

**PART I**  
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## LESSON 1

# THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING

### Introduction

#### Aim

To give a theological basis for the work of the pastor in the areas of pastoral care and counselling. To help the pastor to have a theological perspective for the work that he does with people.

### The Nature of God

Pastoral care and counselling operate under the presupposition that this ministry is to be done within a Christian context. Therefore, it is not necessary for us to try to persuade people that God exists. If they take the initiative to seek out a religious leader for help, this action would imply some sort of religious orientation as a backdrop for our ministry to them. Therefore, we need not try to justify a Christian approach to counselling and pastoral care. This will be taken as a presupposition in the present work.

Experiences in life tend to transform theology from the theoretical to the practical, from the static to the dynamic. It is one thing to sit in a class of theology and dialogue about what God is like and how theologians have seen Him through the centuries; it is something else to hold the hand of one who has just lost a loved one through death and try to comfort them with the truth of God's love and mercy. The present work will seek to point out the pragmatic aspects of God's nature.

#### Is God immanent or detached?

As people grapple with the load of living and as they reflect upon their lives and their circumstances, they ask: "Where is God in all this?" Or, "If God exists, why doesn't he answer my prayers in a more clear way?" "Why do I feel so alone in this experience?"

While working as a chaplain in a medical centre, I was called to be present with a person whose family had been involved in a serious automobile accident. I went into the room to be with the young man who was walking the floor nervously. I introduced myself and told him that I had been informed that his family had been in an accident. His immediate response was: "Where is God in all this?" He explained that his father, mother, and two brothers had been hit by a drunken driver at an intersection. His father was dead and the others were critical. One brother would be a cripple for life if he should survive, and the outcome for his mother and other brother was uncertain. I later learned

*Restate the aim of this lesson in your own words.*

*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

*Pastoral care and counselling operate under the presupposition that this ministry is to be done within a*

*(Christian, context)*

*What question do people often ask when faced with a crisis?*

*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

that the family had been quite active in their local church activities, and were considered devout people. The young man was asking why God was not near them at the time of the accident, and why did He not keep the accident from happening.

This question transforms the academic aspect of God's immanence and his transcendence into daily experience. Neo-orthodoxy in years past emphasized the "other-ness" of God's nature. This means that God is separate from man in His sovereign justice and love. Man cannot discover God unless God takes the initiative to "break into" man's life through self-revelation. