are laypersons. Nevertheless, the group

represents a growing and vibrant network of believers who are committed to biblical counseling and desire to see it flourish in the region.

Biblical counseling is on the rise in this region and because of this, more people are seeking training and even certification. This is to be celebrated. However, as counselors are being trained, a weakness is emerging. Though counselors are receiving training that is adequate in many ways, they usually do not receive training in exegetical or hermeneutical skills, especially skills relating to biblical theology. This limits the ability of counselors to properly interpret and apply the Bible.

As a leader in the biblical counseling movement, ACBC may be considered representative of how many biblical counselors are trained. ACBC views counseling as a serious task requiring serious training. Its approach to training[3] counselors reflects this conviction and expects its counselors to think clearly on many complex theological and counseling issues. Due to these strengths, ACBC's training tends to produce counselors of established and growing competence.

Despite its many strengths, ACBC's training has limitations. While many of these limitations are likely self-imposed for the sake of various tradeoffs, important topics not addressed in training lead to limited effectiveness in counseling. The training required for certification is not comprehensive and is not advertised as such. It does not teach exegetical or hermeneutical skills and does not introduce counselors to insights from biblical theology.[4] Instead, ACBC encourages counselors to be life-long learners and to adapt their skills according to the specific needs of their ministries and counseling

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[3] Since its founding in 1976, ACBC has been training counselors by relying upon a three-part certification process consisting of instruction in the basics of biblical counseling, written testing in matters of theology and counseling, and supervised counseling. ACBC understands biblical counseling to be a form of discipleship and has therefore designed its training to equip not only clergy and counseling professionals but also laypersons. This accessibility is one of its great strengths.

[4] During the learning phase of certification, counselors are required to complete one thousand pages of theological and biblical counseling reading from an approved reading list. Of this, three hundred pages must be from theological texts.

interests.

However, since most counselors are lay persons who have not received theological education, they are left without the insights gained from exegetical and hermeneutical training. They are also left without an introduction to the insights gained from biblical theology. In fact, even counselors who receive counseling training in seminaries are not exposed to biblical theology as it is not a standard inclusion in counseling curriculums.

Biblical counselors have argued that Christians are competent to counsel from the Bible because the Bible is sufficient for the task of counseling. One could even say that biblical counseling as a movement rises and falls upon the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture. However, Scripture is sufficient for counseling only as it is rightly interpreted and rightly applied by the counselor. Biblical counsel is effective only in as far as it is true, and this counsel can be gained only by properly handling the Bible. Biblical theology is one of the disciplines necessary to properly handle the Scriptures and such training can be used to supplement the skills of biblical counselors.

Rationale

If Scripture is sufficient for counseling only when rightly interpreted and applied by the counselor, then counselors must be able to handle the Scriptures themselves. Proper interpretation is a critical skill for the ministry of the word to be effective. Therefore, Paul admonishes Timothy to "rightly [handle] the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15).[5] The Bible contains truth sufficient for counseling, but this truth can be accessed and transmitted only as it is rightly handled—a task requiring multiple disciplines. One must be skilled in exegesis and hermeneutics to interpret and apply the author's message. Additionally, the traditional disciplines of theology–systematic,

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[5] Unless otherwise noted, all Bible quotations come from the ESV.

historical, practical, and biblical–are necessary for this task and cooperate to make unique contributions to the proper handling of Scripture.

While ACBC should be commended for providing some counseling-specific theological training, it does not train counselors in each of these and disciplines. All ministries of the Word are affected by their interpretation and application of the Scripture and should therefore consider the benefits of the aforementioned disciplines. Yet this is especially true for biblical counselors, not simply because they are in a position to greatly influence someone's life but because counselors are uniquely vulnerable to mishandling the Scriptures.

The task of biblical counseling poses several unique dangers to students of the Scriptures, which increase the importance of training. First, counselors are on the front lines of application where they work to demonstrate the Bible's relevance to the complex problems of life. Like ethicists, counselors are called to demonstrate the Bible's immediate relevance in various and often bizarre situations. Such pressure increases the likelihood of error. Second, many counselors have limited accountability for the theological content of their counseling. While ACBC urges counselors to practice within the context of a local church where pastors may help provide doctrinal safeguards, opportunities for oversight and evaluation are quite limited. Ideally, a team approach to counseling would help mitigate this danger, but most counselors do not have this opportunity. A third danger is posed by the ever-present temptation to proof text—taking a passage out of its canonical context. The topical nature of counseling as well as the time pressures of the counseling session rarely afford a counselor to carefully study a passage in its context before he counsels it. This temptation is only heightened by the understandable pressure every counselor feels to provide immediate solutions to complex problems of struggling people.

It is difficult to imagine a ministry situation where any Christian, layperson or otherwise, would be so vulnerable to mishandling the Scriptures. And the stakes are high.

Though counseling is usually personal ministry on a small scale, counselors often have an inordinate amount of influence upon persons they counsel—persons desperate for help. The way a counselor interprets and applies the Bible has an immediate impact on the lives, families, and relationships of counselees. These unique vulnerabilities, combined with the high stakes of counseling application, drastically increase the need to train counselors, not merely to know what the Bible says, but also to handle the Bible for themselves.

If biblical counselors and the organizations that train them are concerned with the proper interpretation and application of Scripture, and if the standard training for biblical counselors does not include these skills, then counselors should seek to supplement their training in these disciplines.

Counselors would especially benefit from studying biblical theology because it aids in proper interpretation. This point is made by Peter Adam, who argues that biblical theology is crucial for faithful teaching and preaching because it enables one to interpret a text in its surrounding and canonical contexts.[6] And since counseling is a form of teaching, biblical theology is also able to provide insight for that task.

In this project, I am seeking to help biblical counselors integrate biblical theology in their counseling. Counselors would benefit from learning biblical theology in several practical ways. One immediate benefit is that it would strengthen the counselor's general biblical literacy. By understanding the grand narrative of Scripture and how individual texts fit into the scope of redemptive history, counselors are better equipped to understand those texts and as well as the broader theological message of the Bible. Second, biblical theology serves to provide a great deal of context, enabling the counselor to better determine the authorial intent of any given passage. A third way biblical

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[6] P. J. H. Adam, "Preaching and Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 104–8.

theology will serve counselors is by exposing them to what James Hamilton Jr. calls "the Bible's symbolic universe."[7] The Bible is full of divinely inspired symbols, images, types, themes, and patterns, all of them rich with insight for counselors. In some cases, familiarity with these themes is essential for answering major theological and interpretative questions. This competence will enable counselors to apply the Scriptures with creativity and personalized insight to the struggles their counselees face. Biblical theology enables counselors to access all these rich insights and serves as a safeguard from doctrinal error.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train biblical counselors with the tools of biblical theology for use in biblical counseling.

Goals

Several goals guided this ministry project and were established to determine the completion of this project. These goals reflect a progression of the steps to be taken to train counselors to integrate biblical theology into counseling.

1. The first goal was to recruit trained, biblical counselors who had completed the ACBC Fundamentals Training Course track or its equivalent.

2. The second goal was to assess the participants' current understanding of biblical theology and how it relates to counseling.

3. The third goal was to develop a curriculum that increases participants' knowledge of and interest in biblical theology for counseling ministry.

4. The fourth goal was to implement the curriculum as a webinar.

5. The fifth goal was to assess the participants' knowledge of biblical theology and their interest in using it in ministry.

A specific research methodology was created to measure the successful

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[7] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?,* 64.

completion of these five goals.[8] This methodology is described in the following section

Research Methodology

To measure the effectiveness of this project, five goals were established. The first goal was to recruit counselors who were qualified and available for training. Since this workshop assumed prior knowledge of biblical counseling, participants must have already had some exposure to the basics of biblical counseling. The registration form[9] asked participants to list their counseling training. Examples of acceptable training include the following: completion of ACBC Fundamentals track either at a regional event or online or completion of Track One of the Biblical Counseling Training Conference (BCTC) at Faith Lafayette, Indiana. Counselors who were actively seeking ABC certification were permitted to participate. Additionally, counselors who had received training at a seminary or Bible college were permitted to participate. Counselors who had been equipped by their local church or parachurch ministry for biblical counseling were also permitted to participate.

To recruit qualified counselors, I used existing associational and professional networks to inform counselors of this training opportunity. As an active participant in a broad network of counselors, I communicated with other counselors in our network. Invitations were sent by email or letter to all registered counselors on the ACBC counselor map within a 25-mile radius. This consisted of about ten ACBC certified counselors. Other communication initiatives focused on the churches in the area who are known to practice biblical counseling. Workshop information was distributed to the closest ACBC certified training center, Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church. Workshop information was also sent to Agape Women's Services, a local pregnancy center that

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[8] The research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

[9] See appendix 1.

trains its volunteers in biblical counseling. The recruitment goal was measured through the registration process. This goal would be considered successfully met when ten to fifteen counselors completed and submitted the online registration form.

The second goal was to assess the participant's interest in and familiarity with biblical theology and its use in ministry. This goal was accomplished by administering a Biblical Theology in Ministry Inventory (BTMI)[10] to each participant. The BTMI contained forty-one open and closed questions about the nature of biblical theology, the value of biblical theology in ministry, and the participant's level of comfort using biblical theology in ministry. The BTMI also provided a brief counseling vignette. Participants were asked to answer six closed questions about their confidence applying biblical theology to a ministry situation. A digital copy of the BTMI was distributed to participants one week prior to the beginning of the webinar and took about fifteen minutes to complete. The inventory was collected before the beginning of session one. The results were anonymous. Participants were instructed to select and include a memorable four-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) to maintain anonymity. This goal would be considered successfully met when at least ten participants completed the BTMI and the results were electronically compiled and stored for later analysis.

The third goal was to develop an eight-session curriculum that introduced counselors to the tools of biblical theology and their application to counseling. The curriculum covered how the unity of the Bible influences how the Bible is to be read, interpreted, and applied by counselors. Participants were instructed how to use the Bible's themes, symbols, images, patterns, and types in counseling. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric[11] to evaluate the material's relevance to biblical theology, teaching methodology, scope, clarity, and applicability of the curriculum. The

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[10] See appendix 2.

[11] See appendix 3.

expert panel included a Christian integrationist counselor with a terminal degree, a pastor with an advanced degree in theology, and one ACBC certified counselor. This goal would be considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, the material would have been revised until it met the standard.

The fourth goal was to implement the training curriculum. Due to restrictions on public gatherings at the time of this training, the curriculum was presented in a webinar format over a period of four days. This goal was measured by asking attendees in the post-intervention inventory to self-report attendance. Attendance was stored electronically by the researcher using SurveyMonkey. All sessions were recorded and made available in case a participant missed a session. This goal would be considered successfully met when five to ten participants attend 87 percent of the workshop sessions.

The fifth goal was to assess the participants' knowledge of biblical theology and their interest in using it in ministry. This goal was measured by administering a post-intervention inventory[12] to measure the change in knowledge and confidence level. The BTMI was used for the post-intervention inventory. The results of the pre and post-inventories were examined by employing a t-test. A t-test for dependent samples demonstrates a positive statistically significant difference in the pre and post-workshop results. A t-test for dependent samples "involves a comparison of the means from each group of scores and focuses on the differences between the scores."[13] Since this project involved a single group of the same subjects being surveyed under two conditions, a t-test of dependent samples is the appropriate test statistic. The goal would be considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrates a positive

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[12] See appendix 2.

[13] Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 6th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2017), 189.

statistically significant difference in the pre and post-inventory scores.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms were used in the ministry project:

Biblical counseling. Biblical counseling operates on the conviction that the Bible is sufficient for the problems people face and should be the primary resource used in helping people with the problems in their life. Biblical counselors "affirm that the Scripture defines and speaks to the gamut of problems in living for all people in all situations."[14]

Counseling. Counseling is a conversation that takes place when a person "with questions, problems, and trouble seeks assistance from someone they believe to have answers, solutions, and help."[15]

Biblical theology. Biblical theology is a way of reading the Bible as a unified whole with a unified message. This message centers around the person and work of Jesus Christ. Biblical theology is concerned with the overall message of the Bible and seeks to understand the parts in relation to the whole.[16] It assumes that the Bible is the self-revelation of God and will therefore have a coherent storyline. Biblical theology recognizes that the biblical authors use various concepts and themes to tell this story of redemption–a story which culminates in the person and work of Christ.[17]

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[14] David Powlison, "Affirmations & Denials: A Proposed Definition of Biblical Counseling," *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 19, no. 1 (Fall 2000): 19. This definition emphasizes the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling. For a more comprehensive definition of biblical counseling, see also "The Confessional Statement of the Biblical Counseling Coalition," July 2018, https://www.biblicalcounseling coalition.org/confessional-statement/.

[15] Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 13. This definition is intentionally broad and expands beyond formal counseling to include many of the discipleship conversations that take place in everyday life church. While the focus of this project is to train counselors who engage in formal counseling, many of its applications may be extended to common discipleship.

[16] Nick Roark and Robert Cline, *Biblical Theology: How the Church Faithfully Teaches the Gospel*, 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 26.

[17] Other helpful definitions of biblical theology have been provided by: T. Desmond Alexander et al., eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000); Peter J.

Two limitations applied to this project. First, the pool of qualified participants to recruit from was small. A limited number of counselors in my region were both qualified and available for training. Second, the duration of the project was limited to only eight sessions spanning four days. It takes a great deal of time to acquire a new theological skill and then to integrate those insights into ministry.

One delimitation was placed on this project. Participants were limited to those who had completed basic biblical counseling training by a recognized training organization or in their local ministry setting.[18] Though some non-qualified participants attended the webinar, they were excluded from the results.

Conclusion

The conviction that the Bible is sufficient for counseling is built upon the assumption that the Bible must also be rightly interpreted and applied; biblical theology is necessary for this task. Biblical theology seeks to read and interpret the Bible on its own terms–as a unified book. Counselors must grasp this unity and counsel accordingly in order to offer "the whole counsel of God" to their hearers. This project aims to provide counselors with resources from biblical theology to accomplish this goal. Counselors who learn to view the Bible as a unified whole will be in a better position to interpret and counsel the sufficient Word of God.

Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenants: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 81–126; Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 15–23. One should also note there is a spectrum of approaches to biblical theology. For an overview of these approaches see D. A. Carson, "New Covenant Theology and Biblical Theology," in *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays in Honor of Tom Schreiner*, ed. Denny Burk and James M. Hamilton Jr. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 17–31. See also, Edward W. Klink and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012). These approaches differ mainly in terms of method and emphasis and do share common ground which is reflected in the definition above.

[18] For a list of recognized standards of biblical counseling training see appendix 1.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR
INTERPRETING THE BIBLE
AS A UNIFIED WHOLE

The biblical counseling movement is distinguished from other forms of Christian counseling primarily because of its conviction concerning the nature of Scripture. Biblical counselors argue that the Bible is sufficient for the task of counseling and that contributions from secular disciplines such as research psychology or anthropology may be useful in secondary ways but are not necessary for the task of counseling.[1] This distinction is recognized in the very name of the movement. Counsel that is merely Christian is insufficient; it must also be biblical.

Yet to be truly biblical, biblical counselors must do more than hold to the sufficiency of Scripture–they must also have a biblical view of the Bible itself. To counsel faithfully, the counselor must first understand what the Bible claims about itself. The Bible must be read on its own terms as the inspired Word of God; it is not a diagnostic and statistical manual for spiritual disorders, or a topic book, or a source of character studies. Nor is it merely a collection of verses or an arrangement of inspired documents that can be isolated from the whole. Rather, the Bible is the inspired Word of God which was progressively revealed in history and presents a unified story of redemption culminating in the person of Christ. If biblical counseling is to be truly biblical, it must adopt a biblical view of the Bible itself and allow the Bible to direct how

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[1] For a more detailed statement on the convictions of biblical counselors, see the Confessional Statement of the Biblical Counseling Coalition, last modified July 2018. https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/confessional-statement/. For more on how the biblical counseling movement views psychology see David Powlison, "How Does Scripture Teach Us to Redeem Psychology?" *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 26, no. 3 (2012): 18–27.

its message is interpreted and applied. The Bible is sufficient for counseling only if it is rightly interpreted and applied. And, as this chapter will demonstrate, this requires a right doctrine of Scripture.

The Inspiration of God's One Word

The nature of Scripture–its inspiration, its inerrancy, and its sufficiency–is not a matter of secondary importance which can be relegated to the halls of the seminaries or the pages of academic journals. Rather, it is at the very heart of Christian life and practice. Writing on the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of Scripture, J. Gresham Machen called the truth of this doctrine "the supernatural act of God with which Christianity stands or falls."[2] This is not overstating the matter; for just as Machen argued, the very essence of Christianity is founded, not on religious experience, but on truth. This truth comes delivered in verbal form. Doctrinal truth is stated in actual words that have meaning. Christianity is founded upon the very words of the Bible and the doctrines these words teach. If these words are not true, if these words are not inspired by God and without error, then the entire Christian life, including the very message of Christ, is at stake.

Several passages in the New Testament provide critical contributions to the doctrine of the inspiration.[3] Second Timothy 3:14-17 is the most prominent of these passages. An exegesis of this passage will demonstrate that the Scriptures bear witness to themselves that they are of divine origin, a record of God's self-revelation. All words of Scripture are created by God and have the same divine author. In this way, the inspiration of Scripture lays the foundation for the unity of the Bible; if all the words of Scripture have the same divine author, one can expect the Scriptures to have a unified message.

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[2] J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, new ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2009), 64.

[3] Three of the most foundational passages that demonstrate the inspiration of the Old Testament include 2 Tim 3:14-17, 2 Pet 1:16-21, and Gal 3:15-20.

Inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:14-17

        Though the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration does not rest entirely upon this passage, it has been prominently and safely secured in this text. The translation of the text is debated, and proper exegesis is required before one can make conclusions about the nature of Scripture. This requires that the reader answer several important questions. Should πᾶσα be translated "every" or "all?" Does γραφὴ refer to individual passages of Scripture or to Scripture as a collective whole? What is the meaning and proper position of the critical word θεόπνευστος? Each of these questions will be addressed in turn after a brief consideration of context.

        In 2 Timothy, Paul is writing to his young disciple and seeking to prepare him and the church he leads for the challenge of persecution. Central to his concern is for the church to be faithful even in the face of persecution. Paul knows that such enduring faithfulness will be fortified and maintained through the regular teaching of the Scriptures by church leaders. Since a teaching ministry may seem to be a small defense in the face of persecution, Paul seeks to bolster Timothy's confidence in the "sacred writings." Timothy should rely on the Scriptures because he knew the godly character of the men and women who had taught them to him since birth. Unlike the false teachers and impostors so common the last days, Timothy knew the character of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice (1:5). He also knew the character of Paul (3:10-11). More than that, Paul wrote to remind Timothy of the nature of the "sacred writings" which, regardless of the extent of supposed inspiration, are able to make one wise for salvation through Christ.[4]

        Though the phrase ἱερὰ γράμματα (3:15) is used only once in the NT, it was a common Jewish reference to the OT.[5] The adjective ἱερὰ ascribes all the Jewish

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[4] Edwin A. Blum, "The Apostles' View of Scripture," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1980), 39–56.

[5] Frederick W. Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 205.

Scriptures as holy and, therefore divine. Paul then establishes the primary function of the "sacred writings," which is to make readers "wise unto salvation." George Knight III describes this quality as attributing to the OT a "certain innate ability" to lead readers to a spiritual deliverance found only in the salvation brought by Christ.[6]

The most critical words are found in verse 16. The first matter to be examined is the translation of πᾶσα: should it be translated "every" or "all?" Some argue for "every" due to the absence of the article. In this case, "every Scripture" would not refer to the OT "as an organic whole, but of every individual 'Scripture' within."[7] However, evidence suggests this phrase should be translated "all." This is because when πᾶσ is used with a proper or collective noun such as γραφὴ, the adjective may be translated "all."[8] Moreover, in its fifty uses in the NT, the normal usage of γραφὴ is as a proper noun, making "all" the preferable translation. "Every Scripture" should be considered an unlikely translation considering Paul's argument since he is describing how Scripture equips the man of God. It is more natural to attribute this equipping function to the whole of Scripture rather than its parts.[9] Even so, as Benjamin Warfield and others point out, the difference in meaning between the two options would be minor. If "every Scripture" is inspired, then it follows that "all Scripture" would also be inspired.[10] Upon this exegesis one can say inspiration is *plenary*: it is not only the so-called "important parts" that are inspired but rather all parts.

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[6] George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 443.

[7] J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles: With Introduction and Notes*, Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge, MA: University Press, 1899), 136–37.

[8] James Hope Moulton and Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh, UK: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 199.

[9] H. Wayne House, "Biblical Inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:16," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137, no. 545 (January 1980): 55.

[10] Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Phillipsburg, NJ: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), 134.

Extra-biblical sources reveal that the word γραφὴ was frequently used to refer to a piece of writing in the singular. Yet Pauline usage and other NT occurrences reveal that Paul was not speaking of any single piece of writing, for the NT never uses the word in this way; γραφὴ is always used to refer to "Scripture." Furthermore, this word should be read in parallel with the use of "sacred writings" in verse 15.[11] If this word were to be taken as referring to "all writing," meaning writing of any kind, this would categorically delegitimize all sacred writing and have a ruinous effect on the doctrine of inspiration.

It is also possible that Paul's use of πᾶσα γραφὴ is an intentional extension of the quality of inspiration beyond the OT to his own writings and to the writings of the other apostles. When Paul uses γραφὴ in 1 Timothy 5:18, he seems to be quoting the words of Jesus in Luke 10:7, thus extending the quality of inspiration to the Gospels. Additionally, Peter, another NT writer, uses γραφὰς in reference to Paul's writings (2 Pet 3:16). It is also evident that Paul understood his own writings to qualify as sacred γραφὴ, for in his writings he urges that his letters be obeyed (1 Cor 14:37; 2 Thess 2:15), read (1 Thess 5:27), and shared with other churches (Col 4:16). More convincingly, Paul claims that his and the apostles' teaching was received from the Spirit. The apostolic message then, preserved in the NT documents, is not according to human wisdom "but taught by the Spirit" (1 Cor 2:12-13). So, when Paul, just one chapter after establishing the value of πᾶσα γραφὴ, exhorts Timothy to preach the Word (2 Tim 4:2), he must have included the apostolic message with the sacred writings. Therefore, Paul's use of πᾶσα γραφὴ in 2 Timothy 3:16 helps establish the inspiration of the NT as well as the OT.[12]

The more difficult question of the meaning and positioning of the adjective θεόπνευστος remains. If the adjective takes on a passive meaning, it would mean that God

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[11] Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 235.

[12] Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 447–48.

is the originating source or the creator of all Scripture. However, if it were to take on an active meaning, it would mean that Scripture is filled with God's breath and, thus "inspiring." Warfield provides a lengthy treatment on how verbal compounds such as this are used. This particular compound describes the effect of God's activity. Accordingly, Warfield concludes that the meaning is passive and therefore reveals the *source* of Scripture rather than its *manner* of inspiration.[13] Knight notes that Warfield's study has been so widely received that it is the only work listed in the BDAG on this word.[14] Additionally, this should be read as a predicate adjective ("Scripture is God-breathed") rather than as an attributive adjective ("God-breathed Scripture"). Though both views are grammatically plausible, the former is preferable based on similar usage patterns in the NT.[15] However, when read in light of Paul's broader point (2 Tim 3:13-17) on the value and origin of the "sacred writings," it seems most likely that Paul is clearly stating that the Scriptures have their origin in God.[16]

At this point, one can safely assert that inspiration is not only plenary but also *verbal*. Scripture consists of words and it is these very words that are inspired. Paul demonstrates this understanding by arguing for a theological point based on a grammatical observation in Galatians 3:16. Therefore inspiration means that the biblical writers themselves were inspired as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21), but it also means that the words themselves, including their grammatical relationships, were also inspired by God.[17]

The doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration holds many implications for the

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[13] Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 275.

[14] Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 446.

[15] Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 446–47.

[16] House, "Biblical Inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:16," 59-61.

[17] I.S. Rennie, "Verbal Inspiration," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001), 1242.

church and how one approaches Scripture. For one, since all Scripture is inspired by God, it is authoritative on all matters which it addresses. It is to be believed and obeyed as God's Word. Second, this doctrine means that Scripture–which originates from God–is entirely truthful and without error. God's people can and must trust everything the Bible affirms in matters of salvation, obedience, doctrine, and even history. God cannot lie (Num 23:19; John 17:17; Titus 1:2), so when he speaks, he speaks truthfully. Additionally, if Scripture is breathed by God, Scripture is certainly useful solely on account of its origin (2 Tim 3:16).

Revelation and the Self-Attestation of Scripture

The Bible is clear that if humanity is to know God, God must make himself known. Romans 1:19 identifies God as the *revealer* of all that can be known about himself. God has done this, in part, through nature. Yet since humans are blinded by the distorting effects of sin, they are bound to misinterpret this natural revelation (Rom 1:21-23). Additional or special revelation is needed to interpret natural revelation and to know God rightly (Matt 11:27; 1 Cor 1:21). Thankfully, the Bible provides that revelation enabling man to know God. And even though finite creatures cannot fully comprehend an infinite God, they can know God truly and whatever he reveals rightly. All of this depends entirely upon the self-revelatory activity of God (Deut 29:29).[18]

If one is to read the Bible seriously, he must read the Bible on its own terms. And one cannot read for long without being confronted with the Bible's claim to contain divine revelation. The Bible claims to be the Word of God in many ways. The OT records accounts of God speaking directly to individuals (Gen 18:1-23). It also records the divine dialogue. OT prophets are presented as messengers who speak on God's behalf and carry

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[18] Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press; Zondervan Publishing, 1994), 149–52.

his authority. To disobey the message of a prophet was to disobey God (1 Sam 13:13-14). In some instances, prophets even speak for God in the first person (Zech 7:12-14). Moreover, the OT contains instances where God instructed a prophet to transcribe and preserve his words in written form (Exod 24:4). Jesus (Matt 4:4) and the apostles viewed the OT as the very Word of God. Added to this is the NT emphasis given to the fulfillment of OT prophecy. One simply cannot read the Bible on its own terms without acknowledging that the Scriptures bear witness to themselves that they are a product of God's revelation.[19]

The Problem of Biblical Diversity

When approaching the Bible, discerning readers will want to think carefully about what questions they should ask and in what order they should ask them. Due to the unique character of the Bible, the first question is not simply what does the Bible say, but what is the nature of the Bible? This chapter has provided a partial answer to that question by demonstrating from 2 Timothy 3:16 that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Yet inspiration is closely related to the question of the Bible's unity. This section advances the argument that since all the words of Scripture share the same divine author, the reader can expect an inherent cohesion despite great diversity. This unity leads to a variety of hermeneutical implications.

In his work on meaning and the morality of literary knowledge, Kevin Vanhoozer helpfully reflects on the nature of books and literary texts. Books are not merely the sum of their words or sentences but are unified and "bound" by their author. The very notion of a book requires the notion of a sovereign author who has a message which he intends to communicate in the writing and binding of his book. The binding of

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[19] Wayne A. Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 19–59. See this helpful chapter for more on this matter and how to deal with the problems associated with developing a doctrine of Scripture from the claims the Bible makes about itself.

the book serves a literal and metaphorical glue holding its parts together. The Bible, he continues, is the "Book of books" which gives a sweeping explanation of who God is, what he is doing in history, and what that means for the world. Unity, therefore, is a "controlling authorial presence" and is an unmistakable feature of the Bible.[20]

Even though the Bible has generally been treated as a unified whole for most of church history, its unity was questioned in the wake of the Enlightenment. With the elevation of reason came the discipline of historical criticism which abandoned the Bible's view of itself and emphasized the humanity of the individual texts. The Bible was not a divine book but a fallible human book which must be interpreted "like any other book." With a book as diverse as the Bible, scholars pursued seemingly endless individual "theologies" which often led to irreconcilable conflicts and contradictions among the biblical authors themselves. In this school of thought, the discontinuity of testaments and authors was heavily emphasized. The result was a fragmentation and de-spiritualizing of eternal truth. With no inherent, internal unity, the broader storyline of Scripture was lost. Any so-called unity the Bible may seem to contain could not arise from the text itself but must have been imposed upon it from the outside.[21] The biblical theology movement of the 1950s was in part a response to the fragmentation caused by historical criticism. As a result, many conservative scholars set out to demonstrate the Bible's unity. One approach was a quest to identify the "center" of the OT or NT. Though this difficult endeavor has been largely set aside,[22] the response gave rise to a renewed

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[20] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998) 103-4.

[21] C.H.H. Scobie, "History of Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 17.

[22] Thomas R Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), xii. In the opening line of his prologue Schreiner states, "By now it is common consensus that no one theme adequately captures the message of the Scriptures…almost any center chosen tends to domesticate one theme or another." This is not to diminish the value of whole Bible theologies, many of which have been produced in recent years. Rather this speaks of the inadequacy of any one theme to capture the center of the Bible in a comprehensive way.

interest in the Bible's unity.

The reader cannot approach the Biblical text without quickly being confronted with its remarkable diversity–a diversity which cannot be ignored. At face value, the sixty-six books of the Bible were written by different authors for vastly different audiences over a long span of time. The books are shaped by a variety of literary genres and sub-genres. Even within individual books, one may encounter a diversity of literary forms. A Gospel may contain parables, proverbs, homilies, and theological discourse. The Psalms are not a monolithic expression of praise but contain songs of confession, grief, and imprecation. Some authors organize their material thematically while others present it chronologically. Beyond literary differences, the biblical books also contain a variety of purposes, perspectives, and themes. Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of David while John presents him as the *logos*. Many of Paul's letters have drastically different purposes, occasions, themes, and tones. In some cases, there may appear to be contradictions even within the same book. In Joshua 13:1 for example, "very much land" remains to be taken, but Joshua 11:23 presents Joshua has having already taken "the whole land."[23] For some scholars, the problem of diversity is far more serious. James Dunn sees in the NT distinct and competing versions of Christianity: Jewish and Hellenistic.[24] Similarly, some have seen Paul and Jesus to be at odds. Paul, some argue, has a different theology than Jesus; and even though Paul is certainly interested in the implications of Christ's death, resurrection, and return, he seems to show little interest in the historical Jesus.[25]

With all this diversity, how has the church historically understood the books of the OT and NT to be inspired by one author, containing a coherent message? Stephen

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[23] C.L. Blomberg, "The Unity and Diversity of Scripture," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 69–71.

[24] James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*, 3rd ed. (London: SCM Press, 2006).

[25] George Eldon Ladd, "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament," in *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 684–719.

Dempster reflects on what would be lost if the Bible were in fact not a unity. If the Bible is merely a collection of ancient texts, merely an anthology of writings, then it could not contain any real unified storyline. In fact, any perceived unity that may appear to exist would actually be synthetic and man-made. "Is the Bible the repository of some marvelous stories and poems, or is it a whole, perhaps a narrative or poetic whole? Is it, in short, a book, or a ragbag?"[26]

**Literary Perspective and the
One Word of God**

If the Bible is an anthology of religious treatises, penned by human authors, the ragbag designation would not be unfair. But as we have already seen, the Bible is not merely human, it is God-breathed. The basis for the Bible's unity is not due, primarily, to its unifying literary qualities but rather to the theological conviction that behind diverse human writers is a single divine author. The uniqueness of the Bible flows from the unique character of the one living God. The foundational conviction of the church throughout the ages has been that there is one and only one God who has revealed himself through his Word. Though God exists in three persons, there is no conflict in his character. God is the immutable author of truth, and his Word must be consistent with that truth. Therefore, the Bible should be seen as the one Word of God because "the oneness of the Word of God follows from the oneness of God."[27]

It must be carefully noted that the one Word of God is a *written* Word. God has spoken and his speech is like any other speech in that it consists of words which have meaning. The implication then, is God's words are given to mankind in a way that is intelligible and able to be understood by humans. This Word is not a hidden Word but a

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[26] Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 20–30.

[27] Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 14.

revealed Word. What is revealed by the Lord *belongs* to his people in a way that is meaningful (Deut 29:29) and can be understood. While the broader hermeneutical implications for this point are explored later in this chapter it must now be made clear that God's Word is to be received and interpreted as a unified whole. This is why orthodox Christians have been able to embrace what critical scholars have struggled to accept: if God is, in fact, the one "author" of the Bible, the Author behind the authors, then its readers can expect authorial unity despite a great degree of diversity.

In this way, when encountering difficulties or seeming discrepancies among the diversity of biblical literature, readers should not be deterred from seeking a unified meaning. "The inspiration of Scripture establishes its unity and legitimizes the attempt to harmonize discrepancies and tensions in the text."[28] The church has recognized this as seen in the hermeneutical principle known as the *analogia fidei*. The analogy of faith recognizes God as the author of one Word in all of Scripture. God cannot lie or contradict himself; therefore, when what is taught in Scripture seems to contradict itself, what is obscure should be interpreted in light of what is clear.[29] In other words, Scripture must interpret Scripture because all Scripture has the same author.

While reading the Bible as the one Word from one God is crucial, approaching the Bible as literature is also necessary. If we have established that the Bible is God's *Word*, then it follows that the Bible is by its very nature *literature*. For this reason, readers who approach the Bible must consider not only what the Bible says, but also the literary shape of its contents. The reader must consider how the Bible expects to be read. To be successful, he must select the appropriate tools for the task at hand. Just as a scientist cannot use a telescope to properly study a beetle or a thermometer to observe an eclipse,

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[28] E. J. Schnabel, "Scripture," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 42.

[29] Bruce A. Demarest, "Analogy of Faith," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 58.

neither can the reader understand the Bible's words without the tools necessary for comprehension.

The Bible demands that its readers be just that–readers. The Bible is a text and as such demands to be approached as literature. Dempster states this point perceptively: "The biblical books, by virtue of their canonical unity and by virtue of their genre require a literary perspective."[30] Just as syntax and structure are taken seriously in the task of exegesis, so too must literary forms and devices be taken seriously. Scripture is literature. As with any other form of literature, comprehension is necessary to understand the meaning of a text. As later portions of this chapter explore, the biblical authors themselves wrote with this sort of literary awareness. Using various intertextual literary devices such as quotations, allusions, and types, they demonstrated that they were writing with a sort of canonical self-consciousness, with the broader corpus in view.

A truly biblical theology must have a biblical view of revelation. The Scriptures bear witness that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, unified by a single, divine author. It "does not just consist in a number of disconnected words and isolated facts but is one single historical and organic whole."[31] Those who approach Scripture must do so on its own terms and seek to read it as the Word of God. For this reason, one must still read seeking to discover the author's intention, but with an acute awareness that untimely he seeks the *divine* author's meaning.

Progressive Revelation

In addition to recognizing that the diverse Scriptures are the inspired, unified Word of one God, students of the Bible must also recognize that revelation is progressive in nature. An exegesis of Hebrews 1:1-2 demonstrates this by showing how Scripture

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[30] Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 24.

[31] Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 340.

involves a historical progression ultimately culminating in Christ as the final Word of God. Before the final Word of Christ was given, revelation was partial and incomplete. Yet it contained a great expectation that God would speak again. The progressive nature of revelation is a critical characteristic of Scripture which readers must consider during the task of biblical interpretation.

The Progressive Nature of Revelation in Hebrews 1:1-2a

The opening paragraph of Hebrews is recognized as a poetically stated introduction to the major theological themes that will be encountered in the book of Hebrews. Numerous stylistic devices like alliteration and parallelism[32] serve to underscore the significance that God has definitively spoken through his Son, who is the climax of all prior revelation. The whole introduction, which is comprised of only one sentence in the original, hinges around the central clause, "God… has spoken to us by his Son." The chiastic structure of the passage, which is thought by many to have been a fragment of a hymn, emphasizes that the Son is the ultimate expression–*the* Word of God. Though revelation unfolded gradually in history, it finds its completion in Christ who is the fulfillment of the prophetic word spoken in the past.[33]

What is most conspicuous in the text is that the God of the Bible is a God who speaks. The verb λαλέω is repeated, once as an aorist participle, God "spoke," and again as an aorist indicative, God "has spoken." The subject of the verb, God, is a God who reveals himself, for he has spoken in the past and has spoken again. From the outset, this verb sets up a significant contrast between the old manner of revelation and the new.[34]

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[32] William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1 - 8*, vol. 47A, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), 5–6. Along with five instances of alliteration of the letter π, and parallelism of sound, Lane notes other literary devices such as a stylistic variation of word order and a "parallelism of sense."

[33] Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010), 46.

[34] Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New

Textually, this contrast functions to establish two distinct stages of revelation. The differences in these stages of revelation are manifested in the historical eras God revealed himself in, the recipients he revealed himself to, the agents he revealed himself through, and the ways in which he accomplished this. In the first case, God revealed himself through the prophets; in the second case, he revealed himself in his Son. Naturally, these contrasts introduce a degree of discontinuity between the two stages of revelation. Yet despite these differences, it is the same God who speaks in each respective stage. The God who speaks in the OT is the same God who speaks in the NT.[35]

The text describes the first stage of revelation as "long ago" in the past (πάλαι). In this stage, God spoke through the prophets as mediators. This he did in an apportioned and varied way. The alliteration of the two opening adverbs πολυμερῶς and πολυτρόπως is for rhetorical effect, presumably to highlight that God's prior revelation to the prophets was diverse and irregular. The word πολυμερῶς may even refer to varied "parts," describing the how revelation was given in modest portions which were distributed throughout history.[36]

The temporal adverb πάλαι stands in stark contrast to the temporal expression ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν which signifies the last days. The latter is an expression found in the Septuagint and was reserved for eschatological contexts.[37] This is significant because it means the "appearance" of Christ has ushered in a new and different age–the eschatological age (Heb 9:26). The last days are underway. In this stage of revelation, in contrast with the prophets, God has spoken through his Son, "ἐν υἱῷ." No article is included, so the phrase could be literally translated "one who is a son." By using an

International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1993), 91.

[35] O'Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews*, 47–48.

[36] Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 847.

[37] Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 93.

anarthous noun, the writer expresses the qualitive force of the noun which functions to highlight the nature of the object. In this context, it means that God's definitive revelation comes through the one who has the quality or rank of "son."[38] Combined with the preposition, this phrase emphasizes the superiority of the Son which is developed as a major theme in Hebrews. The message is clear: God's Word, his message to the world, is spoken through "a son."[39]

The reader should note the contrast between the Word that is "spoken by the prophets" and the Word that is spoken "by his Son." Not only was the former spoken "long ago," but it was partial and incomplete, as it was followed by additional revelation. Yet when the Son came, he came as God's final Word, ushering in the "last days." The implication is that the Son clarified, completed, and fulfilled the Word of the prophets.[40] Christ is the climactic final Word of God. That which came during the first stage of revelation was an incomplete Word. Early revelation was partial and dependent on revelation that would follow. It anticipated a more complete Word–a Word that was not spoken until the appearance of Christ. Once Christ came, God's Word was complete, "for all the promises of God find their Yes in him" (2 Cor 1:20). Therefore, God's self-revelation follows a progression from lesser clarity to greater clarity and from incompletion to completion. This Word culminates in Christ, for beyond him no revelation is needed.[41]

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[38] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1996), 245.

[39] Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 93–94.

[40] Lane, *Hebrews 1 - 8*, vol. 47A, 11.

[41] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1990), 46.

A Biblical View of Revelation from Hebrews 1:1-2a

Several important characteristics emerge from this contrast between two eras of revelation. To maintain a biblical view of revelation, one must adopt and respect these characteristics during the task of interpretation. Revelation is apportioned, historical, progressive, and culminates in the person of Christ.

Revelation is apportioned. As already established, the phrase "at many times and in many ways" recognizes the apportioned[42] nature of revelation. The revelatory acts of God did not all take place at once but were revealed in "portions." The revelation given in the early era lacked the illuminating glory of revelation given in the latter era. One clear example of this is evidenced in biblical prophecy. In one sense, prophecy is incomplete without its anticipated fulfillment. As William Lane notes, "the ministry of the prophets marked the preparatory phase of that history."[43] Their message was given in anticipation of what would happen in the future. Each prophetic word and each divine promise was given with respect to something that would happen in the future. Depending on the perspective of the text, that future revelation of fulfillment is hidden from view.

Other biblical elements exhibit *organic* growth, expanding and growing over time into a more mature, unified whole. Geerhardus Vos draws attention to the "organic growth of the truths of special revelation,"[44] which means that "Scripture does not, in any one place, present static, full-grown concepts but the growing, changing ideas that are

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[42] Lane, *Hebrews 1 - 8*, 47A:11. In his discussion of this quality of revelation, Lane uses the word *fragmentary* to describe how revelation was given in various portions throughout history. Gentry and Wellum also elect to use the language of fragmentary revelation. See Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenants: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 90. However, we have chosen the word *apportioned* to avoid the pejorative connotation associated with *fragmentary*. The divine author's mind was not fragmented or splintered. Rather, God dispensed revelation in portions throughout history according to his sovereign plan.

[43] Lane, *Hebrews 1 - 8*, vol. 47A, 11.

[44] Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2000), 17.

part and parcel of the forward movement of progressive revelation."[45] Because of the organic nature of Scripture, each portion of Scripture exists in relation to other portions of Scripture. The OT is incomplete without the fulfillment of the NT, and the NT writers are clearly dependent on the OT to interpret the significance of the coming of Christ (Rom 16:25-27).

Revelation is historical. God's revelation is not only apportioned but also historical. Revelation is given within an unfolding historical structure that is bound to the events of history. As the above exegesis demonstrates, God's Word has been revealed at various times. God has spoken "long ago," and he has spoken "in these last days." Therefore, truth has a "historic progressiveness"[46] that unfolds across history and in actual historical events. God's Word is not delivered as an atemporal deposit of propositional truth but rather is given within the context of historical, progressive revelation. The exodus, for example, is an objective event that took place in history. During this event, God did speak to Moses in various ways, but he also *acted* in ways that revealed himself to the world. In this way, the exodus was not merely an event which served to progress God's plan of redemption; it also revealed truth about the nature and character of God in a way that is unmistakably bound to history. The God who is proclaimed to be a God of salvation (Ps 68:20) is revealed through historical events to actually be a God of salvation.

Redemptive history is one of the most common ways to think about the historical dimension of God's revelation. The biblical storyline follows a historical trajectory which begins at the creation event, progresses through the history of Israel, up to the coming of Christ and the inauguration of the eschatological age, and will reach its

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[45] Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 71.

[46] Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 22.

terminus at the consummation of the new creation. The story of salvation is interwoven throughout history. One implication here is that since God's revelation of salvation develops over time, biblical texts must be read in the context of this historical revelation. Each text must be read in view of its place in salvation history with an awareness of what revelatory acts have come before and what comes after. Only with this approach can the reader understand the full meaning of each text and how the story of salvation unfolds.

One should also note that Scripture is a form of word-act revelation. This means that God does not merely act in history and leave those acts to speak for themselves, but he also speaks through the biblical authors to provide the authoritative interpretation of those acts. The Bible clearly presents Jesus as the Son of God (Mark 1:1). It also provides a historical account that Jesus died on the cross (Mark 15:37). However, it goes further to provide an interpretative explanation of those events: Jesus died to "put away sin" (Heb 9:26). The pattern of word-act revelation stretches across the canon. For example, the OT may contain a prophetic utterance which is not fulfilled until the Gospels and is then interpreted later in the Pauline epistles.[47] The same is true regarding instances where newer revelation sheds light on earlier revelation in ways the early authors could not anticipate. Each of these forms highlights the historical nature of progressive revelation.

The Bible is not a history book, for it contains many literary genres, but the Bible is a historical book. The revelation it contains was given in history and records historical events that reveal God. So, it is right to say that every part of the Bible relates to the unfolding of the historical story of redemption. Thus, "it follows not only that salvation is historic, but also that history is salvific, itself revelation."[48]

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[47] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 87–95.

[48] Brian S. Rosner, "History of Salvation," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 714.

Revelation is progressive. Given the apportioned and historical nature of revelation, it is easy to see how revelation is progressive. As the revelation given long ago to the prophets continued to accumulate, it eventually reached a crescendo in the Word given through Christ. This progression of revelation through history is often called progressive revelation. Of course, this progress of revelation is not to suggest that later revelation somehow improved in quality, going from worse to better.[49] Rather, this refers to the fact that God revealed his Word and his plan for redemption gradually, as we have already seen.

Due to this progression, "the later revelation often builds on and fills out the earlier."[50] Since the same one God spoke in both the earlier and the later portions of revelation, all portions are to be considered authoritative and valuable. Newer revelation does not somehow sunset or delegitimize older revelation; instead, it develops and builds upon it. Later revelation does not detract from but supplements what came before. Jesus's oft-repeated phrase "you have heard… but I say to you" is an example of this. Jesus, the final Word himself, did not set earlier revelation aside but demonstrated its lasting value.[51] In this way, progressive revelation serves to demonstrate the unity of the Old and New Testaments for the New builds upon the foundation of the Old; they are indispensable to one another. Because of this, the reader should read the Bible in its final, canonical form. He should read with a sensitivity to the anticipatory nature of earlier revelation, which expects later revelation. Therefore, newer, more complete

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[49] C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1929), 248.

[50] Leon Morris, *I Believe in Revelation*, I Believe (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1976), 139.

[51] This raises many important questions regarding how the OT relates to the NT. For one, readers must consider how exactly does Christ fulfill the OT? Matt 5:17 is one of the critical gathering points for this discussion where Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill (πληρόω) them." D. A. Carson argues that based on the NT's normal usage of the word "fulfill," the verb has an eschatological weight to it. Jesus somehow came to fulfill what the law predicts. He is the true meaning of and the "eschatological goal of the OT." See D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: With the New International Version of the Holy Bible*, ed. Frank Ely Gaebelein, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 144.

developments in revelation should be given precedence over what came before.[52]

Revelation culminates in Christ. The most important characteristic of revelation derived from Hebrews 1 is that God's apportioned, historical, progressive revelation reached its climax in the person of Jesus Christ. Textually, this is seen in two ways. First, Jesus, in a manner superior to that of the prophets, is God's Word for the "last days." We have seen that throughout history, revelation has come in progressive stages, yet for this final stage of "last days," Christ is God's definitive Word. Second, in Christ, God "has spoken." The past tense of this verb indicates God's revelation in the person of Christ is to be seen from the vantage point of its conclusion. God has spoken; Christ is his final and sufficient Word to humanity.

It is theologically significant that God's revealed Word reaches its climax in Jesus Christ. Man cannot know God unless God takes the initiative and reveals himself to mankind. Throughout history, God has done this in a progressive manner in his Word and redemptive activity. Yet the Bible teaches that man is not able to understand this testimony without the illumination of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:14; Luke 24:25). After the resurrection, the disciples themselves were unable to see how this earlier revelation revealed the glory of Christ. Not until the Lord "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:45) were able to see "that everything written about [Christ] in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). Not only was Christ the one who opened their eyes to understand God's Word, but he also opened their eyes to see *his person* (Luke 24:39-40). Jesus claimed to be the substance and content of the OT. He is the revelation of God, the radiance of His glory and the "exact imprint of his nature" (Heb 1:3).

After his death and resurrection, Jesus had several critical conversations with

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[52] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), 132–33; 222–23.

his disciples where he taught that ultimately, his person and his work are necessary to understand the entirety of God's revelation. The first of these two conversations took place just after the resurrection on the road to Emmaus. Two of the disciples were walking when, unbeknownst to them, they found themselves in conversation with the risen Christ. The disciples were downcast because their hopes that Jesus was the redeemer of Israel had been dashed at his crucifixion. Their hopelessness reveals they did not consider the resurrection a legitimate possibility. The text makes clear that the disciples were not aware they were talking to the resurrected Lord because "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (Luke 24:16). After they related the incredible reports of the empty tomb to Jesus, he responded with a sharp rebuke: "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25). The interjection used by Jesus (ὦ) indicates the severity of the rebuke in which Jesus expressed his disappointment in their failure to understand and believe the Scriptures. He classified them as "foolish ones" (ἀνόητοι) with unbelieving hearts (βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ).[53]

The rebuke of Jesus may seem surprising since verse 16 states that the eyes of the disciples "were kept from recognizing him." The verb used is passive (αὐτῶν ἐκρατοῦντο τοῦ μὴ ἐπιγνῶναι αὐτόν), indicating that someone other than themselves prevented them from recognizing Christ.[54] When reading verse 16 and considering the rebuke in verse 26, one concludes that their failure to see was a divinely executed consequence of their unbelief. In their unbelief they had failed to believe "all that the prophets have spoken" (24:25). But it should not be surprising that those who failed to see how the OT anticipates Christ are unable to recognize his person. Thankfully, this was

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[53] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, vol. 2, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 1915.

[54] Bock, *Luke*, 1909–10. Bock explores three interpretive options for the passive use of κρατέω. Was God, the disciples, or Satan responsible for concealing the true identity of Jesus? Block argues for the first view "since the passive construction places responsibility outside the disciples and Satan is entirely absent from the resurrection account."

a failure that Christ intended to remedy for these two as well as the rest of the disciples (24:36-49). Yet the substance of Christ's rebuke reveals that he expected the disciples to have been able to anticipate his resurrection. In the light of "all that the prophets have spoken" and "all the things concerning himself" in the Scriptures, the resurrection should not have been hidden. The prophets reveal that Christ's suffering was a necessary (ἔδει) requirement which Christ has now fulfilled. If these two disciples had had hearts of faith rather than of folly, perhaps they would have recognized the suffering and resurrection of their Lord.

Thankfully for these two disciples, the lesson was not yet over. Christ then proceeded to show them what they had missed by interpreting (διερμήνευσεν) for them all that concerned himself. He was not providing a new interpretation but was revealing the meaning already there. The word used here carries the meaning of translating "from one language to another" or explaining the true meaning of prophecies.[55] On this point, Edmund Clowney helpfully adds,

> The phrase 'beginning at Moses and all the prophets" and the use of the verb *diermeneuo* indicate reasoned interpretation. Jesus did not present a course in 'eisegesis.' He interpreted what the Scriptures do say and opened His disciples' minds to understand it."[56]

Two indicators help readers understand the extensive scope of Scripture Jesus had in view here. Using Moses and "all" (πάντων) of the prophets, Jesus interpreted "all the Scriptures" (πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς)[57] and showed how they collectively anticipated Christ and have now found their realization in him. On the day of the resurrection, now that the Scripture had been fulfilled (24:44), a new era had been ushered in and Jesus

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[55] Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 244.

[56] Edmund Clowney, "Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures," in *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Samuel T. Logan (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1986), 164.

[57] Bock, *Luke*, 1917.

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showed the disciples how to interpret the OT in light of this new resurrection era.[58] In doing so, he effectively established the Christological hermeneutical method which becomes the necessary way to read all the Scriptures. The disciples were rebuked for not having this Christological hermeneutic and without it, they were unable to recognize the risen Christ. By failing to see that all revelation anticipated and then culminated in Christ, the disciples had been reading their Scriptures wrongly–a danger that still exists today. The necessary correction for the disciples then, is the same as it is for modern Christians– each text must be carefully interpreted with Christ in view.

The comprehensive scope of Scripture Jesus used indicates that he was not rebuking the disciples for missing a few obvious texts that point to him but that they had failed to grasp the whole point of the OT. Jesus was teaching that he is the lens needed to understand the whole OT. William Hendricksen makes this point well by imagining how this may have taken place:

> "The Old Testament picture of the Messiah is not confined to a number of specific passages… [T]here are, as it were, four lines, which running through the Old Testament from beginning to end, converge at Bethlehem and Calvary: the historical typological, psychological, and prophetical. It is reasonable to believe that our Lord, in interpreting all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, showed how the entire Old Testament, in various ways, pointed to himself."[59]

Regardless of what text the reader is interpreting, a necessary question becomes "how does this text anticipate, reveal, or reflect upon the person and work of Christ?"

Such a Christological reading is necessary to understand revelation which remained incomplete until the coming of Christ. That this revelation was progressive means that it was delivered incrementally and not all at one time. It progressed, stage

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[58] Bock, *Luke,* 1917. As Bock and others point out, the phrase "Moses and all the Prophets" is a figure of speech (*zeugma*) which refers not only to the books of Moses and the prophets but to the entire OT.

[59] William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), 1065. By including this quotation, the author is not arguing for these four lines of Christological development, rather that since Christ used all of Scripture it is reasonable to assume that he used various devices recognized by biblical theology.

after stage, until it reached its climactic stage in Jesus Christ, who explains all the redemptive acts of God. Christ reveals and brings about the ultimate goal of all of God's saving acts. The OT contained many shadows of which Christ is the substance (Heb 8:5, 10:1), and Christ came to fulfill all that was promised. The NT interprets the exodus, the temple, the monarchy, and the exile in light of the ultimate redemptive purposes of God which are fulfilled in Christ. The full revelation of God was not complete until he spoke by his Son. Progressive revelation recognizes a progression with an end–Christ is that end. And it is only through him that all earlier revelation can be fully understood.[60]

Jesus Christ is God's final Word to mankind. The advent of Christ, the *logos,* in his death, resurrection, and ascension, followed by the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, was the watershed moment in revelation. For not only is the work of Christ complete (Rom 6:9), but now, so too, is his Word.[61] As John Frame notes, any attempt to add to the testimony of Christ and the apostles in the canon would be like an attempt to add to the work of Christ itself.[62] In light of this, all Scripture must be read with an awareness that revelation culminates in Christ. "He is not only the hermeneutical center of the whole Bible but, according to the biblical testimony, he gives meaning to every fact in the universe. He is thus the hermeneutical principle of all reality… providing the center that holds it all together."[63]

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[60] Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 50, 63–67.

[61] This is not to say that revelation ended with the ascension but that God's final Word is spoken through Christ who ushered in the last days. Second Peter 1:16-21 teaches that the NT authors did not record a human word but were "carried along by the Holy Spirit." Christ promised the Spirit would miraculously endow the apostles to remember and record the words of Christ (John 14:26), thus authorizing the writing of the NT.

[62] John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 590.

[63] Graeme Goldsworthy, "Biblical Theology as the Heartbeat of Effective Ministry," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Scott J. Hafemann (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 284.

Conclusion

To be truly biblical, those who approach the Bible must do more than affirm the sufficiency of Scripture; they must also affirm a functionally biblical view of the Bible itself. This is especially true for biblical counselors who stake their competency and the legitimacy of their entire ministry on the nature of the Bible. The Bible attributes to itself that it is divinely inspired and has the triune God as its one author. Despite the breathtaking diversity of the Bible, the sovereignty of this divine author can be seen in the Bible's unified message of redemption. God has sovereignly chosen to reveal himself and his plan of redemption to mankind but has done so in a progressive manner. Because of this, his revelation is apportioned and progresses across the epochs of history until it culminates in the person of Christ, who is the radiance of the glory of God. Those who approach the Bible with a sincere desire to know God must interpret and recognize the Bible for what it is–a unified whole.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL
ISSUES RELATED TO TRAINING BIBLICAL
COUNSELORS TO USE BIBLICAL
THEOLOGY

Chapter two demonstrated that the Bible, though a diverse book, is unified by one divine author telling a consistent story of redemption. Therefore, the Bible should be read and interpreted as a unified whole. The Bible contains many unifying features; by using the tools of analysis and synthesis, biblical theology seeks to understand the theological message of the Bible on its own terms. Though the discipline of biblical theology is broad and complex, this chapter seeks to identify biblical-theological tools that will be useful to biblical counselors as they interpret and apply the Bible. These tools include a narrative reading of the Bible, a sample of biblical-theological themes, and an introduction to the riches of the Bible's symbolic universe. Some of the theological insights produced by these tools will yield immediate counseling applications, while others will contribute to the primary task of interpretation which makes application possible.

The Metanarrative of the Bible

Despite its great literary diversity, the Bible contains a unified storyline delivered in narrative form. This is an essential point for interpreters to comprehend as they seek to discern textual meaning because every text has been placed within the context of the larger biblical story. One task of biblical theology is to identify and trace the development of the biblical story, an endeavor that yields insights useful for interpretation and application.

The Bible does not merely contain true stories *about the world*; but rather, the

Bible itself contains the true story *of the world*.[1] The Bible even presents its version of reality in story form. Kevin Vanhoozer points out that the Bible, and with it Christianity, is not merely a religion or moral system, but itself a drama. Dramas center around the actions of actors, and the Bible portrays the drama of how God has acted in history through Christ. "The gospel is *theodramatic:* it's all about the speech and acts of God."[2] According to Vanhoozer, meaning and doctrine emerge as we discern and interpret the meaning of salvation history. Doctrine consists of summary statements about what God has said and done and right application consists of aligning one's life to this theodrama.

Many Christian thinkers have noticed a general four-fold plot structure of the Bible: creation, fall, redemption, restoration (CFRR). Scholars from a diversity of theological perspectives have made various proposals for how to conceptualize the Bible's metanarrative.[3] Though the details of these proposals often differ, each contains a form of this four-part scheme in skeletal form.[4] These four elements function as a

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[1] N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God Series 1 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 41–42.

[2] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Forming the Performers: How Christians Can Use Canon Sense to Bring Us to Our (Theodramatic) Senses," *Edification: The Transdisciplinary Journal of Christian Psychology* 4, no. 1 (May 2010): 7.

[3] It is difficult to determine who first conceptualized the Bible as a narrative. For conceptualizations of the Bible as narrative se the following modern proposals: Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*; Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005); Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2005); Christopher Wright, *Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative.* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

[4] For example, N.T. Wright sees a commonality with the ancient Greek or Shakespearean five-act dramatic structure and imposes it onto the Bible: creation, fall, Israel, Jesus, restoration. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God Series 1 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992). Bartholomew and Goheen approve of much of Wright's model but add a sixth act: creation, fall, redemption initiated, redemption accomplished, mission, redemption completed in their book, Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004). In a paper presented to ETS, Robert Kellemen suggests counseling implications for a more complex model and suggests the drama of redemption is best conceptualized with four acts, a prologue and epilogue, as well as two bookends. Robert W. Kellemen, "Theo-Drama and Gospel-Centered Counseling: God's Redemptive Drama and Our Ultimate Life Questions" (paper presented at The Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, San Diego, California, November 19, 2014).

common denominator and have proven to be useful in summarizing the story of the Bible or even the gospel itself. Herman Bavinck used them to summarize the gospel: "…the essence of the Christian religion consists in the reality that the creation of the Father, ruined by sin, is restored in the death of the Son of God and recreated by the grace of the Holy Spirit into a kingdom of God."[5] While evaluating the differences between these models is beyond the scope of this chapter, the four elements of CFRR may serve as simple and useful way for counselors to summarize the story of the Bible as a unified whole.

Using these plot movements, the story of the Bible can be told as follows. The Bible begins with the story of *creation*. God created the world and all that is in it and declared it to be good. He sustains the world through is providential care. Humans are made in the image of God, and salvation is described in terms of restoring mankind into that image (Col 3:10). Since man was made by God, his purpose may only be found in relation to God. As such, man exists to love, know, and glorify God. Yet since God declared it was "not good that the man should be alone" (Gen 2:18) man is also created to live in loving interdependence with others (Matt 22:39). Man is also expected to interact in responsible care toward creation as he works and cultivates the ground (Gen 2:15). Before the fall, man existed in perfect harmony with God, one another, and the world.[6]

This changed with the advent of sin. In the *fall*, every dimension of God's good creation was corrupted. Sin is a rejection of God as ruler and a rejection of his word as good. In their sin, Adam and Eve sought to free themselves from the perceived constraints of God's rule and to make themselves autonomous. As a result of sin, God

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[5] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:112.

[6] Bruce Riley Ashford and David P. Nelson, "The Story of Mission: The Grand Biblical Narrative," in *Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations*, ed. Bruce Riley Ashford (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2011), 6–16. Ashford and Nelson tell the story of the biblical narrative using the CFRR model emphasizing the mission of God. In their telling, they highlight the four-fold relationship of man with the cosmos, God, others, and self.

cursed his good creation. As a result, man experienced a broken relationship with God, others, and creation.

God's mercy comes swiftly. The first promise of *redemption* appears even amidst the very words of the curse (Gen 3:15). As the testimony of the law, writings, and prophets unfold, culminating in the revelation of Christ and the NT, we see that God's intention is to restore all that has been broken by sin. Redemption will be accomplished through the mysterious seed of the woman, but the unveiling of this plan of redemption takes many generations and to realize. The plan proceeds to unfold in the Abrahamic covenant and continues across the covenants, institutions, types, and institutions of the OT.[7] These culminate in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God incarnate and appears to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb 9:26). The Bible's narrative climaxes in the death and resurrection of Christ, where man is reconciled to God and the kingdom of God is inaugurated. Within this invisible kingdom fallen man can most fully realize the goodness of creation by loving God and his neighbor as himself (Matt 22:36). After his ascension, Christ sends his Spirit to continue his work of sanctification and as a guarantee of future restoration (Eph 1:13-14).

Yet the story does not end with the cross or even the resurrection. God has promised to redeem and recreate the world and intends for the blessing of his rule to extend to all the nations (Hab 2:14). All the Bible is moving toward this complete *restoration*.[8] Many glorious realities are involved in this restoration, but essentially it means that God will restore the original goodness and harmony of creation. Man will be

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[7] For an excellent treatment on the importance of covenants as well as the continuity and discontinuity of the testaments, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*.

[8] On this point Russell Moore says, "All of Christian theology points toward an end–an end where Jesus overcomes the satanic reign of death and restores God's original creation order. This overarching story–with a beginning, a middle, and an end–makes sense of the smaller stories of each of our individual lives. In Scripture the eschaton is not simply tacked on to the gospel at the end. It is instead the vision toward which all of Scripture is pointing…" Russell D. Moore, "Personal and Cosmic Eschatology," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007), 858.

reconciled to his fellow man (2 Cor 5:16; Eph 2:16), to the created order (Isa 11:8), and to God (2 Cor 5:18). Christ will judge all sin and will usher in everlasting justice and peace. God and man will dwell together in a new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1-4).

Since biblical theology is concerned with interpreting the Bible as a unified whole, it is especially concerned with tracing the Bible's storyline and is attentive to how the story develops and unfolds. Biblical theology may ask, "How does each part of the Bible fit into the whole storyline?" Naturally, to answer this question, students of biblical theology must have some basic semblance of what that storyline is.

Likewise, biblical counselors must be familiar with this storyline for at least three reasons. First, knowledge of the storyline is necessary for interpretation. This is because the comprehension of meaning is dependent upon the true context of a text. While every historical-grammatical exegete is concerned with the importance of context in interpretation, the question becomes what is a text's *true* context or contexts? Richard Lints contends that since the Bible's revelation is progressive, every text should be interpreted in light of three contexts or what he calls the textual, epochal, and canonical horizons.[9] Biblical theology is especially sensitive to reading the Bible as a unified whole.

A second benefit to grasping the biblical metanarrative is that it may serve as a basic skeletal structure to trace pan-biblical symbols or themes as discussed later in this chapter. Biblical theology aims to tell the story of the Bible in "fresh and unexpected ways."[10] In many cases, these tellings center around a symbol or a theme such as temple,

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[9] Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 259–311. The textual horizon is the text's most immediate context. This consists of many variables including the cultural, historical, and linguistic settings of the period. These are among the concerns most frequently addressed in standard hermeneutics textbooks which rightly emphasize the importance of context in discerning the intent of the human author. The epochal horizon recognizes that since God's revelation unfolds progressively over time, each teach should be read in light of its location in redemptive history. The canonical horizon is sensitive to the fact that all Scripture is unified, coming from one divine author. Therefore, each text must also be read in light of the entire canon.

[10] Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 9.

or lamb, or clothing. Obviously, one would be unequipped to tell the biblical story of clothing if one did not understand the most basic plot structure of the Bible. Additionally, many of these pan-biblical themes can become quite complex and would not appropriate to use the counseling room without summary and synthesis. The CFRR structure serves this purpose nicely.

Third, understanding and telling the story of the Bible as a metanarrative also benefits counselors because it can encourage counselees to consider life's ultimate questions. The Bible is more than a good story; it is a "metanarrative: a story that explains everything and so provides us with a worldview."[11] The CFRR movement of the Bible highlights and answers all the ultimate questions which are often the subject of counseling. Questions like "who am I?" or "what am I here for?" or "what has gone wrong?" or "how can things be made right?" are all addressed in the biblical story.[12] Biblical theology enables readers to access this framework by attending to the contours of the biblical metanarrative.

**Biblical Theological Themes for
Biblical Counselors**

Biblical theology is a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary endeavor with several valid approaches.[13] Yet the central purpose of each approach is to understand the comprehensive theological message of the entire biblical canon. Brian Rosner insists that to do this the reader must let the text set the agenda. With this conviction in place, the

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[11] Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 31.

[12] Many have written about the relationship between worldview and the Bible's metanarrative. For a counseling specific application of this model, see Kellemen, "Theo-Drama and Gospel-Centered Counseling: God's Redemptive Drama and Our Ultimate Life Questions." Kelemen argues that the theo-dramatic approach to Scripture has direct application to counseling by suggesting eight ultimate life questions which every biblical counselor must address.

[13] Recently, a few works have surveyed the various approaches to biblical theology. See Denny Burk, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Brian Vickers, eds., *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays in Honor of Tom Schreiner* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), 3–75; Klink and Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology*.

reader must then use the tools of analysis and synthesis. Biblical theology seeks to construct bridges spanning the whole corpus of Scripture. It seeks to read the Testaments as parts of a coherent whole. By synthesizing the theological content of the Bible into various themes, biblical theology can establish such bridges. Rosner notes that James Barr has called this synthetic approach "pan-biblical theology," which aims to construct whole-Bible theologies around a single concept.[14] Rosner also points out that carefully chosen themes or "concepts" are better building blocks for theology because concepts are more encompassing than mere words and can include layers of meaning beyond that of a mere lexical entry. Word studies cannot pick up on instances where a concept exists without the expected word or where a biblical author may contribute to a concept by bringing new vocabulary to the discussion.[15] Therefore, biblical theology can explore the theological message of the Bible by telling its story through a diverse array of themes. These themes do not posit competing stories but rather a collage that tells the story of the Bible in refreshingly creative ways. The next portion of this chapter explores two such themes which are especially useful to biblical counselors.

 The story of clothing. The interrelated images of clothing and nakedness are prevalent throughout the Bible. Though the significance of clothing may vary from text to text, the most prominent function of clothing is to illustrate God's provision of redemption for fallen humanity. The story of clothing begins with the occasion of Adam and Eve's nakedness. Initially, the nakedness of their created state was not a cause for shame or alarm (Gen 2:25) for the first humans were made in the image of God and reflected a measure of his glory (Ps 8:5-8; 104:1-2). Alarm enters after the first humans sinned and gained a new knowledge that they were naked, a condition they tried to rectify

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[14] Rosner, "Biblical Theology," 6.

[15] Rosner, "Biblical Theology," 6–8. Rosner provides numerous examples of this including the word "church" which is rarely mentioned in the Gospels. However, the Gospels contain a great deal of content on the kingdom of God.

with homemade, inadequate clothing (Gen 3:7). While many commentators rightly acknowledge that their original pre-fall nakedness was an indication of innocence and naivete,[16] the subsequent provision of clothing is often associated only with the covering of shame. However, the Bible often uses clothing to invest honor on a person.

William Wilder suggests that given Adam and Eve's role as royal representatives (Gen 1:28), God's provision of clothing was not merely a concession to cover their sin-induced shame but was a positive and hopeful act to invest them with honor "keeping with man's Gen 1 status as the ruling "image of God on earth."[17] G. K. Beale picks up this line of reasoning by arguing that this act of clothing is deeply symbolic of their restoration to God and of the eschatological expectation of a coming inheritance.[18] The key point here is that clothing should be viewed as more than a concession to cover nakedness and shame. Instead, it is often used positively, to invest persons with glory and honor. This pattern appears early and is continued throughout the Bible; clothing is used to signify one's social status and role.[19]

Once sin enters the world, nakedness takes on new meaning. Suddenly, rather than being naked and unashamed (Gen 2:25), the first humans were naked and afraid (Gen 3:10). Whereas Adam and Eve were created to live as priests in the presence of the

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[16] John H. Walton, *Genesis: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 203–4.

[17] William N Wilder, "Illumination and Investiture: The Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 68, no. 1 (2006): 53, 58–59. In this persuasive article, Wilder argues that most interpreters have wrongly emphasized that clothing is to cover shame. He argues instead that in both the ancient Near East and the NT clothing is closely associated with glory, especially the glory of royalty. Though Genesis 2 ends by drawing attention to the shameless nakedness of the first humans, this does not mean their condition was a permanent part of their prelapsarian condition. Their shamelessness was not because they did not need clothing in their sinless state but that they had not yet gained the knowledge that clothing was needed or to be desired. Therefore, Wilder assumes that God intended to clothe them at a later time. Wilder supports these claims by providing numerous examples from biblical and secondary sources that clothing is associated with glory.

[18] G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 228–29. Here Beale is dependent upon Wilder for the significance of the investiture of clothing as inheritance.

[19] C. E. Palmer, "Clothes," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 417.

Lord, reflecting his glory, they are now ashamed that they reflect the hideous image of the serpent. Now they must hide. Nakedness now carries with it the vulnerability and terror of standing exposed before the all-seeing gaze of a holy God. For the rest of the story, sinners will be terrified to stand undressed before God. Yet one could argue that the story of redemption begins here. The first act of mercy in the Bible is the provision of clothing. God replaces the inadequate, man-made fig coverings with garments of animal skin (Gen 3:21) and establishes a precedent; from now on, appropriate garments will always be required when coming into the presence of God.[20]

The most noteworthy example of divinely prescribed attire is seen in the clothing of the high priest who was to enter the very presence of God. His garments were designed to adorn him with holiness, beauty, and glory (Exod 28:2) as he represented the people of Israel. Key features included a turban with the gold-laden inscription, "Holy to the Lord," a breastpiece with precious stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel, and a seamless garment of expensive linen. Yet the holiness of the ephod was in stark contrast with the heart of the priests as their sinfulness and corruption played no small part in the rebellion, division, and eventual exile of God's people. As the OT draws to close, there is neither a temple nor a high priest who can faithfully represent God's people.[21] Yet the prophets anticipated a day where this situation would be rectified. Zechariah records a vision where Joshua the high priest was divested of his garments which were stained with the sins of the nation and then clothed with pure garments (Zech 3:1-10). Likewise, Isaiah foresees a day when Jerusalem will have her filthy garments removed (Isa 64:6) to be later clothed with the attire of God's bride (Isa 62:1-12). All this will be accomplished by the servant of the Lord, the Messiah, who will provide the "garments of salvation" and

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[20] Palmer, "Clothes," 417. See Exod 19:10; Matt 22:11-12.

[21] Nancy Guthrie, *Even Better than Eden: Nine Ways the Bible's Story Changes Everything about Your Story* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 65–68.

"the robe of righteousness" (Isa 61:1-3, 10).

All the purposes of redemption symbolized in the provision of clothing reached their climax in the person of Jesus Christ. In his incarnation, Christ divested himself of his heavenly glory to such an extent (Phil 2:6-8), that like the first humans, he came into the world naked and in need of swaddling clothes (Luke 2:7). Though Jesus put on perishable flesh and blood (Heb 2:14-18) in one instance he gave Peter, James, and John a glimpse of his glory. At the transfiguration, the disciples saw the Lord "transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light" (Matt 17:2). What the disciples did not yet know was that one day they would also share in this resurrection glory. Paul assures us of this with the promise that Christ will "transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:20-21).

But death comes before resurrection. The servant of the Lord who took on flesh, even as a naked baby, died the death of a sinner; naked and exposed before the wrath of a holy God. Not surprisingly, an article of clothing is highlighted in the story of the crucifixion. The narrative draws attention to Christ's robe, which like the garment of a priest, was seamless and too costly to sheer (John 19:23-24).[22] Three days later the resurrected Christ again shed and even folded his burial clothes, which were not fitting for his resurrection body, which was never again to see the decay of death (John 20:5-7).

The redemptive symbolism of clothing continues in the epistles where believers are called to live in light of the new spiritual realities inaugurated by the resurrection of Christ. Since believers have been united with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom 6:1-3), they are to live in anticipation of the day when they will appear with Christ and share in his glory. Therefore, that their present lives are to reflect his likeness in increasing measure is only fitting. This requires that they divest themselves of the filthy deeds of the old self and clothe themselves with the deeds of the new self as it

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[22] Guthrie, *Even Better than Eden,* 68.

is being renewed in the image of Christ (Col 3:1-14). Paul makes clear that these new vestments are not merely a new outfit of nice moral behavior but are Christ himself (Rom 13:14). Believers must be clothed with Christ and his holiness, for only those who are equipped with unspoiled garments may commune with God in the heavenly city (Rev 3:4-5). Even then, the pinnacle of redemptive history comes when the bride of Christ is presented to her groom in an array of bridal holiness described as "fine linen, bright and pure" (Rev 19:7-8). Now it becomes clear that this eschatological attire is more than a return to the unashamed nakedness of Eden: it displays the glory of a new humanity–remade in the image of Christ.[23]

The story of the serpent and his demise. Just as the story of clothing is woven throughout the biblical narrative, so too is the story of the ancient serpent, yet with far more prominence. From Genesis to Revelation, in some fifty instances, the Bible consistently portrays Satan in the form of a serpent or dragon. In many ways, the story of the Bible centers around the danger this serpent poses to creation, how susceptible humans are to his cunning, and the initiative God takes to destroy his person and works. The purpose of the incarnation is often depicted in these terms–a demolition mission. This mission is accomplished through Christ's atoning death on the cross and is ultimately realized in the eschaton when the ancient reptile is destroyed (Rev 20:2, 10). The centrality of this theme makes it important to understand the biblical story concerning the serpent. With its telling, wise readers will grow increasingly cautious with the sober realization that they live in a world ruled by such a crafty serpent.

Serpentine imagery abounds in the Scripture and is usually linked to Satan and those who cooperate with his agenda. Satan is infamously portrayed as a serpent in the garden, but the image extends to those who act like him (Matt 3:7) or speak like him (Ps

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[23] See chapter 4 for more detail on how the biblical story of clothing can be applied to common counseling situations.

140:3). Because of the hazard of a venomous snakebite, danger, particularly sudden danger, accompanies snakes. Since snakes often strike while concealed and can inflict great damage quickly, their danger has often been associated with the sudden judgment of God (Isa 14:29; Amos 5:19). Yet snakes are sometimes portrayed in more positive terms. Some find the unique movement of the serpent graceful (Prov 30:19). They are also portrayed as wise (Matt 10:16) or crafty (Gen 3:1).[24]

The Bible's first reference to the serpent designates it as "more crafty than any other beast of the field" (Gen 3:1). His cunning is revealed through his use of language. Though Adam and Eve were designated as the rulers over "every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen 1:28), they quickly disrupted the created order by surrendering that dominion and subjugating themselves to the serpent and his words. Tragic, even deadly consequences would follow these events. A foretaste of resolution comes when the Lord declares that the woman, through her offspring, would eventually administer judgment to the serpent. However, this mysterious serpent-crushing seed would be wounded in the process (Gen 3:15).[25] Later biblical authors reference this promise with great anticipation (Rom 16:20).

Though the demise of the serpent is promised from the opening of the biblical story, his power and influence do not seem to be greatly diminished. Jesus regularly refers to Satan as the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31) who has enslaved the masses by his deceitful influence (John 5:18-19). Satan is well aware of this power and seeks to use it to his advantage, even in his interactions with Jesus (Matt 4:8-10).[26] For this reason, Jesus describes the work of redemption as a mission to destroy to works of the devil

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[24] Leland Ryken, James Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds., "Serpent," in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 773.

[25] T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: Exploring God's Plan for Life on Earth* (Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 102–5.

[26] Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem,* 100–102.

(John 12:31, 16:11; Eph 2:2; 1 John 3:8).

Just as the serpent is presented as a type of Satan, in a strange turn of events, the bronze serpent in the wilderness is presented as a type of crucifixion. Moses, who seemed to be handy with snakes (Exod 4:3; 7:10-12), was instructed to raise a bronze serpent after the people of Israel suffered the bites of fiery serpents as judgment for their unbelief (Num 21:4-9). Jesus compared his agenda to this historical event saying, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14). Like the bronze serpent, Jesus was lifted up. Like the snake-bitten Israelites who looked upon the bronze serpent for healing, all who look upon Christ in faith may be healed. Some have even suggested that the bronze serpent further typified Christ in that he was in the likeness of a serpent but without the serpent's deadly venom. Similarly, Christ took on "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3) and became sin though he knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21). Like the venomless serpent in the wilderness, the lifted-up Christ became the sinless rescuer of those afflicted with sin.[27]

The Gospels, especially the Gospel of Mark, emphasize the triumph of the Son of Man over Satan and his reptilian agents. The reference to wild animals at the temptation of Jesus (Mark 1:13) is perhaps an echo of that fateful day in Eden where humanity submitted to a beast of the field. Jesus is frequently in conflict with Satan driving out demons (Mark 1:32, 34, 39) and unclean spirits (Mark 1:23, 26; 3:30). All who oppose Christ and his work (Matt 3:7; 23:33) are identified with Satan's serpentine agenda. Christ went so far as to accuse Peter of cooperating–even identifying–with the satanic resistance for seeking to question or hinder his Jerusalem agenda (Matt 16:23).[28]

The New Testament writers understood the death and resurrection of Christ to

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[27] Leslie McFall, "Serpent," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 774.

[28] Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem*, 112.

be the decisive event in Christ's triumph over the serpent and his works (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14). Perhaps this is why, in the eschatological age of *Christus Victor*, anticipating the coming victory, followers of Christ expected to be increasingly immune to the dangers of the serpent (cf. Ps 91:13).[29] But this sort of safety cannot be fully realized until the serpent is neutralized. Revelation depicts this climactic event when the dragon (Rev 20:2-8), along with those who share his image (Rev 21:8), will be destroyed. Images of harmless snakes, which eat only dust (Isa 65:25), are used to describe the peace and safety which characterize the eschatological age (Isa 11:8). This is because Christ will have crushed the head of the serpent and fulfilled the promise of the protoevangelium (Gen 3:15; Rom 16:20).

Applications from the story of the serpent and his demise abound.[30] The serpent imagery is intended to condition the human heart to the great danger of our crafty adversary. Such a concrete and repulsive image can shock the senses and cut through the fog of temptation to reveal the schemes of the devil. The palpable sense of danger should encourage Christians to vigilance, recognizing the gravity of their spiritual battle and striving to equip themselves with the armor necessary for protection (Eph 6:12-16). Above all, the story of the serpent points believers to the need for an antidote–an antivenin for sin. A greater bronze serpent is once again needed, pointing us to the Son of man, lifted up in the wilderness, drawing all men to himself (John 3:14; 12:32-33). Christians are called to follow in the steps of the second Adam, reflecting the image of God and rejecting the reptilian behavior of the serpent (Rev 21:8).[31]

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[29] McFall, "Serpent," 775. This anticipation may be detected in Paul's triumph over the serpent (Acts 28:3-5) or perhaps, even more speculatively, in the longer ending of Mark. Though this writer does not consider the longer ending to be original, it is interesting that followers of Christ are pictured as masters of serpents and immune to poison (Mark 16:18).

[30] See chapter 4 for more detail on how the biblical story of the serpent and his demise can be applied to common counseling situations.

[31] See chapter 4 for more detail on how the biblical story of the serpent can be applied to common counseling situations.

The Symbolic Universe of the Bible

This chapter is based on the premise that, despite its great diversity, the Bible is a unified whole. Biblical theology recognizes this unity and uses the tools of biblical-theological synthesis to distill and present the message of the Bible in ways that do justice to this unity as well as to the progressive nature of redemptive history. In the discussion above, we have just seen that one of the ways biblical theology accomplishes this is by recognizing that the Bible uses themes to tell the story of redemptive history. Yet, the biblical story is also told through the means of rich symbols, images, types, and patterns which contribute to the unity of the Scriptures. To be faithful to the message of the Bible, readers and teachers of the Bible must be aware of these how these symbols function and unfold. The following section addresses how the biblical authors use symbolism to summarize and tell the story of the Bible.

In communicating theological truth, the biblical authors did not feel restricted to communicating only through the vehicle of theological prose. Rather, they made liberal use of concrete items that existed all around them. Virtually every book contains items and actions that carry more than their common, face-value meaning. The Bible is full of concrete things like feasts, gates, goats, and wine. It also contains actions like fighting, running, sleeping, and harlotting which convey multiple levels of meaning. In many instances, biblical authors reach for images such as these to express their message. In such cases, if these are not recognized as images, not only will the author's message be missed, but readers may reach some strange conclusions. C.S. Lewis expressed the danger of misunderstanding symbols with cleverness, "…scriptural imagery (harps, crowns, gold, etc.) is, of course, a merely symbolic attempt to express the inexpressible…People who take these symbols literally might as well think that when Christ told us to be like doves, He meant that we were to lay eggs."[32] While modern

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[32] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001), 137.

readers may not be in much danger of thinking they are to lay eggs, they must be attentive to the Bible's use of symbols, particularly symbols which extend thematically across the full scope of the canon.

At this point, some key terms need to be defined–particularly to distinguish between an image and a symbol. "An image is any word that names a concrete thing (such as a house or tree) or action (such as running or threshing.)"[33] Images can be pictured in the reader's mind. A symbol must be differentiated from an image. "A symbol is an image that stands for something in addition to its literal meaning." So, symbols generally contain images, but they are *more* than images as they carry additional meaning.[34]

The Bible's use of tree imagery, which is carried throughout the Bible, illustrates this difference. At creation, God planted a garden and there he "made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen 2:9). Later, the Psalmist uses a vine–a type of fruit-bearing tree–to depict how the Lord's bringing Israel up out of Egypt is likened to Israel being a new creation (Ps 80:8). Yet Israel is unfaithful, so the Lord uses Assyria as an axe to cut down the tree of Israel in judgment (Isa 10:5-15). Yet from the stump of Israel, a fruit bearing shoot will come (Isa 11:1-10). The Psalmist utilizes the fruitful tree imagery to describe the faithful man (Ps 1). By the time the end of the canon is reached, the image of the Edenic tree has matured from an image to a complex symbol, depicting not only Israel but also Christ, who grants access to the tree of life (Rev 22:2).[35]

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[33] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xii–xiv.

[34] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xii–xiv.

[35] James M. Hamilton, Jr. *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 67–69. This is a selective summary of the Bible's tree-related imagery and is not meant to provide an exhaustive picture of the biblical image. Related biblical images such as branch, leaf, plant, root, and vineyard add layers of complexity to the Bible's use of this imagery. For more on these images, see the corresponding entries in Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery,* 116-17, 497-98, 649-51, 740-41, 914-17.

The Bible uses images and symbols along with many other literary devices. Understanding such devices is critical for basic interpretation. But in some cases, such as in the example of a tree, the Bible develops larger, longitudinal symbols that stretch across the whole storyline. James Hamilton argues that the symbols biblical authors select to use indicate how they interpreted earlier portions of Scripture. Symbolism becomes an authorial strategy to "summarize and interpret the Bible's big story."[36]

The sacrificial lamb is a prominent example of how the Bible uses symbolism to convey its message. When Paul spoke of Christ, the Passover lamb who has been sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7), he assumed that his readers would understand the symbolic meaning of words like sacrifice and Passover lamb. To understand his meaning, they had to have been informed by a several relevant texts. He assumed they would know that John identified Christ as the Lamb of God (John 1:29). He assumed they would know Isaiah identified the suffering servant as the lamb to be slaughtered (Isa 53:7). He assumed they would remember the function of the sacrificial system in the atonement for sins (Lev 4–5; 23:19) as well as the details of the Passover feast and all it commemorated (Exod 12:1-28). He expected them to remember the role of the blood in sacrifice (Lev 17:11). Perhaps he even expected them to recall the words Abraham spoke to Isaac: "God will provide for himself the lamb" (Gen 22:8). The point is, when Paul reached for a way to describe the redemptive work of Christ, he chose the symbolism of the Passover lamb. And one cannot understand Paul's meaning without understanding the images of lamb and sacrifice with all the symbolic meaning they contain. Paul used a symbol to summarize the work of Christ in an image. Since Paul used the symbol to tell the story, the reader is required to interpret the symbol to understand his meaning.

Biblical theology, as already noted, is interested in how the biblical story is told, thus biblical theology pays attention to the way symbols are used to tell that story. The

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[36] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?,* 62.

authors use images, types, and motifs as symbols to tell the story. Hamilton refers to these collected symbols as the Bible's "symbolic universe." As the authors read and interpreted the Bible, they saw a whole universe of images, types, and motifs that they used in their writing. To be faithful interpreters of the Bible, readers must work to identify and embrace this symbolic universe.[37]

Biblical imagery. As already stated, the biblical authors do not hesitate to employ a variety of literary devices to *image* God's truth. While these images often mature to carry rich theological symbolism, one must give attention to the images themselves. The Bible's use of imagery is to make abstract symbolism more tangible and concrete. Imaging devices such as the metaphor, which is "an implied comparison," or the simile, which "compares one thing to another… using the formula *like* or *as,"* are common.[38] These images require a deeper level of engagement by inviting the reader to consider metaphysical realities in a way that cannot be communicated through mere cognitive statements. Images and metaphors are more than simple comparisons but often trigger an emotional response which creates a more complex picture for the reader.[39]

Readers must be alert to identify and interpret the biblical imagery they encounter. Authorial intent remains the chief concern and images are not open-ended but remain constrained by their literary context. Once identified, images place several requirements on the reader. First, by their very nature, images must first be experienced literally, in a concrete or sensory way. Second, the reader must seek to "be sensitive to the connotations or overtones of the image." [40] By considering the image literally, the

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[37] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?,* 64–65.

[38] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xiii–xvii.

[39] Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 143.

[40] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xiv.

cautious reader will have rightly come "underneath" the text by allowing the Bible to speak on its own terms. By considering the image's connotations, the reader can then seek to determine the author's meaning.

As the size of the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* suggests, the Bible is replete with images of varying detail and significance. Some images, such as the Shulammite maiden's goat-like hair (Song 4:1), have a strictly local presence. Other images, such as water or shepherd, are longitudinal images, carrying more weight and significance as they are employed repeatedly across genres and stages of redemptive history. In instances such as these, interpreters must still be concerned with the interpretive questions mentioned above, but they must also be sensitive to how biblical authors make use of these images.

Consider the image of the temple. Though the temple represents one of the most significant themes in all the Bible,[41] one dimension of that theme is that the temple functions as an *image* of the whole cosmos.[42] A temple is a place where God's presence is manifest in a special way and the temple has various manifestations throughout the redemptive narrative. Moses made specific connections between features of the tabernacle and the garden of Eden making Eden a "temple-garden" or the Bible's first temple. One of many parallels is that Adam is presented as a priest placed in the garden to serve and guard it (Gen 2:15), just as the Levitical priests will later be instructed to serve and guard the tabernacle (Num 3:7-8; 18:4-7). Yet Adam failed to guard the temple of Eden. Once sin entered the world, God's dwelling place was no longer associated with earth, but in heaven (Gen 28:12-13), with God journeying down on occasion to make himself known (Gen 18:1). This began to change with the institution of the tabernacle

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[41] G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 17 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). Beale wrote a 458-page biblical theology of this important biblical theme. Due to the comprehensive nature of the notion of temple in the Bible, it is not surprising that the temple also functions according to other dimensions of symbolism such as a type or motif. This brief discussion primarily has the imagery of temple in view.

[42] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 72–75.

and eventually the temple. First, the presence of the Lord was in the ark of the covenant–the Lord's footstool (1 Chron 28:2), but once the temple was built the presence of the Lord filled the sanctuary (1 Kgs 8:10). God was once again dwelling among his people.

John draws on the temple imagery when he describes the incarnation of Christ (John 1:14) as does Jesus when he promises to "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). John interprets this to be a reference to Jesus' body (John 2:21). With the rich history and significance of the temple and its associated imagery in mind, Paul later declares the church to be God's temple, inhabited by the Spirit (1 Cor 3:16-17). Therefore, the church becomes God's means to manifest and extend his presence throughout the earth. This is true even down to the individual Christian whose body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20). The Bible ends in a way similar to how it began: with the creation of a temple. In Revelation the new Jerusalem is presented as a temple (Rev 21:16) coming down from heaven. Yet there is no temple in this new city, "for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev 21:22). No "temple" is needed because the presence of the Lord is fully manifest among his people–in the new heavens and the new earth the entire earth is the temple.[43]

As the image of the temple unfolds across redemptive history in its various manifestations, it is easy to identify similar features from one to the next. Not only do these similarities provide continuity in the biblical story, but each temple installment functions to explain and interpret what comes next. The insight from these similarities becomes very useful when interpreting a passage such as 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 where Paul uses temple imagery as a motive to glorify God through sexual purity. While teachers and biblical counselors may be able to teach the right meaning of this text, biblical theology allows them to access the weight of its full canonical context by drawing insights from the Bible's use of temple imagery. Sexual impurity should not be

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[43] Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem*, 13–73.

avoided simply because it defiles the body or even because it disrupts fellowship with God. Sexuality immorality should be avoided because it is contrary to the *entire goal* of redemptive history–for God to dwell once again among his people.[44]

The Bible uses images to summarize and interpret the whole Biblical story. The image of the temple is an example of this, for the temple embodies the concept of *a place where God and man dwell together* and makes it concrete. Readers who are not sensitive to the Bible's use of images, particularly the trans-canonical images, will fail to grasp the Bible's full meaning.

Biblical archetypes. Douglas Moo once quipped, "typology is much easier to talk about than to describe."[45] There are many reasons for this as evidenced by the ongoing debate of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries about the nature and interpretation of typology. Notwithstanding the complexity of many difficult hermeneutical and theological issues, an over-simplification for the cause of debate might be that in many cases, "typology" has been used to justify a variety of unlikely interpretations through creative appeals to allegory or symbolism. This has led some to find "Christ under every OT rock and stone," neglecting the author's original intent. Beale simplifies this complex debate by asking; is typology merely an analogy between the OT and the NT or does it entail intentional authorial foreshadowing?[46]

At the heart of this matter is the nature of the relationship between the OT and the NT. The NT clearly quotes, alludes to, and interprets the OT. The NT contains 317

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[44] Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 243–50.

[45] Douglas Moo, "Paul's Universalizing Hermeneutic in Romans," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 11, no. 3 (2007): 81.

[46] G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 13–14. Baker categorizes two major approaches to typology into scholars who center on the idea of 'prefiguration' and those who focus on historical interpretation and historical correspondence. See D. L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010).

direct OT quotations and thousands of allusions, echoes, and verbal parallels. Some of these instances are explicit while others are less clear, creating a continuum where clearly defined rules for interpretation are hard to come by.[47] Yet the study of typology attempts to identify and correctly interpret these correspondences. Definitions abound, and some are quite exhaustive, but D. L. Baker puts it simply: "A type is a biblical event, person or institution which serves as an example or pattern for other events, persons or institutions." Then he helpfully adds, "the basis of typology is God's consistent activity in the history of his chosen people."[48] This addendum is important because it highlights that types are, as Leonhard Goppelt puts it, "considered to be divinely ordained representations or types of future realities that will be even greater and more complete."[49] A type is not merely a pattern or example, but a *divinely inspired* pattern or example. Types are not mere symbols; they are *divinely intended* symbols. Such a conviction prohibits fanciful or arbitrary associations and instead recognizes that true types have been arranged by a God who has providential control over all of history. "To examine biblical typology is to examine the orchestration of the sovereign God."[50]

Based on this definition of types, two additional key points emerge. Types have a historical correspondence with actual persons, events, and institutions in history. As redemptive history unfolds, God reveals a relationship between the type and the antitype which develops organically. A historical reality functions as a type by pointing beyond itself to the antitype–the greater reality. This historical dimension of typology is so significant because of the amount of Christ's work which is described in terms of

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[47] Robert J. Cara, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament: Trusting the New Testament's Hermeneutics," in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized*, ed. Michael J. Kruger (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 593–94.

[48] D. L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 180.

[49] Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos, the Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1982), 18.

[50] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 78.

fulfilling OT patterns. When, in Romans 5, Paul declares Adam to be a type of Christ, it is critical that Adam and Christ are both historical figures; otherwise, Christ's redemptive accomplishments would not be effective within redemptive *history.* If Adam is not a historical figure, then Christ's accomplishment as federal head loses its significance.[51] Just as Noah was *actually* brought safely through the waters of the flood, so too will believers *actually* be brought safely through the waters of death and judgment (1 Pet 3:20-22).

A second key point is to notice how types feature an element of escalation. The reality of the antitype is "greater and more complete" than earlier installations of the corresponding type. All types find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ, God's final Word (Heb 1:1-3). And Jesus is quite clearly better than all previous types such as Moses, Joshua, or Aaron. Though this does not necessarily take place in a straight line, typology always follows this "lesser to greater" pattern. This is significant for several reasons. First, this allows readers to understand and not be deterred by the discontinuity between the Christological antitype and all earlier types. David anticipates Jesus in some ways, but in some ways, he *does not*. Second, it highlights the newness and the "better-ness" of Christ and the new covenant.[52] "The New Covenant antitypes are the *telos* of biblical history."[53]

So how does one identify types? The answer to this question is hotly debated,[54] but Gordon Hugenberger offers three criteria for identifying types. First, types must bear a historical and analogical correspondence between the type and antitype. King David qualifies as a legitimate type of king Jesus because he is a historical king who ruled over

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[51] Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," 18–19.

[52] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 77–79.

[53] Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," 21.

[54] For further discussion and additional criteria on how to identify less obvious types see: Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 19–25.

the people of God. He has a correspondence to Jesus who came from the Davidic line and Bethlehem, the Davidic birthplace. Second, a type must show evidence of being providentially designed by God to function as a type. This is most clear in the few cases where the text clearly identifies a type or pattern but is also clear when a fulfillment formula is used. The mere existence of a possible correlation is not sufficient on its own, there must be evidence that God intended to foreshadow the redemptive work of Christ. The comical example given by Hugenberger is "Balaam's ass rebukes a false teacher. Jesus rebukes false teachers." Yet it does not follow that Balaam's ass is a type of Christ. Finally, types must be forward-looking–anticipating greater fulfillment in its antitype counterpart. This distinguishes a type from a symbol which is "an image that stands for something in addition to its literal meaning."[55] A type is more than a mere symbol; it anticipates future fulfillment. Though blood symbolizes life and by the shedding of blood Christ gives life, it does not follow that blood is a type of Christ.[56]

An additional word needs to be said about the application of OT types. Even when types are properly identified, misapplication can be a danger. One of the great benefits of understanding typology is found in how it helps readers avoid misreading the OT. One danger which is certainly a temptation in the counseling room is to appeal to moralism. The story of Samson can become a story about personal charisma, courage, or even a call to "find the strength within you." But such an application fails to recognize the judges as installments in the typological pattern which ultimately culminate in Christ as the Spirit-filled deliverer and ideal judge. Though less common, there is also the danger of allegorizing OT passages in which one finds a variety of metaphors within the text and then springboards to application.

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[55] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xiv.

[56] G. P. Hugenberger, "Introductory Notes on Typology," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 338.

A better approach to application begins with a proper understanding of how types function as a pattern pointing to future fulfillment in the redemptive work of Christ. This requires one understand the OT passage in its context–as its original readers would have understood it. Then one can trace the typical pattern to its fulfillment in Christ as the NT antitype. From there, application can be made.[57] Perhaps one of the most useful applications coming from the study of typology is that, with repetition and escalation, types reveal patterns of how God works. These patterns eventually lead us to see the superiority of Jesus Christ and create an expectation of how God typically works in history.

Biblical motifs. A third category of biblical symbolism must also be considered. Biblical writers regularly employ literary motifs to communicate their message. Put simply, a motif is a set of textual ingredients that are repeated thus forming a *pattern* in the text. The pattern includes a discernable "grid of conventions." Robert Alter uses the phrase "type scene*"* to speak of these sets of repeated conventions. A type scene is "an elaborate set of tacit agreements between artist and audience about the ordering of the art work." These patterns function to create an expectation on behalf of the reader that the text will unfold according to the previously established pattern.[58]

A careful Bible student may notice a pattern emerging: persons tend to find their future spouses at wells. For example, Jacob meets Rachel, his future bride, at a well (Gen 29:4-12). The ingredients of the encounter are as follows: a male foreigner comes to the well, a woman is there who draws water, this act is seen as an act of special kindness, the woman runs to tell her family of the event, and the foreigner is shown hospitality. If this sequence of events happened only on one occasion, it would not be remarkable; but

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[57] Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church*, 78–80.

[58] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 47.

similar scenes are repeated when Abraham's servant finds a bride for Isaac at a well (Gen 24:1-33) and when Moses flees to Midian (Exod 2:16-21).[59] A pattern as conspicuous as this should be in the minds of readers as they come to John 4 where Jesus meets a woman at Jacob's well. Could it be that even though the Samaritan woman has already had and lost five husbands, Jesus has come to woo his bride? Whatever the significance of Jacob's well and the familiar conventions of a man and woman at a well may be, the significance of the motif must at least be considered. Readers who can discern the repeated conventions of motifs are able to approach each text with insights from earlier texts. This allows readers to perhaps see more than they would otherwise see.

Hamilton adds to the discussion of patterns by distinguishing between patterns (or motifs) and types as discussed above. He notes how patterns tend to be broader and while all types have characteristics of a motif, not all motifs are types. Hamilton agrees that the primary effect of motifs is they create an expectation that the established pattern will continue. He points to the festivals of Israel as an example of this. The Lord appointed three primary festivals for Israel to observe on an annual basis (Deut 16:16). The Passover celebrated God's deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt (Exod 12:11-14). The feast of Weeks (Lev 23:15-22) and the feast of Booths (Lev 23:33-43) celebrated how God provided for Israel while they lived in booths as they tabernacled through the wilderness and his continual care by providing the rain and the harvest. Celebrated annually, these feasts caused Israel to look back and remember how God was a savior, a leader, and a provider. The patterns of celebration were designed to establish the expectation that God will continue to act in these ways. For God's people, these annual reminders "would create a mental grid through which they would interpret their lives and according to which they would expect God to act for them in the future."[60] But the feast

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[59] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, xv.

[60] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 87–89.

motifs establish more than the saving, leading, providing character of God; they also establish the pattern that no one is to appear before God empty-handed (Exod 23:15). They also condition and inform the consciences of the people that they continue to need and can anticipate a greater exodus, a more fruitful harvest, a more glorious redemption.[61]

This symbolic universe, made of symbols, images, types, and motifs, is employed by the biblical authors to summarize and interpret the biblical story. In most cases, these symbols are not textually isolated but span longitudinally across the canon. Those who are interested in faithfully interpreting and communicating the message of the Bible to others must recognize the literary and theological significance of this symbolic universe and learn to identify and interpret it. As they do, they will quickly discover it contains invaluable insight for life and godliness.

Conclusion

Counselors who appreciate the unity of the Bible are able to use these biblical-theological tools to gain better access to the theological message of the Bible. The purpose of this discussion is not primarily to catalog the specific counseling applications produced by these tools but rather to demonstrate their relevance to the discipline of biblical counseling. Biblical counseling rises or falls on the sufficiency of the Scripture as it is rightly interpreted. For this reason, counselors must grow increasingly competent using the tools of biblical theology.

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[61] For more on how the feast patterns can be applied to counseling, see chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTING THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY IN
MINISTRY WEBINAR

Introduction

With the biblical and theological foundations for interpreting and counseling from the Bible as a unified whole now in place, the purpose of this chapter is to describe the process of implementing this ministry project. The concern for this project grew out of my fellowship with other biblical counselors in my church and across the Tri-Cities region. Most of the biblical counselors I knew were laypersons and had been equipped through competent training organizations such as ACBC or ABC, but none of them had received any formal theological training. While the lack of theological training does not disqualify one from the work of interpersonal ministry, I noticed that without the theological and hermeneutical training which is standard in most seminaries, counselors were unknowingly making interpretive mistakes or, more frequently, were unable to interpret and apply significant portions of the Bible in their counseling. At the same time, my reading of the Bible was being enriched by reading major works in biblical theology. Gradually, these insights began to make their way into my preaching and counseling ministries. In this way, the motivation for this project was born.

The purpose of this project was to train biblical counselors with the tools of biblical theology for use in biblical counseling. This project was guided by five progressive goals. The first goal was to recruit trained, biblical counselors who had completed the ACBC Fundamentals Training Course track or its equivalent. The second goal to was assess the participants' current understanding of biblical theology and how it relates to counseling. The third goal was to develop a curriculum that increases

participants' knowledge of and interest in biblical theology for counseling ministry. The fourth goal was to implement the curriculum as a webinar. The fifth goal was to assess the participants' knowledge of biblical theology and their interest in using it in ministry.

These goals were carried out by executing a plan, which can be divided into five phases.[1] Phase 1 included developing a curriculum that was designed to introduce attendees to biblical theology and to demonstrate its relevance to biblical counseling. Phase 2 included recruiting participants who were qualified and willing to attend the required workshops. I developed the Biblical Theology in Ministry Inventory pre-test (BTMI),[2] designed to measure participants' understanding of biblical theology and its usefulness in ministry during this time. Phase 3 was due to the unexpected disruption of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and accounts for the many adjustments that needed to be made to transition the in-person workshop to an interactive webinar. Phase 4 is when the webinar was executed. During Phase 5, the BTMI post-test was administered and the results were recorded for evaluation.

Preparation Period

Phase 1 Curriculum Development:
(January 10 – February 21)

On January 10, I began to develop the curriculum for this project. At this point, several members of the counseling community had already expressed interest in this seminar, and I had received about eight soft commitments from them to attend. A few attendees were planning to travel from out of state to attend the seminar. My initial plan was to develop curriculum for an in-person workshop with about ten attendees that would include lectures, case studies, and small group discussions. Since about half of the

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[1] My original project proposal included only four phases of execution. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 forced me to make significant alterations to my plans. I have added a phase to account for the COVID-19 disruption.

[2] See appendix 2.

original attendees were going to be traveling from out of state, I decided to execute the whole seminar in an intensive format in ten sessions over two consecutive weekends. The training was scheduled to take place April 17-18 and 24-25. Friday evening sessions would be from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Saturday sessions would be from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Given the intimate size of the seminar, I planned to devote a significant portion of time to the application of seminar principles through case study discussions. Attendees were going to be given a variety of written assignments to complete outside of the scheduled seminar times. I planned to provide catered meals due to the lengthy time commitment and to foster fellowship and allow for networking among the participants.

The first step in this process was to develop a schedule and training outline for the seminar. Each session was intended to last about fifty minutes. During week 1, I developed an outline for the overall seminar and developed a goal and thesis statement for each session. During week 2, I wrote the content for session 1. Session 1 was designed to provide an introduction to biblical theology including how biblical theology relates to the sufficiency of Scripture, a central tenant in biblical counseling. Various definitions of biblical theology would be discussed, and a simple definition would be proposed for the seminar. During week 2, I also developed an outline for session 2. Session 2 would begin by introducing the first of nine biblical-theological tools for counselors. The first tool to be introduced in session 2 was a metanarrative approach to reading Scripture. I planned to introduce how to use this approach in counseling and to illustrate it with a case study.

During week 3, I developed an outline for session 3 where I intended to introduce the first of three pan-biblical themes for counseling. The first theme was the biblical theme of marriage. In session 3, I planned to present a case study, teach the pan-biblical theme of marriage, arguing the biblical story could be told through the lens of marriage. I then planned to discuss its applications for counseling. During week 3, I also developed an outline for session 4 where I intended to teach the pan-biblical theme of

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clothing. I planned to present a case study, then argue the story of the Bible could be told through the story of clothing. The session would conclude with a discussion of counseling application using the previously given case study.

During week 4, I developed an outline for session 5. During session 5, I planned to teach the final pan-biblical theme of reptiles. As with the two previous sessions, I intended to introduce a counseling vignette, tell the story of the Bible through the theme of the serpent and his defeat, and then discuss its applications for counseling in the previously given counseling vignette.

In week 5, I developed an outline for session 6. Session 6 marked a turn in the seminar as we moved on from pan-biblical themes to a new set of biblical-theological tools for counselors by exploring the Bible's symbolic universe. Session 6 was designed to introduce counselors to this symbolic universe and to explain that just as some pan-biblical themes span the Bible, some pan-biblical symbols do the same. As with previous sessions, my plan was to introduce the lesson content and to discuss how to apply symbols to common counseling situations. I also developed the outline for session 7, which was designed to teach counselees about biblical imagery, especially major biblical images such as shepherd, lamb, and rock. This session included seven advantages for using images and symbols in counseling as well as steps for implementing images and symbols into counseling.

During week 6, I developed an outline for session 8 typology. Participants would be introduced to a definition of typology using Romans 5 as an example. Next, we would cover the characteristics of types, how to identify types, and examples of types useful in counseling. In this session, we would give careful attention to the tasking of moving from type to application.

During week 7, I developed the final two session outlines. Session 9 would teach counselors how to identify biblical patterns and how to use them in counseling. I planned to focus our discussion on the Bible's feast patterns as well as the biblical pattern

of lament. This session had a special section on how to use the pattern of lament to create homework assignments for counselees. This session concluded with a discussion of how to apply patterns to counseling by discussing a counseling vignette. During week 7, I also created an outline for the pattern of promise and fulfillment. In this tenth and final session, I planned to teach participants how to discern various biblical patterns of promise and fulfillment. We were to conclude the seminar by discussing four ways counselors could use the Bible's pattern of promise and fulfillment in their counseling, especially to give counselees hope.

After completing my initial training outline, I sought to share this information with my supervisor. The first draft of my training outline exceeded eighty pages, so I wrote session summaries which I emailed to my supervisor on February 21. Each summary included a session thesis and a session goal.

Phase 2: Recruitment (February 27 –
March 17)

The first goal in this project was to recruit trained, biblical counselors who had completed the ACBC Fundamentals Training Course track or its equivalent. The recruiting process began by word-of-mouth several months before the seminar date was set. As mentioned in Chapter 1, I am a founding leader of an informal meetup for biblical counselors in the Tri-cities area. This network has grown gradually over the years to include more people with a greater diversity of involvement in biblical counseling. This meetup has two ACBC certified counselors, five ABC certified counselors, and several participants with professional licenses or advanced degrees in counseling. A critical part of my recruitment strategy was to leverage this growing network of counselors.

To promote this seminar, I created three promotional artifacts. I designed a high-quality brochure which I printed in full color.[3] This two-page brochure included all

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[3] See appendix 7.

relevant details for the seminar including an outline of seminar content. Additionally, it contained the basic occasion of the seminar and asked readers to consider "How Thick Is Your Counselor's Bible?" The flyer also contained information about who should attend, biographical information about the instructor, and how to register online. The information on these flyers was replicated in two other forms, a website created for this occasion and an ongoing email campaign.

These flyers were distributed in person, through the mail, and through email to various ministries and persons. On March 2, I gave a ten-minute promotional speech to all members in attendance at our local biblical counseling meetup. All attendees received a flyer. Flyers were also mailed and emailed to contacts at the nearest ACBC Counseling Training Center at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church in Greeneville, TN. Flyers were sent to the certified counselors at that church. Flyers were also sent to the founder of Thrive Life Advancement Ministries, a local discipleship ministry. Additional flyers were sent to all persons who recently completed the ABC certification course at Bridwell Heights Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, TN. An additional pack of flyers was delivered to the executive director of Agape Women's Services, a pregnancy medical clinic in the region. Among its many services, Agape provides post-abortion care and trains dozens of its volunteers in the basics of biblical counseling. I also delivered flyers to several local pastors in the Holston Baptist Association and key administrators at Providence Academy, a local Christian school with an interest in biblical counseling.

In tandem with flyer distribution, I also launched a targeted email campaign with advanced analytics. This campaign included seven different emails to fifty-seven contacts from the sources mentioned above. The first of these emails was sent out on March 6 and most of the subsequent emails were sent at periodic intervals. These emails contained various representations of all relevant seminar information including the ability to register online and to download the seminar flyer for sharing. Each email directed users to a webpage created just for this event. Participants could register online through

email or the website. Collectively, these emails had an 86.02% open rate and a 66.0% conversion rate for seminar registration. Registration for this seminar took place online using Google Forms.[4]

During this period, I began to develop a survey to meet goal 2, which would allow me to assess the participants' current understanding of biblical theology and how it relates to counseling. This initial pre-test draft included sixty-two Likert-scale statements which were organized according to the content of each seminar session. During this time, I also developed a Curriculum Evaluation Rubric (CER)[5] to give to a panel of experts who would review my material. This concluded the end of phase 2.

Phase 3: COVID-19 Disruption (March 17 – April 15)

Though phase 3 of this project was unplanned, it was a necessary addition for its execution. On March 11, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. The next day, the state of Tennessee declared a state of emergency. On March 16, local schools closed, and the White House issued guidelines urging Americans to restrict public gatherings to less than ten people. On March 22, our church canceled all services for an indefinite period.

Though registration for my seminar opened at the beginning of March, it quickly became apparent that an in-person gathering in April was not going to take place. On March 17, I had a phone conversation with Dr. Matthew Haste, and we discussed various options for how to proceed with this ministry project. During this phone call, Dr. Haste gave me verbal approval to proceed with this project by transitioning from an in-person seminar to a webinar. I discussed this with my faculty supervisor by email and phone. On March 21, we decided to change course and proceeded with plans to execute

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[4] See appendix 1.

[5] See appendix 3.

this project using the webinar platform.

The first step in transitioning from the seminar to webinar format was to communicate with existing registrants. At this point, eight people had registered for the seminar, and several of them were planning on attending from out-of-state. I communicated with each of them personally and told them that the event would proceed as a webinar during the same dates. On April 1, I began a three-part email campaign communicating the change in seminar format. During this time, other states began to issue stay-at-home orders. On April 2, the governor of Tennessee issued a stay-at-home order, just three days after the governor of North Carolina issued a stay-at-home order for residents of North Carolina. The combined effect of providing this training as a webinar and so many people finding themselves under stay-at-home orders led to a registration boom. Though my initial goal was to recruit five to ten qualified counselors to register for this event, by April 7, twenty-eight participants from various states had registered. By the time registration closed on April 15, thirty-seven participants had registered for the event.

The second step in this transition was to adjust the whole structure of my seminar to better fit the webinar format. Broadly speaking, I had three concerns. These concerns were compounded by the fact that I had never conducted a webinar or even attended a webinar longer than one hour. First, I was concerned with the amount of meaningful interaction that could take place between participants on the Zoom platform. My initial plan had been for this seminar to have a workshop feel with a great deal of discussion and small group interaction. I had planned to have participants discuss case studies in small groups. Given the significant increase in registration and the many technological variables that could affect the ability of participants to take part in these small group discussions online, I choose to revise my plan. Rather than a highly interactive format, my approach to this webinar took on a more didactic form. As a result, I decided to revise my third goal from teaching "counselors how to integrate biblical theology into their counseling." Instead, my aim became to "develop a curriculum that

increases participants' *knowledge of* and *interest in* biblical theology for counseling ministry." I felt the webinar format was better suited for the later goal.

The second set of concerns I had about the webinar platform was related to learner comprehension. While the digital presentation of material has the advantages of accessibility, flexibility, and convivence, I was concerned that if participants were not in a traditional classroom setting they may not be as motivated to attend all sessions or to engage with the content with the same attentiveness as in the classroom setting. I was also going to be unable to take attendance in each session but needed participants to attend 87 percent of the sessions to meet my fourth goal. I was worried a webinar would have a higher attrition rate than an in-person seminar. Though I was and remain unsure if these assumptions were correct, I made several changes to my plans to try to mitigate these perceived disadvantages.

First, I shortened the length of the webinar from the ten planned sessions down to eight sessions. This enabled me to honor the schedule I had originally advertised but also required I remove some of my content. Second, I created eight fun, light-hearted quizzes using a technology called Kahoot. Kahoot is an online service allowing users to create custom quizzes using sound, images, and video. A host is then able to run a quiz by inviting remote participants to answer timed questions on their smartphone or electronic device. Answers are displayed in real-time, and participants are awarded points for the speed and accuracy of their answers. To encourage participant retention, comprehension, and engagement, I created a book giveaway. At the end of the webinar, the top five users with the most cumulative points would win the book of their choice from the Participant Annotated Bibliography (PAB).[6] The timing of quizzes was not announced. During the week of April 12, I created eight content-based quizzes containing about eighty multiple-choice questions.

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[6] See appendix 4.

The final set of concerns was related to the quality and stability of the webinar experience. The number of practical problems I had to solve is beyond what is appropriate for this chapter, but suffice it to say I did dozens of tests and tried to develop best practices and contingencies for the most obvious technological variables. To enhance the quality of the webinar, I purchased studio lighting and a professional-grade microphone. I also consulted with a sound engineer and built makeshift acoustic panels to create a home studio in my basement. The most difficult problem was to work with my internet service provider which was throttling internet speeds in my neighbor during peak hours to meet unprecedented traffic demands.

During this time, I also began to revise my pre-test. In its existing form, there were problems with the pre-test's content, quality, and form. The content needed to be revised to match my new project goals. Many items were modified to measure attitudes about biblical theology rather than comfort integrating biblical theology into counseling. Some items needed to be removed because of the reduction in webinar content. Additionally, the quality of items needed to be tested and improved. Finally, other formatting adjustments had to be made since the survey would be delivered electronically rather than on paper and in-person. On March 19 and 24, I had a series of phone calls with Dr. Joseph Harrod, who offered invaluable feedback on many of my items. I made many changes as a result of these phone calls including reducing the number of items from sixty-two to forty-eight including one closed question. The quality of items improved as well. An additional change included adding a brief counseling vignette and asking participants to answer six closed questions about their confidence applying biblical theology to a particular ministry situation. On March 28, I discussed these changes with my supervisor. He provided me with additional input and gave the changes his approval.

During the week of March 30, I converted my instrument from paper to electronic format using SurveyMonkey. I engaged in a series of instrument tests. The first

test I ran was to ask a group of friends and family members to pilot the BTMI and record the amount of time it took to complete. Six persons who were unfamiliar with the webinar content completed the survey and reported it took an average of ten minutes and nine seconds to do so. Several mentioned that if they were more familiar with the content it might have taken longer. One important insight that emerged from this pilot group was the concern that participants might misjudge and overestimate their confidence in defining biblical theology. I noticed that even though none of the participants in my first pilot group had received any theological training, most of them reported a very high degree of confidence that they could define biblical theology.[7] Since one of my main goals in this project was to create a measurable increase in participants' knowledge of biblical theology, I decided after asking participants to report their confidence defining biblical theology, to add one open-ended item asking participants to define biblical theology.

I ran a second pilot test with a group of classmates familiar with instrument creation. These three men provided many helpful points of feedback. As a result of their feedback, I removed four items deemed repetitive or unnecessary. I clarified six and reordered three items to create a more logical progression. One of the most helpful parts of this process was that in most cases my pilot group had concerns about the same items. Two reviewers expressed concern that it might be difficult responding positively to items on the case study even after the webinar. After finalizing my instrument, I included it in my research profile that I submitted to my supervisor on April 2. On April 13, I received approval from the Research Ethics Committee to proceed with my research according to the low-risk informed consent protocols.

On April 6, in the final weeks leading to my webinar, I sent the CER and

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[7] See appendix 2, item 1.

training curriculum to three pastors and counselors.[8] I gave these men the deadline of April 10[9] to return their completed rubrics and any other feedback they were willing to provide. Each of these men has pastoral and counseling experience and has been trained in Southern Baptist seminaries. Each of them responded to my request for feedback and these men were used as an expert panel to provide evaluation and critique of this ministry project. The expert panel consisted of Chad Cooke, Mark Harrod, and Steve Pack.

Dr. Chad Cooke has served as a counselor and pastor for more than a decade in two SBC churches. Chad holds a Ph.D. in psychology and counseling from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Master's in counseling psychology from Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee. Dr. Cooke served as the founder and executive director of Shalom Christian Counseling, a ministry whose aim was to give Christ-centered counseling to individuals, couples, and families in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. He is licensed as a clinical mental health counselor (LCMHC) and currently serves as the practice administrator at Triad Pediatrics in North Carolina.

Dr. Mark Harrod is the senior pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Jonesborough, Tennessee. He holds a Doctor of Ministry from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has more than twenty years of pastoral and counseling experience and has a special interest in biblical theology.

Steve Pack has more than ten years of experience as a pastor and biblical counselor. He holds a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a Doctor of Ministry candidate at the same institution. He is an ACBC certified counselor and currently serves as the Director of Biblical Counseling

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[8] See appendices 3, 5, and 6.

[9] The brief turnaround window for the CER was necessitated by the disruption COVID-19. I had spoken to these men in the months prior to this request, and each had already agreed to provide feedback. During the period when I was transitioning my seminar to a webinar, I kept them apprised of my progress. Each one kindly agreed to work within these time constraints prior to this request.

at Hampton Park Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. Each of these men offered helpful feedback on my training curriculum using the CER. The primary recommendation was to strengthen examples of counseling applications. During the week of April 6, I made final revisions to my curriculum and focused on clarifying the counseling applications.[10] Based on their feedback, the curriculum met and exceeded 90 percent of the sufficient score.

Beginning on April 6 and stretching up to the final week of the webinar, I worked to create Keynote slides for each session. I aimed to use presentation technology to inform and visually stimulate participants to increase engagement and retention. The content of my slides varied. I used visuals to illustrate abstract ideas. I used the slides to display reference information such as Bible verses, definitions, quotes, and counseling vignettes. I often used slides to emphasize main ideas and punchlines. Slides were printed four per page with room to take notes and was provided as handouts to participants before the webinar began. In total, my webinar contained 310 slides.

During the week of April 12, I also finalized the PAB.[11] Since the third goal of this project was to develop a curriculum that increases participants' knowledge of and interest in biblical theology for counseling ministry, I wanted to provide participants with as many resources as possible to that end. Rather than just making book recommendations throughout the webinar, I gave participants a bibliography of twelve books and two series of biblical theology which I deemed to be particularly useful for counselors. The bibliography was broken down into three sections including essential biblical theology resources for counselors, additional biblical theology resources for counselors, and biblical theology series. With each entry, I provided a synopsis of the

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[10] More detail on counseling application is provided in the Overview of Webinar and Counseling Applications in phase 4.

[11] See appendix 4.

book, an explanation of how its content might be useful for counselors, and an indication of its degree of difficulty.

Phase 4: Webinar Execution (April 15-25)

After this lengthy period of preparation, the time finally came to execute the webinar. The first step in this process was to send the BTMI[12] to each registrant. The assessment was first delivered on April 15 through email. To take the assessment, each registrant had to click on a SurveyMonkey link. They could take the assessment on any device with an internet connection. I was able to monitor the number of responses in real-time. After one day, about 35 percent of registrants had responded, so I sent a second email, which led to another wave of responses. After the second email, the completion rate was still lower than I expected. Since I had set up analytics tracking on my email campaigns, I was able to run a report to determine those who had not opened the assessment emails or who had not clicked on the survey link. I soon realized seven registrants had either not received or opened my last several emails containing the links to assessment and the Zoom credentials. There were a variety of technical reasons for this; but in each case, I found alternate means to deliver this critical information. By the time the webinar began, I had received thirty-seven registrations and thirty-three responses to the BTMI. This is a response rate of 89 percent.

Before the webinar began, each participant was emailed a resource email. Along with a final link to the assessment, this email linked to a shared folder in Google Drive which became the resource folder for the webinar. The folder contained a handout with an outline for each session, a handout with slides for each session, and the PAB. Eventually, this is where webinar participants were able to access recordings of missed sessions and the cumulative score for the quizzes.

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[12] See appendix 2.

Overview of webinar and counseling applications. On April 17, I began

teaching the curriculum, which was modified and shortened from its original seminar

format as explained above. In the following portion, I will summarize some of the key

counseling applications from each session.[13]

The first session began at 6:30 on Friday night and introduced participants to

the discipline of biblical theology. Like Jesus warned in John 5:39-40, it is possible for

counselors to use and honor the Bible and still miss the point of the Bible. The Bible is

remarkably diverse and complex, yet it is unified by a single, divine author. The goal of

biblical theology is to synthesize and articulate the theological message of the Bible in a

way that does justice to the Bible's diversity.[14] Despite the Bible's great diversity, many

counselors are tempted to counsel from only a small selection of passages. On this point,

I challenged the counselors: *given the remarkable complexity of problems humans face, is*

it wise to limit ourselves to only a handful of counseling passages? During this session, I

described how the Bible contains a unified storyline. This storyline can be summarized

using the creation, fall, redemption, restoration (CFRR) model. This structure is

particularly useful for counselors for four reasons. It aids in interpreting lesser-known

passages, serves as a skeletal structure to trace pan-biblical themes, encourages

worldview reflection, and serves as a creative way to share the gospel with counselees.[15]

Session 2 also took place on Friday night and was the most technical of the

eight sessions. The goal of the session was to introduce participants to a relevant

selection of approaches to biblical theology and to demonstrate how biblical theology is

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[13] For an overview of the content I intended to teach in the seminar prior to the COVID-19 disruption, see Phase 1. For a more detailed outline of the curriculum I taught in the webinar, see appendix 6.

[14] Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 6. For more on this point, see chapter 3.

[15] For more detail on this point, see chapter 3.

not an end in itself but *leads to application.*[16] I selected two approaches to biblical theology which seem most relevant to counselors. As described above, I argued counselors can use the CFRR model in their counseling. This is based on the redemptive-historical approach. I called the second model a thematic or synthetic approach. This approach uses the tasks of analysis and synthesis to ask how the message of the biblical authors fits together around themes. One goal of biblical theology is to tell the story of the Bible in true but surprising and refreshing ways.[17] This is often demonstrated in the synthetic approach and is particularly useful for counseling for reasons seen below.

Session 3 took place on Saturday morning and traced the story of redemption using the theme of clothing. In this session, I expanded upon the idea of pan-biblical themes and prepared attendees to consider how they might use two themes, clothing and the demise of the serpent, in their counseling. Many insights for counseling emerge from the theme of clothing. This theme touches on many elements of the human experience including shame, fear, guilt, desire, brokenness, honor, and beauty. The image of clothing addresses both the inner man and the outer man. Depending on the counseling need, various dimensions of this story can be highlighted to show how sin does and should make us insecure. This story also reveals how God has created humans with a longing to be seen and approved. Humans experience incredible brokenness and therefore will be disappointed when they try to find lasting beauty in their broken bodies, or when they try to satisfy the approval of man, or when they try to provide lasting clothing for themselves which only God can provide. The story of clothing can be used to give hope because, in the gospel, Christ has taken on the nakedness of our shame, given us robes of righteousness, and promised to clothe us in immortality. We discussed these and many

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[16] D. A. Carson, "Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 102. In this sense, D.A. Carson calls biblical theology a "bridge discipline." For more on this point, see chapter 3.

[17] Rosner, "Biblical Theology," 9.

other applications around a counseling vignette. This vignette was of a middle-aged woman reporting feelings of anxiety, fear, and depression. The case had elements of overeating, overspending, hostility toward her church community, and an addiction to social media.[18]

Session 4 took place on Saturday morning and introduced another pan-biblical theme for counselors: reptiles. In this session, I explained how the story of the Bible centers around a serpent and the danger that serpent poses to creation, how susceptible humans are to his cunning, and the initiative God takes to destroy his person and works. The very work of Christ is depicted as a demolition mission of Satan and his works (1 John 3:8), and the crucifixion itself is depicted as the antitype of the bronze serpent in the wilderness. Central to this story is how Christ accomplishes victory over the deadly serpent. Because of this, God's people should be exceedingly cautious but not afraid. As with the pan-biblical pattern of clothing, various dimensions of this story can be explored according to the counseling need. However, we did explore several counseling applications. The story of the serpent graphically depicts the danger of Satan. This serpentine image may shock counselees who occasionally lack a healthy fear of sin. One of the sub-themes of this story is how the serpent uses his tongue to tempt by engaging the desires of the heart. Likewise, our speech patterns can imitate either God or the serpent (Rom 3:13). This story graphically highlights how the Christian life is a spiritual battle and we must be on guard as we would be if we knew we were in close proximity to many dangerous snakes. Finally, it is noteworthy that not only is hope found in the ultimate defeat of the serpent, but the Bible uses the image of harmless, venom-less snakes to characterize the eschatological age (Is 11:8; 65:25).

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[18] This vignette did not depict a real person but was a fictional composite of several people I have ministered to in my counseling ministry. Though brief, it was designed to permit a variety of acceptable counseling agendas. This same vignette was used for discussion multiple times throughout the webinar.

During this fourth session, I dedicated a portion of time to teaching how counselors could integrate themes into counseling. I gave four recommendations. First, counselors can use themes to tell the story of the Bible–the very source of wisdom in counseling. Counseling involves instruction and as a part of that instruction, counselors can consider telling a portion of these thematic stories. Second, counselors can integrate themes in the homework they assign to reinforce or introduce new ideas. I gave counselors a list of ideas and sample homework assignments they could create by taking advantage of resources included in the PAB.[19] Third, counselors can use pan-biblical themes to share the gospel. This technique may appear novel to counselees and is especially useful in regions where cultural Christianity has given rise to many false professions of faith. Finally, I encouraged counselors to consider using pan-biblical themes especially when their counseling "feels stuck" or when they need to reinforce teaching that is normally more propositional.

Sessions 5 and 6 took place the next weekend on Friday, April 24. After a brief review, I introduced the concept of the Bible's symbolic universe.[20] This topic spanned across both evening sessions. I argued that just as the theological message of the Bible can be summarized by tracing redemptive history or by attending to pan-biblical themes, the story of the Bible is also told using symbols, images, types, and patterns. If the Bible's authors use these devices, then counselors should be able to interpret and make use of them in their counseling. Additionally, I argued this symbolic universe is particularly useful for the task of counseling.

During this fifth session, I used many examples to distinguish between symbols, images, and metaphors. I also made a distinction between local and longitudinal

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[19] See appendix 4.

[20] I first heard the phase "symbolic universe" from James M. Hamilton, Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 64–65. For more detail on this concept, see chapter 3.

symbols–some symbols are confined to the local text while others, such as the sacrificial lamb, are weightier and develop across the canon. Despite this difference, all images and symbols are useful in counseling. I reasoned, *if the biblical world is so full of images and symbols, should not our counseling be full of these biblical images and symbols as well?* To teach the differences between these devices, I used examples that may be useful in counseling. We discussed the images of the pit, dung, and vomit as examples. By their very nature, images require a deeper level of engagement to interpret and therefore often trigger an emotional response. We discussed elementary principles of interpretation using the image of vomit to counsel foolish behavior.

I continued the discussion of the symbolic universe in the sixth session but focused more on counseling applications. We began by exploring a significant longitudinal image–the Passover lamb–and saw that when Paul sought to describe the gospel, he selected a longitudinal image. At times, counselors should do the same. Significant time was given to exploring how the Bible's flood imagery illuminates the story of the wise and foolish builder (Luke 6:46-49). We traced how flood imagery depicts the sudden terror of judgment and how it appears all over the Bible. Yet, whether by providing an ark, orchestrating a miraculous river crossing, sending a great fish, or calming the sea, one of the Bible's reoccurring themes is God's power over the flood (Hab 3:15). He is able bring his people safely through the waters (Ps 18:13-19; Isa 43:2; 1 Pet 3:20-21). This flood imagery can be used to teach counselees (1) the seriousness of God's wrath, (2) the havoc sin wreaks in our lives, (3) the certain danger of future wrath, (4) the need for an appropriate vessel of salvation, (5) God's saving power over sin, and (6) the role of obedience in salvation.

In this session, I offered seven reasons why counselors should make use of symbols in their counseling. First, biblical counselors must be faithful to the Bible, and some of the Bible's truths are accessible only through symbols. Second, since biblical counselors have the most important message in the world, they should seek to be as

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persuasive as possible. Third, symbols provide creative ways to share Christ. Fourth, symbols are illustrations and illustrations help make propositional truth more accessible and memorable. Fifth, since symbols help us picture God's truth in God's world, they remind us how relevant truth is to real life and encourage application. Sixth, since symbols engage the imagination and often our emotions, they are more likely to "cut through the fog" that may be experienced in the counseling room. Finally, a carefully chosen symbol may help build involvement in a counselee's life.

In this same session, I provided participants with four ideas on how to use image studies in counseling. This can be done through instruction or homework. Symbols are especially useful for teaching (1) the character of God, (2) the danger of sin, (3) the nature of man, and (4) the depths of the gospel. For each use, I provided a list of four to fifteen example symbols. Finally, I gave six practical ways counselors could use symbols in their counseling. Counselors can (1) prayerfully seek an image to engage the imagination of their counselee, (2) familiarize themselves with the Bible's images, (3) use images to illustrate their instruction, (4) assign image studies as homework, (5) creatively encourage concrete engagement with images, and (6) use images to provide continuity in teaching across counseling sessions. I gave various examples for each of these ideas.

The seventh session took place on Saturday morning and introduced participants to typology and its role in biblical counseling. After introducing and defining types, I worked through several examples of biblical types. I taught counselors the characteristics of types by working through several extended examples. In the first instance, I demonstrated how Adam, and all who take on his role as representative image bearer, including Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David, are types of Christ. This led to a widely useful counseling application: anytime a counselor is counseling from the life of Israel, he has a legitimate road to Christ. In this, typology is an essential tool for Christ-centered counseling. In the second example, I showed how the exodus pattern is a type of salvation that is central to the Bible. Closely related is the pattern of deliverance from

exile. These patterns open new and often unexplored avenues for counselors to show how capable God is of delivering those in bondage to sin.

The second portion of this session focused on demonstrating how counselors can use types in their counseling. Participants were provided with a handout listing biblical types which may be of special interest to counselors. These include patterns of exodus/exile, sin as slavery, the righteous suffer, the victorious king, and each of the Bible's major institutions. I also included a discussion of how counselors can move from type to application without moralizing or allegorizing. Essentially, since all types point to the redemptive work of Christ, counselors should use types to point counselees to Christ.

The eighth and final session of the webinar introduced biblical patterns. Biblical authors made use of patterns to communicate their message. After defining a pattern, I gave the amusing example of romance at Jacob's well. This repeated OT pattern of male foreigners meeting special women at Jacob's well creates a sense of expectation when approaching John 4. The bulk of the session focused on two biblical patterns of interest to counselors. The first is the feast pattern established in the life of Israel. These annual feasts were tangible lessons that functioned to condition the consciences of God's people to expect him to act in ways consistent with his character. Even more, the pattern of lament appears throughout the Bible and is of great value in the counseling room. Counselors can employ the pattern of turning, complaining, asking, and trusting[21] to help counselees turn to the Lord in their sorrows. I provided participants with various ways to use these patterns during counseling sessions or as homework. I also provided them with a list of additional biblical patterns to explore.

I concluded this session by arguing for the benefit of using patterns in counseling. First, patterns give greater insight into obscure biblical passages. Second, due

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[21] Mark Vroegop, *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 29–38. Vroegop identifies these four elements as the basic pattern of lament seen throughout the Bible.

to their progressive and forward-looking nature, patterns can be used to give hope. Third, counselors can use patterns to help correct a counselee's expectations of the future. Finally, counselors can be creative and use patterns to help counselees establish their own ritualistic patterns of behavior. Several examples were given. One example was to encourage an anxious, expecting mother to quote and pray Matthew 6:25 each time she feels the baby kick. This is an application of the put on/put off principle. The webinar concluded with an optional, but lengthy question and answer time.

Phase 5: Post-Test (April 25 – May 2)

Upon completion of the webinar, participants were asked to complete the post-test assessment. They were told the post-test contained the same questions as the pre-test. Participants who missed more than one session were encouraged to consider watching missed sessions before completing the post-test. Webinar recordings were made immediately available. All this information was communicated at various times during the webinar and reinforced by email on April 26 and on May 1. These emails contained the link to the post-test. By May 2, I had received twenty-two unique responses to the post-test.

During the week following the webinar, I received emails from four attendees who reported they had forgotten their anonymous four-digit PIN. This was despite instructions that explicitly encouraged participants to choose a memorable PIN and that they would need to supply the PIN later. Fortunately, since the post-tests were taken online, SurveyMonkey automatically records each respondent's IP address. These unique markers provide a way to match responses from the pre-test and post-test based on their unique IP address.

Conclusion

This project was completed through nineteen weeks of preparation and implementation. As feedback and testimonies from participants began to come in, it

became apparent that participants enjoyed and perceived the webinar to be useful. The research data in chapter 5 demonstrates this project was successful in accomplishing its goals. Though COVID-19 was a major obstacle in executing this project, I found the process to be enjoyable and edifying. I pray the content of this webinar will bear fruit in the years to come in the lives and ministries of all who participated.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE MINISTRY PROJECT

The final chapter of this project considers the overall effectiveness of this project by evaluating its purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. It evaluates the ministry project and concludes the project fulfilled its purpose and each goal has been successfully met. Analysis shows that this intervention made a statistically-significant difference in participants' knowledge of and confidence in using biblical theology in ministry. This chapter includes a variety of project reflections. I reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the project and upon some of the ways it might have been improved during its development and implementation phases. This chapter concludes with theological and personal reflections and a call for additional research.

Evaluation of the Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train biblical counselors with the tools of biblical theology for use in biblical counseling. This goal is consistent with the conviction that the Bible is sufficient for the work of counseling *if it is rightly interpreted and applied.* Since the great commission calls for Christians to teach *all* Christ has commanded, and the Bible reveals itself to be a unified whole, then counselors need the skills to interpret and apply *all the Bible* in their ministries. The discipline of biblical theology aids in that task. The intervention of this project centered around preparing a curriculum designed to introduce counselors to biblical theology, particularly its value and insight for counseling, and then expose counselors to this curriculum.

The Bible is a remarkably diverse book with a staggering literary breadth and scope, meriting a lifetime of study. At the same time, the great variety of human suffering

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(Jas 1:3; Eccl 2:23), complicated by the complexity of the human heart (Jer 17:9; Eccl 9:3), means counselors must work hard to understand the message of the Bible and how it relates to the human condition. Paul's charge to Timothy certainly applies to all who take up the work of counseling: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15). Given the complexity of the problems humans face and the remarkable diversity of the Bible, when can a counselor rest, satisfied with his knowledge, and conclude he has done his "best" in this great task?

To that end, the purpose of this project was to help counselors "thicken their counseling Bible" by showing them how biblical theology provides the tools to help them use more of the Bible in their counseling ministries. I remain convinced this is a worthy and necessary endeavor and trust the implementation of this project was a significant step toward meeting this need.

Evaluation of the Goals

This project was guided by five goals. Each goal represents a progressive step toward the purpose of training biblical counselors to use biblical theology in their counseling. For this project's purpose to be considered successful, five goals were developed. Each goal will now be evaluated.

Goal 1: Recruiting Biblical Counselors

The first goal of this project was to recruit trained, biblical counselors who had completed the ACBC Fundamentals Training Course track or its equivalent. The reasoning behind limiting this training to trained biblical counselors was to allow the curriculum to assume and build upon the fundamentals of biblical counseling. This limitation was not intended to be overly restrictive to ministers with less training, but to communicate the ideal target audience. All who registered were permitted to participate, and no participants were excluded from the results due to a lack of training.

The workshop registration form[1] asked registrants to indicate what biblical counseling training they had received.[2] Of the initial registrants, 78% reported they had received at least one form of the training listed above. Of those who had not received formal training, most referenced having read books from authors in the biblical counseling movement. Fifty one percent of registrants reported having been trained by ACBC, and 23% of registrants reported having completed a graduate-level counseling course.

This first goal was measured by using an online registration form created through Google forms and stored electronically in a spreadsheet. This goal was to be considered successfully met when ten to fifteen counselors have completed and submitted the online registration form. By the time registration closed, thirty-seven[3] participants had completed and submitted this form.

Goal 2: The Initial Assessment of Knowledge of Biblical Theology

The second goal was to assess the participants' understanding of biblical theology and how it relates to counseling. To accomplish this, I developed and administered the BTMI.[4] The BTMI had five parts. Part 1 was designed to measure participants' exposure to biblical counseling. Part 2 was designed to measure participants' familiarity with biblical theology and contained fifteen items about the basic principles of

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[1] See appendix 1.

[2] The form provided the following options: ACBC Fundamentals Training (online or at a regional event), Biblical Counseling Training Conference at Faith Lafayette, Association of Biblical Counseling certification (ABC), CCEF School of Biblical Counseling, seminary or graduate-level counseling course, and biblical counseling training in a local church or parachurch organization. Additionally, I provided space for registrants to list any other training or exposure to biblical counseling they may have had.

[3] The significant increase in registration was unexpected and can be attributed to two primary factors. First, the social circumstances of COVID-19 increased the availability of participants, many were under stay-at-home orders. Second, the conversion of this seminar into a webinar format meant travel was no longer a limiting factor for participation. For more detail, see chapter 4.

[4] See appendix 2.

biblical theology. Participants were asked to provide a written definition of biblical theology. Part 3 contained ten items related to the value and perceived usefulness of biblical theology to the participants' ministries. Part 4 contained ten items designed to measure participants' attitudes about integrating biblical theology into their counseling ministries. It asked subjects to evaluate their current counseling practices. Part 5 contained a short, broad counseling vignette touching on a variety of counseling problems. Six items measured participants' understanding and confidence in applying specific insights, derived from biblical theology, to the counseling situation.

Each participant identified himself in the survey by using a four-digit personal identification number (PIN). The PIN was used to maintain anonymity. Except for two items, the BTMI was graded on a six-point scale. As stated above, several opening questions assessed the participants' experience in biblical counseling. These were excluded from data analysis. Item 1 on the pre-test asked participants to define biblical theology. It was followed by the item "I can confidently define biblical theology" (item 2).[5] The former item was added after a pilot test revealed participants tended to have a high degree of confidence defining biblical theology, even when the participant has a poor understanding of the term. Of the thirty-eight responses to item 2, participants scored an average of 3.7 out of 6.0. This nearly equates to the result that participants "agree somewhat" when it comes to their ability to confidently define biblical theology. However, an examination of the responses to item 1 revealed only seven of the thirty-two respondents, or 21%, were able to provide a passable definition of biblical theology.[6] Most respondents simply described biblical theology as theology that is biblical or "theology that is not unbiblical." I attribute this to the non-descriptive nature of the term.

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[5] See appendices 2 and 8, items 1 and 2.

[6] In determining what is a "passable" definition, I looked for definitions that spoke of the unity or Christocentricity of the Bible.

This second goal was considered successfully met when ten participants completed the BTMI online. By the time the webinar began, thirty-three registrants had completed the BTMI.

**Goal 3: Developing Curriculum to
Integrate Biblical Theology into Biblical
Counseling**

The third goal was to develop an eight-session curriculum to introduce counselors to the tools of biblical theology and their application to counseling. This goal was considered successfully met when a panel of three experts reviewed the curriculum and provided a minimum score of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria at sufficient or above levels. The panel used the CER to complete this evaluation.[7] Each member of the panel scored the webinar curriculum at the sufficient level.

In general, the expert panel considered the curriculum to be exemplary but did provide some helpful feedback that strengthened the curriculum. Several reviewers suggested I add more counseling applications. Dr. Chad Cooke commented, "I would like to see more specific application to a few common biblical counseling problems." Likewise, Steve Pack commented, "I would love to see some specific and practical examples to demonstrate the relevancy of biblical theology." I took these concerns seriously and revised many of the sessions to strengthen the counseling applications. Some sessions, including the sessions on images, types, and patterns were significantly revised to add counseling application.

**Goal 4: Implement Curriculum as a
Webinar**

The fourth goal was to implement the curriculum as a webinar. The webinar was executed on the weekends of April 17-18 and April 24-25. As detailed in Chapter 4,

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[7] See appendix 3.

the webinar contained eight sessions. Registrants were given handouts for each session and were asked to self-report attendance on the post-test survey.[8] It was not possible to accurately take attendance during the webinar for a variety of reasons. Some participants had occasional technical problems and would have to disconnect and reconnect for various reasons. Other attendants did not display their name in each session or elected not to use the video function of Zoom. Other participants reported viewing portions of the webinar with others. Recordings of each webinar session were made available for participants to access online if they missed one or more sessions. Participants were encouraged to attend or view all sessions. This goal was considered successfully met when five to ten participants reported they had attended at least 87 percent of the webinar sessions. On the post-test, twenty-two participants reported attending or watching at least seven of the eight sessions. Ninety percent of these participants attended all eight live webinar sessions.

Goal 5: Assessing the Increase in Knowledge

The fifth goal of this project was to assess the participants' knowledge of biblical theology and their interest in using it in ministry. The measure for this goal included a post-training survey, and the goal was met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-training survey.

As stated above, thirty-three participants completed the pre-test, and twenty-two of those participants completed the post-test. I was able to match all the pre- and post-test surveys using the participants' PIN. In some cases, individuals forgot or incorrectly entered their PIN. In these cases, I was able to match their pre- and post-tests by matching their IP addresses. To run statistical analysis, I inverted the responses to two

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[8] The inclusion of this question is the only way the post-test differed from the pre-test.

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questions based on the way the question was asked.[9] After running the data analysis, I

determined that running the webinar did help increase knowledge and interest in biblical

theology for use in counseling ministry. Since the absolute value of the t-stat (-

8.239153983) is larger than the t critical one-tail value (1.720742903), it can be stated

that the teaching intervention made a difference in knowledge and attitude. The p-value

(0.000000025595) is less than p=0.05, therefore I can say this difference was not by

chance.

Table 1. T-Test: Paired two sample for means

	Pre-Test total	Post-Test total
Mean	172.4545455	215.7727273
Variance	452.1645022	360.6601732
Observations	22	22
Pearson Correlation	0.253439853	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	21	
t Stat	-8.239153983	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.55953E-08	
t Critical one-tail	1.720742903	
P(T<=t) two-tail	5.11906E-08	
t Critical two-tail	2.079613845	

Strengths of the Project

The project had two strengths. Given the results of the data analysis, this

project successfully helped counselors gain knowledge and interest in biblical theology as

a useful tool in counseling. Specifically, this project was successful in increasing

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[9] Whenever a survey question was asked in such a way that the desired response would have fallen on the negative side of the Likert scale (numbers 1, 2, or 3), I inverted the response in the Excel spreadsheet. If the participant marked a 1, I changed it to a 6. If the participant marked a 2, I changed it to a 5. If the participant marked a 3, I changed it to a 4. If the participant marked a 4, I changed it to a 3. If the participant marked a 5, I changed it to a 2. If the participant marked a 6, I changed it to a 1. The two questions which the answers were inverted were survey questions numbers 6 and 32.

participants' confidence that biblical theology is a worthwhile field of study for counselors. As the questions displayed in Table 2 show, before beginning the webinar, registrants reported a high level of interest in biblical theology and generally considered it to be a tool useful for biblical counseling. This is not surprising given that registrants demonstrated their interest in the subject simply by registering for a multi-day webinar.

Table 2. Pre- and post-webinar survey responses concerning the use of biblical theology

Survey Question (31 responses)		Pre-Test Average	Post-Test Average
Q16	Biblical theology is a useful tool for counselors as they read the Bible.	5.29	5.91
Q24	I need to learn more about biblical theology.	5.54	5.81
Q25	Understanding biblical theology will make me a better counselor.	5.58	5.95

Despite the high level of interest shown on the pre-test, participants still reported an increase in interest in biblical theology–even after completing ten hours of training. As already stated above, most participants were not able to properly define the term biblical theology. This may have led to an inflated interest on the pre-test. However, for interest levels to increase, the webinar had to be successful in several ways. First, it had to properly explain what biblical theology is and correct any misconceptions of it as a discipline. Second, it had to teach participants how biblical theology works and demonstrate some of the insights it provides. Third, it had to demonstrate how to use biblical theology in common counseling situations. Fourth, it had to persuade participants they could engage in the discipline of biblical theology themselves and gain insights for use in their counseling ministries. As item 25 shows, participants strongly agreed with the statement "understanding biblical theology will make me a better counselor."

Furthermore, even after gaining an understanding of what biblical theology is and how it can be useful to counseling, participants reported that their gap in knowledge was

not satisfied. Even after a lengthy webinar, most participants strongly agreed with the statement listed in item 24, "I need to learn more about biblical theology." Because of this, I conclude that the webinar accomplished more than teaching participants about biblical theology, but that it persuaded them of its usefulness and created a desire to learn more.

The second strength of this project was that it was successful in resourcing participants for further study. A teacher must face many limitations when introducing a broad field of study to new students. Like all learning environments, this webinar was limited in length and format. Since the purpose of this project was to increase participants' knowledge of and *interest in* biblical theology for counseling ministry, I wanted to focus on stimulating learner curiosity and to provide resources for learners to later satisfy that curiosity. This is why participants were provided with an annotated bibliography[10] and were given numerous examples of counseling applications to explore.[11] Item 33 asked participants to respond to the following statement "I know where to find resources that can teach me more about using biblical theology in my ministry." As demonstrated in Table 3, the total aggregate increase among participants was 1.62, a 27% total increase. This indicates that participants increased their interest in biblical theology as well as their confidence that they are equipped to learn more about biblical theology. Additionally, many participants indicated their eagerness to learn more about biblical theology in their comments on the post-test.

Table 3. Pre- and post-webinar survey responses concerning biblical theology resources

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[10] See appendix 4.

[11] For example, when teaching participants how to use images in their counseling, I provided them with many additional images that would be applicable to common situations. I did the same for types and patterns. For more detail, see appendix 6.

Survey Question (31 responses)		Pre-Test Average	Post-Test Average
Q33	I know where to find resources that can teach me more about using biblical theology in my ministry.	4.19	5.81

Weaknesses of the Project

Though the project was successful, it was not without weaknesses. One weakness in this project is related to the feedback I received from my expert panel. In the first place, this panel could have been more robust. Though these men possess helpful qualifications, none of them is an "expert" in biblical theology. Outside of seminary professors, I do not know of many persons who would qualify as experts in biblical theology. Though several of the members of my expert panel have shown an interest in reading biblical theology, none of them has likely read deeply enough to provide robust critical feedback on the more technical aspects of this project. This project would have been strengthened if I had been able to strengthen this panel.

A second shortcoming in the feedback I received from my panel was due to the level of detail in the first draft of my webinar curriculum.[12] I should have included more detail about the counseling applications I intended to make in the initial draft of the curriculum. As previously mentioned, several of my experts commented that they wanted to see more counseling application in the webinar curriculum. I took this feedback seriously and significantly strengthened my counseling application before the execution of the webinar. However, as I read their comments, I realized that many of the counseling applications I had planned for the webinar simply were not sufficiently explained in the webinar curriculum. In addition to my webinar curriculum, I used hundreds of slides and many personal notes which I did not include in the version of the curriculum I gave to my experts. As a result, I likely missed feedback on some of my most novel counseling applications. One of the difficulties I faced here was the length of the material. The

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[12] See appendix 6.

curriculum outline I gave my expert panel was twenty-four pages long. My teaching notes were four times longer than that, and I used hundreds of slides. In hindsight, I should have added more counseling details to my curriculum.

My project methodology also had several shortcomings. Though I remain convinced that my instrument was sufficient, it could have been strengthened in several ways. Though I piloted the survey and received feedback from classmates, my final survey still contained redundancies and unnecessary or poorly worded items. Some redundant items should have been removed. For example, item 10 read, "I can summarize the message of the whole Bible." Two items later, item 12 read, "I can summarize the history of redemption." While a researcher may detect nuances in how these items are worded, both items are not necessary for this project. Additionally, some items could have been worded more effectively.

Other items were simply not needed. Item 6 states, "Systematic theology is a kind of biblical theology." The purpose of this question was to evaluate participants' familiarity with biblical theology. I assumed that if participants were familiar with biblical theology then they would be able to distinguish it from other theological disciplines. Even though my webinar addressed this question in some detail, and even though I quizzed participants on this distinction multiple times, the scores for this question were still quite low. The total aggregate increase for participants on this item was 0.81, a slight increase of 13%. Though this distinction is helpful for understanding the discipline of biblical theology, it is not a critical distinction most biblical counselors need to make and was probably not needed on the assessment.

Another weakness in my instrument relates to how I communicated the idea of biblical theology. Biblical theology is a theological term unfamiliar to some Christians who may not understand how I am using the term, thinking it simply means theology that is biblical or *theology that is not unbiblical.* This different understanding was evident early in some pre-test responses and caused some participants to overreport their

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familiarity with biblical theology. This is illustrated in item 1 on the BTMI,[13] which read, "In your own words, please define biblical theology." One typical response read, "biblical theology is a view of God that is based on the Scriptures." Another read, "biblical theology, put simply, is what the Bible teaches us about God, Christ, sin, salvation and what we need to know as believers." Though I am still not sure how this problem could be mitigated, I suspect this misunderstanding affected how participants read every pre-test item with the phrase "biblical theology."

A final weakness is that my BTMI did not include any items on typology. During the process of transitioning my seminar to a webinar, I decided to remove several portions of my material to better fit the time constraints.[14] Initially, I had planned to remove the session on typology for counselors.[15] Later, however, I decided to add it back. Yet at this point, I had already received approval from the Research Ethics Committee to proceed with my research according to the instrument I submitted and was therefore unable to add any items related to typology. As a result, the statistical analysis provided in this chapter does not directly measure the effectiveness of this portion of the webinar.

What I Would Do Differently

I would change three aspects of this project if I had the opportunity to conduct it again. Naturally, I would seek to remedy each one of the weaknesses listed above. I would seek to find an expert who has more expertise in biblical theology to add to my expert panel. I would also include more counseling detail in my curriculum outline, even if this added considerably to its length. An additional alternative would be to remove one of the biblical-theological topics. I would also make several changes to my instrument

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[13] See appendix 2.

[14] I removed a section on marriage as a pan-biblical theme as well as the pattern of promise and fulfillment.

[15] See appendix 6, session 7.

according to the observations mentioned above including adding items about typology.

Finally, though the webinar format had the advantages of accessibility, flexibility, and convivence, and even though it led to a larger sample size than I initially expected, I still believe it is preferable to teach this material in-person. Though the social circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 made this impossible, if I ever have the opportunity to run this project again, I will elect to teach it in-person. I remain convinced that in some critical ways a webinar is different than a seminar or workshop. My original intention for this project was to supplement workshop lectures with significant periods of discussion. Though the webinar format was successful in meeting my stated goals, I believe a workshop format may prove to be an even *more* effective way to equip counselors with these insights.

Theological Reflections

This project aimed to develop a curriculum that would introduce counselors to biblical theology. Despite all the work I have put into this project, and despite the amount of ground I attempted to cover, it is deeply humbling to consider the scope of my teaching compared to the scope of the Bible. Ever since I first discovered biblical theology, I have been enthralled with how it helps to illuminate the Bible's message. As this discipline has led me deeper into the cavernous expanse of God's Word, it has only revealed more beauty, more mystery, and more glory. I am deeply humbled yet excited to consider how much more careful study and reflection the Bible merits. I am compelled to exclaim with Paul, "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" (Rom 11:33). As I near the end of this project, I find myself more motivated than ever to know the whole counsel of God to faithfully teach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

Just as I have marveled at the depth of God's Word, I have also marveled at his providence during this project. Though the disruption of COVID-19 presented many

challenges to this project, God's sovereign care for me was evident. For two years I have anxiously worried that I would be unable to recruit enough counselors to participate in this project. As I prayed, my most bold prayers led me to ask for the Lord to provide ten participants who would complete this training. During the registration process, while under stay at home orders, I remember laughing out loud when sixteen people registered in one day alone. The twenty-two participants who completed the pre- and post-test remind me that the Lord cares for me and hears my prayers.

Additionally, the disruption of COVID-19 forced me to make significant revisions to my work. In this too, I see the providential hand of God. Undoubtedly my work was improved because of those revisions. Some of my most significant insights came during this period and led to helpful revisions–revisions that may not have been made without the disruption of COVID-19. Indeed, "The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules overall" (Ps 103:19).

Another theological reflection I have had, though not new, has been strengthened. The discipleship prescribed in the Great Commission is explicitly didactic. Making disciples requires "teaching them to observe all [Christ has] commanded…" (Matt 28:20). Not only does discipleship require instruction, but Christ specifies that this instruction is to be exhaustive and all-inclusive. One cannot fulfill the Great Commission by teaching only the passages which are familiar or easily understood. Faithful disciple-making requires teaching the *whole* counsel of God. This is the goal of biblical theology.

Finally, I have been encouraged to see bright spots of health in the local church. Though I still lament the widespread biblical illiteracy in my local church, I have been encouraged to work with more than forty participants who are eager to know God's Word. The prophet Jeremiah spoke of joyfully experiencing the sweetness of God's Word: "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name…" (Jer 15:16). During every part of my training, from facial expressions and webinar emojis to the questions and feedback I

received, I had the joy of watching people joyfully experience the sweetness of God's Word. God's people have a hunger for God's Word.

Personal Reflections

This project has provided many opportunities for me to learn about God, his Word, and his Church. It has also allowed me to reflect upon myself as a pastor and a counselor. One reflection is that I must be a lifelong learner. The more I study the Bible, the more inadequate I feel in my knowledge and understanding. On the one hand, this is understandable. At what point does one exhaust the beauty, the person, or the character of God? As finite creatures gazing upon an infinite God, there are, one might say, an infinite number of frontiers (Rom 11:33). Furthermore, not only is his Word vast, but it is also "living and active" (Heb 4:12). One of the factors that led me to pursue doctoral studies was the burden of excellence placed upon all who handle God's vast Word. In 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul says, "Do your *best* to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." When can one say he has done his *best* or reached his maximum potential as a student of God's Word? Is there not always more to learn? While the desire for knowledge and competence drove me to begin this project, it is by no means satisfied. I am eager to continue in biblical studies and to grow in my skill as a pastor and counselor.

This project has also affirmed and reinforced something I have known for some time–I really enjoy teaching. Not only does the preparation stimulate and energize me, but I have found that people tend to appreciate my labors. This was reaffirmed by the comments some participants included in their post-tests. Several of them commented on the passion and clarity of the speaker. Additionally, one aspect of teaching I enjoy most is the way it forces me to refine my ideas. As all teachers know, good teaching clarifies and deepens one's understanding. Many of my ideas did not mature until I considered how I would teach them to others. Just as I hope to be a lifelong learner, I hope to be a lifelong

teacher.

Furthermore, the process of learning is deeply humbling and has made me deeply grateful for those who have taught me. I often tell my congregants, students, and counselees that everything I know, someone taught me. I am sincerely thankful to God for the scores of authors, professors, pastors, and mentors who have invested richly in me through their teaching, mentorship, and writings. God has richly blessed the church through the gifts he has bestowed on these and others (Eph 4:8-12). These are gifts that are undeserved and often neglected. I pray that I will prove to be a good steward of my relationships, education, and resources.

Further Study

An area of further study related to my specific project would be to evaluate *if* and *how* participants were able to integrate the insights from this seminar into their actual counseling. One helpful intervention would be to meet with webinar participants again, after some time has passed, to discuss actual case studies. Then we could work together to see if any biblical-theological insights would be useful for the particulars of our actual cases. I would also be interested to know which insights counselors find most useful.

In my research, I quickly discovered that while more people are beginning to emphasize the importance of biblical theology in preaching, very few are thinking about the connections between biblical theology and counseling. If, as I have argued, biblical theology is valuable for biblical counselors, a great deal of work remains to be done. In my webinar, I admitted to my participants that not all biblical theology is immediately applicable to counseling. I did argue, however, that all biblical theology is useful in that it helps us understand our Bibles better; and the more we understand our Bibles, the more effectively we are able to use them in our counseling ministries. Yet, as I trust my project shows, I am convinced that biblical theology does yield many insights that are immediately applicable to counselors. These need to be explored more. The Bible has

hundreds–perhaps thousands–of images, symbols, themes, types, and patterns. I desire to see these studied more and taught specifically to counselors for use in their counseling ministries. Perhaps someone can take up the task of publishing a dictionary of biblical imagery *for counselors*.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to train biblical counselors with the tools of biblical theology for use in biblical counseling. This was accomplished by designing a curriculum that introduced counselors to the nature of biblical theology, its role in interpretation, and its usefulness in counseling application. This curriculum was implemented as a webinar to nearly forty participants. Each of the five goals established to guide this project was accomplished.

In chapter 1, this project demonstrated the need to train biblical counselors in the Tri-cities region of Tennessee with the tools of biblical theology. Chapter 2 provided the biblical and theological basis for using biblical theology as a means of theological interpretation. Chapter 3 established the theological and practical basis for training counselors on how to implement biblical-theological tools such as themes, symbols, types, and patterns into their counseling. Chapter 4 described the execution of the project in detail. Chapter 5 was an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the project as a whole and concluded that it was successful in accomplishing its purpose and achieving its stated goals.

This project successfully trained counselors to use biblical theology in their counseling and interpersonal ministries. If it pleases God, the impact of this project may be felt for many years to come and has the potential to bless many people. The hermeneutical and theological methods discussed here give readers greater access to the message of the Bible–the living and active Word of God. For this reason, this project has the potential to produce fruit in hundreds or perhaps even thousands of lives. If this

proves to be the case in any measure, may God receive the glory due his name.

APPENDIX 1

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

This registration form was used to record registrations for the webinar. It was converted to a Google Form and distributed electronically. This form was used to complete goal 1 of the project.

Agreement to Participate:

Thank you for your interest in attending this counseling workshop. This workshop is part of my Doctor of Ministry Project at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. While your participation in this workshop assists me in my project, I pray that this experience will help you grow in your ability to use the whole counsel of Scripture as you care for others.

This workshop will be held from 6:00 – 8:30 on Friday night and from 8:30 – 12:30 on Saturday morning. By registering for this workshop, you are agreeing to participate in all sessions. By completing this workshop, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name: _____

Email: _____

What Church do You Attend? _____

1. What days will you attend?
   Note: This workshop is a part of my doctoral research at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I am prayerfully seeking participants who can commit to attend all training sessions and therefore participate in my research. Thank you for your consideration if your schedule permits.

   Day 1: April 17th, Friday PM
   Day 2: April 18th, Saturday AM
   Day 3: April 24th, Friday PM
   Day 4: April 25th, Saturday AM

2. Have you participated in any of the following training?

   ACBC Fundamentals Training (Online)
   ACBC Fundamentals Training (Training Center or Regional Event)
   Biblical Counseling Training Conference, Faith Lafayette
   Association of Biblical Counseling Certification (ABC)
   CCEF School of Biblical Counseling
   Seminary or Graduate Level Counseling Course
   Biblical Counseling or Soul Care Training in your Local Church
   None of the Above

Other: Please Explain

3. Please list any other training or exposure you have had to biblical counseling not included above.

APPENDIX 2

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY IN MINISTRY
INVENTORY (BTMI)

The Biblical Theology in Ministry Inventory was used to measure participants'

understanding of biblical theology and its usefulness in ministry. This instrument was

converted to digital form and delivered electronically using SurveyMonkey. This rubric

was used to complete goals 2 and 5 of the project.

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to introduce biblical counselors to the value of biblical theology in ministry. This research is being conducted by Nathan Moore for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions concerning your familiarity with biblical theology and its usefulness in your ministry. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

Part I: General Data

1. This assessment is anonymous. Please select a memorable, four-digit PIN number. You will need to supply this number again at a later point in the workshop.

(PIN ####): _____

2. Have you participated in any of the following training? (Mark all that apply)

___ A. ACBC Fundamentals Training (Online)

___ B. ACBC Fundamentals Training (Training Center or Regional Event)

___ C. Biblical Counseling Training Conference, Faith Lafayette

___ D. Association of Biblical Counseling Certification (ABC)

___ E. CCEF School of Biblical Counseling

___ F. Seminary or Graduate Level Counseling Course

___ G. Biblical Counseling or Soul Care Training in your Local Church

___ H. Biblical Counseling or Soul Care Training in a Parachurch Ministry (e.g.

Agape Women's Services)

3. Please list any other training or exposure you have had to biblical counseling not
    included above.

Part II: Familiarity with Biblical Theology

Directions: Please mark the appropriate answer. Some questions may ask you to give

your opinion using the following scale:

        SD = strongly disagree
        D = disagree
        DS = disagree somewhat
        AS = agree somewhat
        A = agree
        SA = strongly agree

1. In your own words, please define biblical theology.

2.	I can confidently define biblical theology.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
3.	There are many valid ways to approach biblical theology.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
4.	Biblical theology affects how I read the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
5.	I know how biblical theology differs from other disciplines of theology.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

6. Systematic theology is a kind of biblical theology.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
7. One goal of biblical theology is to summarize the theological message of the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
8. The Bible tells a unified story across all its books.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
9. The story of the Bible can be told in a variety of ways.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
10. I can summarize the message of the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
11. Jesus is the key to interpreting the Old Testament.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
12. I can summarize the history of redemption.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
13. Understanding the New Testament helps me better interpret the Old Testament.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
14. Biblical authors intentionally use symbols (e.g. leaven, oil, lamb) to tell the Bible's story.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
15. Biblical authors intentionally use patterns (e.g. sowing and reaping, reversal) to tell the Bible's story.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Part III: The Value of Biblical Theology for Ministry

16. Biblical theology is a useful tool for counselors as they read the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
17. I believe counselors should be intentional about using the whole Bible in counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
18. When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for images (e.g. eagle, shade, pit).	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
19. I find images useful in my counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

20. When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for symbols (e.g. leaven, oil, lamb).   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

21. I find symbols useful in my counseling.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

22. When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for patterns (e.g. sowing and reaping, reversal).   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

23. I find these patterns useful in my counseling.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

24. I need to learn more about biblical theology.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

25. Understanding biblical theology will make me a better counselor.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Part IV: Confidence in Integrating BT in Counseling

26. I know how I could use the minor prophets in counseling.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

27. I am confident I could use the biblical theme of clothing to share the gospel with a counselee.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

28. I find every book of the Bible useful for counseling.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

29. I could offer a counselee hope from any book in the Bible.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

30. In a divorce counseling situation, I could counsel from many different places in the Bible.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

31. When addressing anger in counseling, I could counsel from many different places in the Bible.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

32. In my personal ministry, I find the New Testament to be more useful for counseling than the Old Testament.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

33. I know where to find resources that can teach me more about using biblical theology in my ministry.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
34. Faithful counselors should work to engage the imaginations of their counselees.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
35. I want to learn more about how biblical theology can make me a better counselor.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Part V: Case Study

Read the counseling vignette and answer the following questions.

Counseling Vignette:

Jack is a manager at a manufacturing company where he has been employed for 27 years. In just a few more years, Jack will be able to retire with great benefits and a nice pension. As long as his wife Angie has known him, Jack has been a hard worker. Doing a great job, pleasing his boss, and providing for his family all give him a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Then without any warning, the economy grinds to a halt and Jack is laid off. For the first time since he was a boy, Jack is unemployed.

Jack comes to you feeling depressed and hopeless. It has been almost months and he is still out of work. Of all the problems Jack reports, one of the dominant themes is shame. Jack can't seem to face his wife and his kids. He's even started sleeping on the couch. He feels like a failure. "What sort of man can't even provide for his own family?"

Recently he stopped going to the Tuesday morning men's Bible study. Most of those guys still have jobs. No matter how much she tries to encourage him, Jack's wife just can't seem to connect with him. One night when pressed, he finally blurts out, "How can you love a man who is so completely worthless?"

36. I understand how the biblical story of clothing could be used to give Jack hope.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
37. I am confident I could select an appropriate biblical image or symbol to counsel Jack.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

38. I am confident that I could counsel Jack   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA
from the Old Testament just as easily as
the New Testament.

39. I understand how Jack could benefit by   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA
considering that the Bible presents Satan
as a serpent.

40. I am confident I could use the pattern of   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA
Old Testament feasts to give Jack hope.

41. I am confident I could use the biblical   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA
pattern of lament to counsel Jack.

APPENDIX 3

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC (CER)

The following rubric was used to test the effectiveness of the biblical theology in ministry curriculum. It was distributed electronically with the expert panel request to the panel of experts to evaluate the webinar curriculum. This rubric was used to complete goal 3 of the project.

Name of Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Biblical Theology in Ministry					
Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The material in these lessons addresses topics relevant to biblical theology.					
The need for this workshop is clearly explained.					
The objective of each lesson is clearly stated.					
The content of the lesson clearly supports the lesson thesis.					
The content of these lessons demonstrates how biblical theology is relevant to biblical counseling.					
Overall, this material is clearly presented.					

In the space below, please submit any additional feedback regarding specific strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Please include any aspects you would add or subtract.

APPENDIX 4

PARTICIPANT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (PAB)

The following resource is an annotated bibliography written to help orient participants to biblical theology resources that may be of interest to counselors. Each entry includes a brief synopsis of the book, an explanation of how its content may be useful for counselors, and in some cases, an indication of its degree of difficulty. The PAB was used to complete goal 3 of the project.

Essential Biblical Theology Resources for Counselors

The following resources are especially useful for counselors seeking to integrate biblical-theological insights into their counseling ministry.

Alexander, T. Desmond, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

This work, along with the DBI listed below, is the most important biblical theology resource for counselors to own. The NDBT is comprised of three parts. Part One contains twelve articles on the fundamental issues of biblical theology. Part Two contains articles on the biblical theology of each book of the Bible and Part Three contains hundreds of articles on major biblical-theological themes or topics of the Bible.

Carson, D. A., T. Desmond Alexander, and Douglas Moo, eds. *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible: Follow God's Redemptive Plan as It Unfolds throughout Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018.

This work was edited by D.A. Carson and T. Desmond Alexander, the primary theological influences for this webinar. The study notes are written in a way that helps connect the individual stories and themes of Scripture to the grand biblical narrative. The appendix includes 28 brief articles on various themes of the Bible. These articles will be immediately applicable for counselors seeking to integrate biblical theology into their counseling and are great to assign as homework assignments.

Guthrie, Nancy. *Even Better than Eden: Nine Ways the Bible's Story Changes Everything about Your Story*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.

In this new work, Nancy Guthrie traces and applies nine themes that unfold across the Bible. Themes include the story of wilderness, tree, image, clothing, bridegroom,

sabbath, offspring, dwelling place, and city. This is a very accessible work for beginners. Each theme will be useful for counselors.

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2002.

Vaughn Roberts has taken Graeme Goldsworthy's work and made it even more accessible for laypersons. In this book, Roberts traces the storyline of the Bible around the paradigm of the kingdom of God which is defined as "God's people in God's place under God's rule." Complete with discussion questions at the end of each chapter and many useful charts, it is an easy way for Christians to get a feel for the whole message of the Bible.

Ryken, Leland, James Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds. *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

The DBI contains approximately 850 articles on individual biblical images. Many of these images are what we have identified as pan-biblical images. The DBI enables readers to get a quick snapshot of the various ways an image is used, its meaning, as well as literary and cultural connotations.

Additional Biblical Theology Resources for Counselors

The following resources are useful for counselors who wish to learn more about the discipline of biblical theology.

Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: Exploring God's Plan for Life on Earth.* Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

In this intermediate-level work, Alexander provides a thematic biblical theology of the Bible. Here he traces six biblical themes that frame the biblical meta-story. Those

themes include the temple, throne, devil, lamb, tree of life, and people of God. Alexander goes into more depth biblically, yet his insights are radially accessible for counselors.

Hunter, Trent, and Stephen J. Wellum. *Christ from Beginning to End: How the Full Story of Scripture Reveals the Full Glory of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018.

Trent Hunter and Stephen Wellum have written this book to help readers understand how every part of Scripture gives testimony to the glory of Christ. The heart of this book focuses on helping Christians read each part of the story, such as creation, the fall, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, etc., in view of Christ. It also gives special attention to identifying and interpreting types. It is an excellent resource for counselors who want to grow in their Christ-centered approach to biblical counseling.

Klink, Edward W., and Darian R. Lockett. *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

This work argues that the various approaches to biblical theology are best understood on a spectrum. Edward Klink and Darian Lockett argue for five such approaches and give a summary of each approach and identify a contemporary scholar as an example of each approach. The book contains a helpful table as an appendix which summarizes how each approach addresses key issues in biblical theology. The approach taken by this seminar is that insight and value can be gleaned from various approaches across this spectrum. The material presented in this seminar does not strictly adhere to these categories.

Lawrence, Michael. *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

This book is an excellent overview of what biblical theology is and how it can be used in the local church. Michael Lawrence gives extra attention to placing biblical theology into context with other theological disciplines. The second portion of the book tells the story of the Bible through the themes of creation, fall, love, sacrifice, and

promise. The final portion of the book gives case studies for how biblical theology can be used in the teaching and counseling ministries of the local church.

Murray, David. Jesus on Every Page: *10 Simple Ways to Seek and Find Christ in the Old Testament.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2013.

As stated in the title, this work is designed to help readers find Christ in the OT. With chapters such as "Discovering Jesus in the Old Testament Proverbs" and "Discovering Jesus in the Old Testament Characters," counselors will find this book immediately helpful. The book also has a whole chapter on OT typology.

Roark, Nick, and Robert Cline. *Biblical Theology: How the Church Faithfully Teaches the Gospel*. 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.

This little book is a part of the well-received *9Marks Building Healthy Churches* series. Written with the layperson in mind, Nick Roark and Robert Cline address the need for biblical theology and provide a working definition. The second portion of the book contains a whole-Bible biblical theology told around the theme of God the King. The final portion of the book discusses how biblical theology shapes the church's teaching, including in the counseling room.

Vroegop, Mark. *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019.

This work traces the biblical pattern of lament through the Psalms and Lamentations. Mark Vroegop identifies four general movements in lament: turning, complaining, asking, and trusting. The book's appendices will be of special interest to counselors. Appendix 1 contains a list of twenty biblical complaints. Appendix 2 contains a chart categorizing all the Psalms of lament. Appendix 3 contains a Learning-to-Lament worksheet that has immediate application in counseling. Appendix 4 catalogs the various turning-point patterns that appear in the Psalms.

Biblical Theology Series

Carson, D. A., ed. *New Studies in Biblical Theology*. IVP Academic, 51 vols.

 This massive series offers a lifetime of insight and is still growing with more volumes forthcoming. Volumes address areas of biblical theology in several different areas including the nature of biblical theology, the theology of a particular writer or text, and by tracing a biblical theme across the whole canon. These volumes are the most academic included in this list. Some works address topics of particular interest to counselors including works on idolatry, repentance, spiritual adultery, adoption, holiness, and temple.

Ortlund, Dane C., and Miles V. Van Pelt, eds. *Short Studies in Biblical Theology.*
  Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 9 vols.

 Unlike the NSBT, the entries in this series are short and accessible. Most come in under 200 pages. This growing series includes topics such as marriage, work, covenant, redemptive reversals, and kingdom. I just learned that a new volume, *"The Serpent and the Ancient Serpent Slayer"* is scheduled to be published in November 2020.

APPENDIX 5

EXPERT PANEL REQUEST

The following letter was distributed electronically with the CER to the panel of experts to evaluate the webinar curriculum. This letter was used to complete goal 3 of the project.

Dr. [Fill in the blank],

I am preparing to teach a webinar for biblical counselors on how to integrate the tools of biblical theology into their counseling. This webinar will consist of eight sessions over two consecutive weekends. This material was originally intended to be presented in-person, but due to the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, which is currently in effect, I have decided to proceed with the webinar format.

This webinar is intended for counselors who have received some amount of training in biblical counseling. I will not teach participants *how to counsel* but intend to give instruction on what biblical theology is and how it may be integrated into a counseling ministry. The primary goal of these workshops is to expose and introduce counselors to the discipline of biblical theology in order to increase participants' knowledge of and interest in biblical theology for counseling ministry. Though much of the training will be theological in nature, sessions will include times of counseling application through the discussion of case studies, homework assignments, and general principles of counseling application. At the date of writing, twenty-nine participants have registered.

This webinar is the core part of my project for the D.Min. program at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I sincerely desire for this material to be beneficial to participants regardless of their experience or level of expertise in biblical counseling. For that reason, I have determined not to present this material until I receive feedback from three men whom I consider to be competent in pastoral ministry and biblical studies. I have attached to this email detailed lesson plans for each of the eight

sessions. Each session is intended to take about fifty minutes to teach. With any remaining time, I plan to pose various discussion questions to webinar participants.

I would be appreciative if you could return the completed rubric (attached) by Friday, April 10, to ensure I have time to make any necessary edits to this material. Your feedback may be used verbatim in the evaluation of the efficacy of my project. If this time frame does not work for you, please let me know.

Attached:

1. Project Lesson Plans in .doc and .pdf
2. Evaluation Form in .doc and .pdf

With Gratitude,

Nathan C. Moore

APPENDIX 6

WEBINAR CURRICULUM

The following is a sampling of the curriculum used to provide instruction to counselors on how to understand and use biblical theology in their counseling ministries. This was used to complete goals 3 and 4 of the project.

Session 1: Foundations of Biblical Theology

I. Session Overview:

   A. Session Thesis: Biblical counseling (BC) stands on the conviction that the Bible is sufficient for counseling if it is rightly interpreted and applied. Due to the complex nature of the Bible, biblical theology (BT) is a helpful tool that aids counselors in determining the theological message of the Bible.

   B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this session learners will show confidence that BT is useful for reading the Bible and thus relevant to counseling.

   C. Key Counseling Applications

      1. BT is relevant for counselors because it aids counselors in interpreting and applying the Bible.

      2. If all of the Bible is divine and unified in its message, then *all* of the Bible has the potential to be useful in counseling. However, many BC counsel from a "thin Bible." Given the remarkable complexity of the problems we face as humans, BC should intentionally draw upon the Bible's diversity.

II. Biblical Foundations for Biblical Theology

   A. Opening Illustration: the Bayeux Tapestry

      1. Punchline: The Bible is like the Bayeux Tapestry, complex, diverse, and massive in historical and literary scope. Yet, the Bible is a unified whole, linked together by a single divine author, with a cohesive storyline.

      2. To avoid error, each diverse part must be interpreted in light of the whole.

      3. This is the task of BT, to interpret the Bible as a unified whole.

      4. The purpose of this webinar is to consider how the tools of BT can help us counsel truthfully from the whole Bible.

   B. Christ's Warning: The Danger of Using the Scriptures in Vain

      1. It is possible to read, use, and honor the Bible, and still miss the point of the Bible.

      2. John 5 - It is possible to "search the Scriptures and miss the point that they bear witness to Christ.

      3. Luke 24

         a) Jesus is the interpretive key for the whole Bible.

   b) Every portion of the Bible must be read in light of Christ.

III. The Relevance of BT for Counselors

 A. Biblical counseling and the Sufficiency of Scripture

  1. Biblical counseling stands on the conviction that the Bible is sufficient for the task of counseling.

  2. However, the Bible is only sufficient *for counseling* if it is rightly interpreted and applied.

  3. Counseling is on the front lines of application; therefore, great caution is needed.

  4. The discipline of biblical theology aids interpreters in interpreting the Bible as a unified whole.

  5. Therefore, BT is valuable and necessary for biblical counselors.

IV. The Nature of the Bible necessitates BT.

 A. The nature of revelation[1]

  1. Revelation is progressive

  2. Revelation is historical

  3. Revelation is organic

  4. Revelation is practical

 B. The character of the Bible

  1. The Bible is human

  2. The Bible is divine

  3. The Bible has a unified storyline

   a) Four-Part Plot Structure to the Bible (CFRR)

    (1) Creation

    (2) Fall

    (3) Redemption

    (4) Restoration

   b) The CFRR Structure is Useful to Counselors

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[1] Most of this conceptualization of the nature of the Bible comes from Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 27–33.

(1) CFRR helps with canonical interpretation

    (a) Illustration: Trying to Interpret a Slice of a Comic

    (b) If you understand the beginning, middle, and end of the story, you are more likely to understand a particular episode in the middle of the story.

(2) CFRR encourages worldview reflection

(3) CFRR is a creative way to share the Gospel

(4) CFRR is a skeletal structure to trace other pan-biblical themes

C. Conclusion - Biblical Theology works to synthesize and articulate the theological message of the Bible in a way that makes these qualities accessible.

Session 2: What is Biblical Theology?

I. Session overview:

A. Session Thesis: Biblical Theology is a way of reading the Bible as a unified whole with a unified message. It serves as a bridging discipline to systematic theology and application.

B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this session learners will be able to provide a definition of BT and gain an understanding of different approaches to BT and how it is used in interpretation.

C. Key Counseling Applications

1. BT is relevant for counselors because it aids counselors in interpreting and applying the Bible.

II. What is Biblical Theology?

A. BT is a broad and complicated discipline with many valid approaches.

B. Biblical theology as theological interpretation

1. *In light of all complexity, biblical theology works to synthesize and articulate the theological message of the Bible in a way that makes these qualities accessible to people.*

2. The central purpose in BT is to understand the comprehensive theological message of the entire cannon.

3. BT is the work of Analysis and Synthesis

C. Various Definitions of BT

1. Geerhardus Vos

2. D.A. Carson

3. Stephen Wellum

4. Simple Definition for this Webinar:

  a) *Biblical Theology is a way of reading the Bible as a unified whole with a unified message. This message centers around the person and work of Jesus Christ.*[2]

III. Approaches to Biblical Theology

A. There are many valid ways to approach BT. This workshop will focus on two.

1. Redemptive Historical Approach

  a) Focuses on "reading the Bible as an historically developing collection of documents."[3] (D.A. Carson)

    (1) Asks: How does each book contribute to the storyline of the redemptive narrative?

  b) We will take this approach and use it to ask worldview questions. (N.T. Wright)

    (1) Ask: How does the story of the Bible answer the ultimate questions our counselees are asking?

2. Thematic (Synthetic) Approach

  a) Uses analysis and synthesis to ask how the message of the biblical authors fits together in terms of themes.

  b) Aims to tell the story of the Bible in true but refreshing ways.

IV. The Role of Biblical Theology in Interpretation

A. Five Theological Disciplines

1. Exegetical Theology

2. Biblical Theology

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[2] This definition is very close to the definition provided by Roark and Cline. Roark and Cline, *Biblical Theology*, 26.

[3] D. A. Carson, "Current Issues in Biblical Theology: A New Testament Perspective," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995): 27.

3. Historical Theology

4. Systematic Theology

5. Practical Theology

B. The relationship of BT with other theological disciplines.

1. BT and Systematic Theology

a) BT is a bridging discipline between exegetical and systematic/practical theology

b) D.A. Carson's Theological Progression

(1) Exegetical theology > Biblical Theology > [Historical Theology] > Systematic Theology

c) All five theological disciplines are involved in interpretation and application. Therefore, all are necessary for biblical counseling.

Session 3: The Story of Clothing in Redemptive History

I. Session overview:

A. Session Thesis: BT seeks to synthesize whole-Bible theologies around singular pan-Biblical themes. The story of redemption can be told using the theme of clothing.

B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this teaching session, learners will gain an understanding of how the story of redemption can be told through the theme of clothing.

C. Key Counseling Applications

1. The story of clothing can be used to illustrate biblical teaching on a wide array of subjects including the put off/on dynamic, fear of man, materialism, body image, fear of aging, pornography, and moralism.

2. The story of clothing is a creative way to share the Gospel.

II. Introduction to Pan-Biblical Themes

A. BT is a multi-faceted endeavor with several valid approaches.

B. Recall that the central purpose of BT is to understand the comprehensive theological message of the Bible.

C. This task requires the process of analysis and synthesis.

1. Analysis asks: What is the theology of this book, author, or portion of Scripture?

2. Synthesis asks: How do these theologies stretch across the whole Bible?

    a) The synthetic approach can apply to themes, symbols, images, types, and patterns.

    b) BT seeks to tell the story of the Bible in true, but refreshing and creative ways.[4]

3. This webinar will demonstrate this principle by telling the story of redemptive history through the themes of clothing and serpents.

III. Counseling Vignette

A. This vignette will be used for application over the next two sessions

B. Molly

IV. Introduction – Theme of Clothing

A. Images of clothing and nakedness are prevalent throughout the Bible.

B. The most prominent feature of clothing is to illustrate God's provision of redemption in fallen humanity.

C. Therefore, the images of clothing and nakedness are intended to be used as a vehicle for Gospel proclamation and application.

V. Tracing the Story of Clothing

A. Naked at Creation

1. The nakedness of Adam and Eve

    a) Initially, as image-bearers, nakedness was not a cause for shame or alarm

    b) However, nakedness is unsettling, especially for royal representatives. Therefore, there is an expectation that God would eventually provide clothing.

    c) Nakedness should not be seen simply as innocence or clothing simply to cover shame.

2. Clothing carries meaning

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[4] This phrase is very close to the phrase used by Brian Rosner, "One goal of biblical theology... [is] to tell 'the old, old story', in fresh and unexpected ways." Rosner, "Biblical Theology," 9.

a) Clothing communicates status and role

b) Clothing is a way of investing honor.

3. Nakedness and the Fall

a) Once sin enters the world, nakedness is associated with shame and fear.

b) Adam and Eve were created to live as priests in the presence of the Lord, reflecting God's glory, but now they reflect the image of the serpent and are ashamed and want to hide.

c) Nakedness now carries with it the vulnerability and terror of standing exposed before the all-seeing gaze of a holy God.

d) For the rest of the biblical story, sinners will be terrified to stand undressed before God.

4. Grace

a) The story of redemption begins through the divine provision of clothing.

b) The first act of mercy in the Bible is the provision of clothing.

c) This establishes a precedent; from now on, appropriate garments will always be required when coming into the presence of God.

5. The Vestments of the High Priest

a) Great attention is given to the clothing of the High Priests who are required to stand in the presence of the Lord.

b) Features of the priestly vestments emphasize the importance of holiness.

c) As the OT draws to a close there is neither a temple nor a high priest who can faithfully represent God's people.

B. The Prophets

1. The prophets anticipated a solution to Israel's lack of temple and faithful priests.

2. Zechariah 3:1-10

a) Joshua the high priest is divested of his garments, which are stained with the sins of the nation, and clothed with pure garments.

3. Isaiah

a) Isaiah foresees a day when Jerusalem will be divested of her filthy garments (64:6) and clothed in wedding attire (62:1-12)

b) All this will be accomplished by the servant of the Lord, the Messiah, who will provide the "garments of salvation" and "the robe of righteousness" (61:1-3, 10).

C. Jesus Christ

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise and provides garments of salvation.

2. In the incarnation, Christ divested himself of his heavenly glory (Phil 2:6-8) to such an extent that like the first humans, he came into the world naked and in need of swaddling clothes (Luke 2:7). Jesus put on perishable flesh and blood (Heb 2:14-18)

3. At the transfiguration, the radiance of Jesus' clothing was highlighted, revealing to Peter, James, and John the glory he set aside (Matt 17:2).

    a) Later, Paul looked back on this event to encourage believers that Christ will "transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:20-21).

4. Clothing and nakedness are highlighted at the death and resurrection of Christ.

    a) The servant of the Lord who took on flesh, even as a naked baby, died the death of a sinner; naked and exposed before the wrath of a holy God.

    b) The narrative draws attention to Christ's robe, which like the garment of a priest, was seamless and too costly to sheer (John 19:23-24).

    c) At the resurrection, Christ shed and even folded his burial clothes which were not fit for his body which would never again see the decay of death (John 20:5-7).

D. The Epistles

1. Put On/Off Language

    a) Believers are repeatedly called to live in light of resurrection realities.

    b) Put On/Put Off language uses the clothing metaphor to express how Christians live in light of the resurrection by the patterns of behavior they adorn themselves with.

       (1) Not mere moralism, but the call to put on Christ himself (Rom 13:14).

       (2) Put on the deeds of Christ (Col. 3:1-14)

    c) Women, when facing social clothing pressures, are instructed to adorn

themselves with Christlikeness, not extravagant clothing (2 Tim 2:9-10).

    2. Longing for Better Clothing

        a) Paul uses the clothing image to describe human insecurity in the face of death (1 Cor 5:1-4).

          (1) Our bodies are a type of clothing for the inner man.

          (2) We know our bodies are deficient.

          (3) We groan with deep insecurity by our deficient physical clothing.

          (4) Humans have a deep longing to be clothed with the unfading beauty of immortality.

          (5) God created humans with a longing to be seen and approved of.

          (6) Humans wrongly seek approval by:

             (a) Obsession with body image

             (b) Fear of man

             (c) Sexual perversions (pornography, nudity, etc)

             (d) Anti-aging (exercise, beauty products)

  E. The Consummation

    1. Christ has purchased immortality for us (1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Cor 15:52-53)

    2. There is a dress code for heaven (Rev 22:14)

    3. The church presented in wedding attire (Rev 21:2)

VI. Discussion of Counseling Applications

  A. Potential counseling topics

    1. Body image

    2. Sexuality

    3. Aging

    4. Bullying/Fear of Man

    5. Shame/Guilt

    6. Modesty

Session 4: The Story of Reptiles in Redemptive History

I. Session overview:

  A. Session Thesis: The story of redemption can be told using the theme of reptiles,

the danger they pose, and their eventual defeat.

    B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this teaching session, learners will gain an understanding of how the story of redemption can be told through the theme of reptiles.

    C. Key Counseling Applications

        1. The pan-biblical theme of the serpent can be used to show counselees the danger of sin, the inner workings of temptation, the need for spiritual resources, and to exalt Christ as the one who triumphs over the serpent.

II. Introduction

    A. The theme of the ancient serpent bookends the Bible, highlighting its significance.

    B. In many ways, the story of the Bible centers around the danger this serpent poses to creation, how susceptible humans are to his cunning, and the initiative God takes to destroy his person and works.

    C. Readers who recognize how the theme of the serpent is interwoven throughout the Bible have the opportunity to grow increasingly cautious with the realization that they live in a world ruled by a crafty serpent. They may also be inclined to delight in Christ who crushes the head of the serpent.

III. Tracing the Story of the Serpent in Redemptive History

    A. Serpentine Imagery in the Bible

        1. Serpentine imagery abounds in the Scripture and is usually linked to Satan and those who cooperate with his agenda.

        2. Snake bites are associated with sudden danger.

        3. On some occasions, snakes are presented in positive terms.

    B. The Ancient Serpent

        1. The Bible's first reference to the serpent designates the serpent as crafty.

        2. Though Adam and Eve were created as rulers over creation, they subjugate themselves to a creature because of his crafty words. Disastrous consequences follow.

        3. Hope is given through the promise of a seed who would crush the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). Yet, the seed would be wounded.

        4. The serpent has remarkable power and influence in the world (John 12:31;

5:18-19).

      5. The work of Jesus is portrayed as a mission to destroy to works of the devil (John 12:31, 16:11; Eph 2:2; 1 John 3:8).

  C. The Bronze Serpent

      1. Just as the serpent is presented as a type of Satan, in a strange turn of events, the bronze serpent in the wilderness is presented as a type of crucifixion.

        a) Israel's sin was judged through the sting of the serpent bite.

        b) Christ compared his crucifixion to this event

        c) Like the bronze serpent, Jesus was lifted up.

        d) Like the venomless serpent in the wilderness, the lifted-up Christ became the sinless rescuer of those afflicted with sin.

  D. The Gospels

      1. The Gospels, especially Mark, emphasize the triumph of the Son of Man over Satan and his reptilian agents.

        a) Reference to wild animals at the temptation of Jesus (Mark 1:13)

        b) Jesus is frequently in conflict with Satan driving out demons (Mark 1:32, 34, 39) and unclean spirits (Mark 1:23, 26; 3:30)

        c) All who oppose Christ and his work (Matt 3:7; 23:33) are identified with Satan's serpentine agenda. This includes Peter (Matt 16:23).

  E. Victory over the Serpent

      1. NT writers viewed the death and resurrection of Christ to be the decisive event in Christ's triumph over the serpent and his works (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14).

      2. Revelation depicts the destruction of the dragon and those who share his image as the climactic event of redemptive history (Rev 20:8).

      3. The image of harmless, de-fanged snakes is used to portrays shalom (Isa 65:25; 11:8). This is because Christ has triumphed over the serpent.

IV. Discussion of Counseling Applications

  A. To apply pan-biblical themes, focus on what the patterns teach.

  B. Key applications:

      1. Satan is Dangerous

      2. Satan's primary tactic in temptation is deceit.

3. We are involved in a spiritual battle and need spiritual resources.

4. Christ's defeat of the serpent is cause for hope and peace.

V. Methods for Integrating Biblical Themes into Counseling

A. Tell the thematic story as a part of your counseling teaching

B. Assign homework

1. Write Thematic Bible Studies

2. Reading/Sermon Assignments

C. Use the theme to share the gospel

D. Employ when your counseling is "stuck"

Session 5: Introducing Local and Longitudinal Symbols

I. Session overview:

A. Session Thesis: Biblical authors intentionally make use of images and symbols to interpret and tell the biblical story.[5] Interpreting biblical symbols is necessary to understand the biblical message.

B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this teaching session, learners will gain awareness that the Bible offers pan-biblical symbols and images which can be used for biblical instruction in counseling.

C. Key Counseling Applications

1. Counselors will learn hermeneutical principles which will aid them in biblical interpretation which is necessary for faithful biblical counseling.

2. Counselors will be given numerous examples of images that are particularly useful to counseling.

II. Introduction

A. BT uses the tools of biblical-theological synthesis to distill and tell the message of the Bible in ways that do justice to this unity as well as the progressive nature of redemptive history.

B. BT synthesizes the message of the Bible using themes.

C. BT also synthesizes the message of the Bible using the Bible's symbols, images,

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[5] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 65.

types, and motifs.

    D. Jim Hamilton refers to this as the Bible's symbolic universe.

    E. This symbolic universe is particularly useful for the task of BC.

III. The Prevalence of Biblical Symbols

    A. Biblical authors did not only communicate through theological prose but made frequent use of the concrete items around them as symbols.

    B. Images can be easily misunderstood. Great care is needed in interpretation.

IV. Terms

    A. Image

    B. Symbol

    C. Symbolic Universe

V. Local vs. Longitudinal Images

    A. The Bible has hundreds of images.

    B. Local images

        1. Tend to be confined to their immediate context.

        2. Have less theological weight.

        3. Examples

    C. Longitudinal Images

        1. Are repeatedly used and further developed by various biblical authors.

        2. They stretch across the canon.

        3. Tend to have more theological weight.

        4. Examples

VI. Literary Images

    A. Biblical authors use figurative language to image God's truth.

    B. Metaphors

    C. Similes

    D. Example: Applying the "pit" image to counseling

        1. Images require a deeper level of engagement

        2. Images invite readers to consider the metaphysical realities of an image

        3. Images often trigger an emotional response

VII.   How to Interpret Images

A. Key Principle: Authorial intent is always the primary concern.

 1. Images must be experienced literally

 2. Readers must be sensitive to the connotations and overtones of the image

B. Example: God is a rock (Ps 78:35)

VIII. Sample Image: Vomit

A. Proverbs 26:11

B. Various biblical depictions of vomit

C. Vomit is an image of revulsion

D. This graphic image can be applied to a variety of counseling problems including

 1. Foolish, repeated behavior

 2. Hard-heartedness

 3. Apostasy

 4. Walking into sin leading to judgment

 5. Overindulgence of food, drink, entertainment, or wealth.

 6. Nominal Christianity.

E. Counselors must do more than "tell people what they need to know." They must also prayerfully and patiently describe and illustrate truth as they wait on the Holy Spirit to illuminate God's Word. Images are useful for this.

Session 6: Using Symbols in Counseling

I. Session overview:

A. Session Thesis: The Bible contains pan-biblical symbols that carry more theological significance than other images. These symbols are useful for counseling.

B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this lesson, learners will gain an understanding of how the longitudinal symbols of lamb and flood can be used in counseling. They will also gain concrete ways to integrate symbols into their counseling.

C. Key Counseling Applications

 1. In this session, the longitudinal images of sacrificial lamb and flood are applied to a counseling vignette.

 2. Counselors will be given seven advantages for using biblical images in

counseling.

3. Counselors will be given six practical ways to use images in counseling including a topical list of counseling-related images.

II. Longitudinal Images

A. The Biblical authors use longitudinal symbols to communicate their message as well as to summarize and interpret the Bible's big story.

B. An Example: Sacrificial Lamb

1. 1 Cor 5:7 – "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."

2. Paul assumed his readers would have been aware of what the Bible has said about the Passover lamb.

3. A biblical understanding of a Passover lamb would include

   a) Exod 12:1-28

   b) John 1:29

   c) Isa 53:7

   d) Lev 4-5; 23:19

   e) Lev 17:11

   f) Gen 22:8

4. Paul used a symbol to tell the story of the Gospel. When Paul reached for a way to describe the redemptive work of Christ, he chose the symbolism of the Passover lamb.

5. The reader is expected to interpret the symbol in light of previous installments in the text.

C. Since counseling is the work of teaching, reproofing, correcting, and training, every single symbol in the Bible is useful for counseling (2 Tim 3:16).

D. Counseling Vignette: applying the symbol of a flood to an apathetic counselee.

III. Advantages of Using Symbols/Images in Counseling

A. We must interpret Scripture rightly to be faithful BC.

B. Counselors want to be persuasive.

C. Counselors want creative ways to faithfully share Christ.

D. Symbols are illustrative and illustrations are an effective way to communicate.

1. Jesus used illustrations.

2. Illustrations make propositional truths more acceptable

3. Illustrations make truth memorable.

E. Symbols encourage application.

F. Symbols can help counselees cut through the mental fog of suffering.

G. Symbols can be an entryway into a counselee's story.

IV. Using symbols in counseling

A. Prayerfully seek biblical images that will engage the imagination of your counselee.

B. Be alert in your reading and familiarize yourself with the Bible's image.

1. Make use of the DBI and the DBT.

2. Make use of the NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible.

C. Use images to graphically illustrate your counseling instruction.

D. Assign image studies.

E. Creatively encourage concrete engagement with images/symbols.

F. Use images as multi-session anchors to add continuity to your counseling.

Session 7: Typology in Counseling

I. Session Overview

A. Session Thesis: Counselors need to understand that the Bible contains types that are necessary for interpretation and counseling application.

B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this session, learners will gain an understanding of what biblical types are, how types can be identified, and how types can be used in Christ-centered counseling.

C. Key Counseling Applications

1. In this session, counselors will be encouraged to be on the lookout for types, which occur with frequency throughout the Bible. Types ultimately point to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. This enables counselors to share Christ from any place in the Scriptures.

2. Counselors will be given multiple examples of types that are especially useful for counseling including Adam, the exodus, the exile, slavery, and the temple.

3. Counselors will learn how to apply types to counseling without moralizing or

allegorizing.

II. Introduction

    A. Types give counselors direct access to Christ from anywhere in the Scripture.

    B. Typology has a complicated history because some have used typology carelessly.

III. What is a type?

    A. Typology is concerned with the interrelationship of the Bible, especially the relationship between the OT and NT.

    B. Typology is concerned with identifying and correctly interpreting textual correspondences that seem to establish a pattern.

    C. Definition: "A type is a biblical event, person or institution which serves as an example or pattern for other events, persons or institutions."[6]

        1. Type simply means "pattern"

        2. God does not just speak. God orders history.

        3. God can providently orchestrate events and lives so that they serve to *prefigure* future events.

        4. These persons or events become Divinely ordained, historical analogies that correspond to future fulfillment.

        5. Types are not invented by authors or readers. Types are selected by God.

    D. Example of Typology – Romans 5:14

        1. When Paul goes to explain how Christ's work on the cross applies to Christians, he explains his point through typology.

        2. Adam is presented as a type of Jesus.

        3. Adam is a divinely appointed, historical person, who helps establish a pattern that would point to and explain the work of Christ.

IV. Characteristics of Types

    A. Types have a historical correspondence with actual persons, events, and institutions in history.

        1. Types are rooted not primarily on spiritual realities, but historical realities.

    B. Types feature escalation

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[6] Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 180.

1. Types increase in intensity and significance.
2. All types find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ, who is the final word of God.

V. How to Identify Types

A. Types must bear a historical and analogical correspondence between the type and antitype.

B. Types must show evidence of being providentially designed by God to function as a type.

C. Types must be forward-looking–anticipating greater fulfillment in its antitype counterpart.

VI. Examples of Types

A. Adam and all who take on his role (Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David) are types of Christ.
   1. Israel is a type of Christ.
      a) Matt 2:15
      b) Hos 11:1
      c) Exod 4:22
   2. Counseling Israel as a type of Christ.

B. The exodus pattern is a type of salvation.
   1. Just as Moses led Israel out of slavery in Egypt, Jesus leads his people out of slavery to sin.
   2. Psalm 77:16-20
   3. Counseling the exodus pattern.

C. Institutions can be Types
   1. Jesus is a better temple
   2. Jesus is a better priest
   3. Jesus is a better sacrifice

D. Other examples:
   1. Jonah as a type of Christ (Matt 12:38-40)
   2. The flood as a type of baptism (1 Pet 3:20-22)
   3. The serpent as a type of Christ/crucifixion (John 3:9-15)

4. Melchizedek as a type of Christ (Heb 7:1-3)

VII.   How do Counselors move from Type to Application?

    A. Avoid moralizing

    B. Avoid allegorizing

    C. Understand how types eventually lead to the redemptive work of Christ

    D. Types reveal patterns of how God works in redemptive history

VIII.   The Use of Types in Counseling

    A. Types aid in gospel-centered counseling

    B. Types show the consistent character of God

    C. Recommended resources for using types

Session 8: Biblical Patterns and Conclusion

I. Session Overview

    A. Session Thesis: Counselors need to recognize that the Bible contains discernable motifs which are useful in counseling application.

    B. Learner Objectives: As a result of this session, learners will be encouraged to begin recognizing biblical patterns to consider their use in biblical counseling.

    C. Key Counseling Applications

        1. In this session, counselors will learn that patterns are particularly useful for counseling because, by their very nature, they instill hope.

        2. Counselors will learn how to use feast patterns and the pattern of lament in biblical counseling.

        3. Counselors will be given a list of biblical patterns that may be especially helpful in counseling.

II. Introduction

    A. Like symbols, images, and types, the biblical authors regularly used patterns or motifs to communicate their message.

    B. Definition: a motif is a set of textual ingredients that are repeated, forming a pattern in the text.

        1. A pattern is made up of a discernible grid of conventions.

        2. A pattern contains ingredients that clearly recur in similar situations so that

readers began to expect them to appear.

C. An Amusing Example: Jacob's Well is a place where persons seem to find their future spouse.

    1. Genesis 29:4-12

        a) Pattern ingredients

            (1) A male foreigner comes to the well

            (2) A woman is there to draw water

            (3) The act is seen as a special act of kindness

            (4) A woman runs to tell her family of the event

            (5) Foreigner is shown hospitality

            (6) Someone gets married

    2. Other Instances

        a) Genesis 24:1-33

        b) Exodus 2:16-21

    3. John 4 – Jesus and the Woman at the Well

        a) Some pattern ingredients are present

        b) The pattern creates an expectation

D. This example demonstrates that a motif is a repeated set of textual ingredients that form a pattern.

E. Patterns allow readers to perhaps see more than they would have otherwise seen.

III. Feast Patterns

A. Patterns can be built into institutions and events such as feasts.

B. Three primary annual feasts (Deut 16:16)

    1. Passover

    2. Feast of Weeks

    3. Feast of Booths

C. Each feast was designed to remember how God was a savior, leader, and provider.

D. The feast patterns were to create the expectation that since God had acted a certain way in the past, he could be trusted to act again in the future.

E. The annual reminder of the feasts functioned to create a mental grid for people the interpret their lives according to the faithfulness of God.

F. The feasts conditioned and informed the consciences of Israel that they need and can anticipate a greater exodus, a more fruitful harvest, and a more glorious redemption.

IV. The Pattern of Lament

    A. Some patterns are less discernable as historical patterns but consist of spiritual ingredients that form a pattern.

    B. Lament is an example of one such pattern.

    C. The Pattern of Lament in Psalm 77[7]

       1. Turn to God in Prayer (Ps 77:1)

       2. Speak Your Complaints to God (Ps 77:2, 4)

       3. Ask Honest Questions (Ps 77:7-9)

       4. Trust God (Ps 77:13ff)

    D. Using the Pattern of Lament in Counseling

       1. Teach counselees the pattern of lament

       2. Lament worksheet

       3. Use a counseling session for guided lament

V. Other Examples of Patterns for Counselors

    A. Safe passage through the water

    B. Pattern of Reversal

    C. Righteous Sufferer

    D. Barren Women

VI. Counseling Application

    A. Patterns give counselors greater insight into obscure passages.

    B. Counselors can use patterns to offer hope, especially courage.

    C. Counselors can use patterns to help correct a counselee's expectations of the future.

    D. Counselees can use patterns to help counselees establish ritualistic behavior patterns of obedience.

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[7] This pattern of lament was recognized by Mark Vroegop, *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 25–40.

1. Many elements of worship are designed to shape the conscience of the worshiper, especially the ordinances.
2. The Feasts were designed to create patterns of remembrance that shaped future expectations.
3. Counselors can help counselees create "rituals of remembrance." Establish concrete cues that can be connected to patterns of Godly behavior.
   a) Eg. Every time you feel the baby kick, quote Matt 6:25.
   b) Every time your mother-in-law texts you, tell your kids one thing you appreciate about her.

VII. Conclusion
   A. Return to opening illustration: Though the Bible is rich and complex, it is unified by the redemptive work of Christ.
   B. The Bible is not only sufficient for counseling, but it is useful for counseling in its entirety.
   C. BT gives counselors the tools to declare the whole counsel of God.
   D. The people we counsel have complex problems. We should strive to give them complex, nuanced biblical solutions.
   E. Hopefully, this seminar has motivated you to take up an ongoing study of BT.
   F. Consult the annotated bibliography.

A final word of advice: start small. Before you try to integrate BT into BC, select one BT topic and study it until you benefit from it personally. Then you will be able to give it away to others.

APPENDIX 7

SEMINAR BROCHURE

This is a copy of the brochure distributed for promotional purposes.

HOW THICK IS YOUR COUNSELOR'S BIBLE?

Biblical-Theological Tools for the Counselor's Tool Box:
A Seminar For Applying Biblical Theology to Counseling

What is it?

A free seminar for biblical counselors who desire to grow in their ability to interpret and apply the Bible in ministry.

When and Where?

- Two sequential weekend seminars at Trinity Baptist Church in Jonesborough, TN
  - April 17-18 & 24-25
  - Fridays: 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
  - Saturdays: 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

What Will the Seminars Include?

Free dinner or breakfast will be provided at each session.

- Homework Resources
- Session Handouts
- Extensive Resource Lists
- Small-group discussion applying new principles to case-studies.

Do You Counsel From a Thin or Thick Bible?

When you counsel, how much of the Bible are you able to use? Do you find yourself using the same texts over and over again? Are there large portions of the Bible you rarely use in counseling?

Most importantly, are you comfortable proclaiming Christ from any portion of the Bible?

Or as some have put it, *"How thick is your Bible?"*

This is a theological seminar designed to equip biblical counselors with the often neglected tools of biblical theology which are necessary for interpretation.

In it, counselors will be introduced to the discipline of biblical theology and why it matters for counseling. Counselors will then be given nine biblical-theological tools for immediate use in counseling.

Register Online at: http://trinity3e.org/counseling-events/
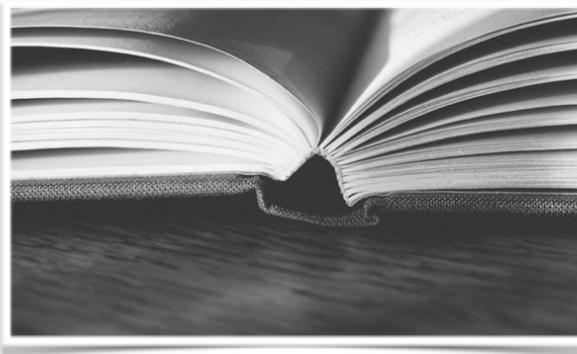
Figure 1.1. Promotional brochure front.

Who Should Come?

This seminar will assume the basics of biblical counseling and is designed for biblical counselors of any level who have received some degree of formal training in the Fundamentals of Biblical Counseling.

However, any person who is interested in becoming a better student of the Bible will benefit from this seminar.

Who is the Instructor?

These seminars will be taught by Nathan Moore, pastor and ACBC-certified biblical counselor. This is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Ministry degree at SBTS. This project is supervised by ACBC fellow, Dr. Robert Jones.

This 12 hours of training will address the following topics:

A. Foundations of Biblical Theology
  1. What is Biblical Theology?
  2. Why is Biblical Theology of Interest to Counselors?
  3. The Necessity of Biblical Theology in Christ-Centered Counseling
B. Biblical Theological Tools for Counselors
  1. The Redemptive-Dramatic Approach to the Bible
     a) Worldview Stories and the Counselee
     b) Life's Ultimate Questions in Counseling
  2. Pan-Biblical Themes for Counseling
     a) The Story of Marriage in Redemptive History
     b) The Story of Clothing in Redemptive History
     c) The Story of Reptiles in Redemptive History
  3. The Bible's Symbolic Universe
     a) Counseling and Biblical Symbols
     b) Counseling and Biblical Images
     c) Counseling and Typology
     d) Counseling and Biblical Patterns
     e) Counseling and Biblical Promises

Register Online at: http://trinity3e.org/counseling-events/

Figure 1.2. Promotional brochure back.

APPENDIX 8

AGGREGATE PRE- AND POST-TEST AVERAGES
FROM BIBLICAL THEOLOGY IN MINISTRY
INVENTORY (BTMI)

This table contains the aggregate pre- and post-test averages from the BTMI.

The open-ended question from item 1 is not included.

Table 4. Pre- and post-webinar survey responses

Survey Question		Pre-Test Average	Post-Test Average
Part II: Familiarity with Biblical Theology			
Q2	I can confidently define biblical theology.	3.72	5.38
Q3	There are many valid ways to approach biblical theology.	3.22	5.85
Q4	Biblical theology affects how I read the Bible.	5.09	5.86
Q5	I know how biblical theology differs from other disciplines of theology	3.77	5.32
Q6	Systematic theology is a kind of biblical theology.	2.85	3.67
Q7	One goal of biblical theology is to summarize the theological message of the Bible.	4.60	5.27
Q8	The Bible tells a unified story across all its books.	5.68	5.95
Q9	The story of the Bible can be told in a variety of ways.	4.31	5.64
Q10	I can summarize the message of the Bible.	4.72	5.64
Q11	Jesus is the key to interpreting the Old Testament.	5.19	5.82
Q12	I can summarize the history of redemption.	4.63	5.36
Q13	Understanding the New Testament helps me better interpret the Old Testament.	5.24	5.64
Q14	Biblical authors intentionally use symbols (e.g. leaven, oil, lamb) to tell the Bible's story.	5.48	5.82
Q15	Biblical authors intentionally use patterns (e.g. sowing and reaping, reversal) to tell the Bible's story.	5.48	5.91
Part III: The Value of Biblical Theology for Ministry			
Q16	Biblical theology is a useful tool for counselors as they read the Bible.	5.32	5.91

Table 4 Continued

Q17	I believe counselors should be intentional about using the whole Bible in counseling.	5.27	5.95
Q18	When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for images (e.g. eagle, shade, pit).	4.05	5.14
Q19	I find images useful in my counseling.	4.73	5.32
Q20	When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for symbols (e.g. leaven, oil, lamb).	4.23	5.18
Q21	I find symbols useful in my counseling.	4.32	5.41
Q22	When I read the Bible, I intentionally look for patterns (e.g. sowing and reaping, reversal).	4.45	5.32
Q23	I find these patterns useful in my counseling.	4.41	5.36
Q24	I need to learn more about biblical theology.	5.55	5.82
Q25	Understanding biblical theology will make me a better counselor.	5.59	5.95
Part IV: Confidence in Integrating Biblical Theology in Ministry			
Q26	I know how I could use the minor prophets in counseling.	3.36	4.91
Q27	I am confident I could use the biblical theme of clothing to share the gospel with a counselee.	3.59	5.50
Q28	I find every book of the Bible useful for counseling.	4.41	5.36
Q29	I could offer a counselee hope from any book in the Bible.	4.14	5.05
Q30	In a divorce counseling situation, I could counsel from many different places in the Bible.	4.32	5.41
Q31	When addressing anger in counseling, I could counsel from many different places in the Bible.	4.50	5.45

Table 4 Continued

Q32	In my personal ministry, I find the New Testament to be more useful for counseling than the Old Testament.	3.27	4.09
Q33	I know where to find resources that can teach me more about using biblical theology in my ministry.	4.27	5.82
Q34	Faithful counselors should work to engage the imaginations of their counselees.	4.36	5.86
Q35	I want to learn more about how biblical theology can make me a better counselor.	5.68	5.86
Part V – Case Study			
Q36	I understand how the biblical story of clothing could be used to give Jack hope.	3.45	5.27
Q37	I am confident I could select an appropriate biblical image or symbol to counsel Jack.	3.23	5.09
Q38	I am confident that I could counsel Jack from the Old Testament just as easily as the New Testament.	3.77	5.27
Q39	I understand how Jack could benefit by considering that the Bible presents Satan as a serpent.	3.50	4.95
Q40	I am confident I could use the pattern of Old Testament feasts to give Jack hope.	2.77	4.68
Q41	I am confident I could use the biblical pattern of lament to counsel Jack.	3.41	5.73

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ABSTRACT

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY TRAINING FOR BIBLICAL
COUNSELORS IN THE TRI-CITIES
REGION OF TENNESSEE

Nathan Charles Moore, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2020
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Robert D. Jones

This project sought to train biblical counselors to use insights from biblical theology in their counseling ministries. This was to help counselors in the Tri-Cities Region of Tennessee faithfully interpret and apply the Bible. Chapter 1 describes the state of biblical counseling in the region and the goals of this project. Chapter 2 provides biblical and theological exegesis of two passages of Scripture to show how the doctrine of inspiration lays a foundation for interpreting the Bible as a unified whole. Chapter 3 presents a theoretical and practical basis for training counselors to use a metanarrative reading of the Bible, biblical-theological themes, and the Bible's symbolic universe to enrich their counseling. Chapter 4 describes the implementation and methodology of the project. Chapter 5 evaluates the efficacy of the project based on the completion of the project's goals. Ultimately this project aimed to help counselors faithfully interpret the Bible.

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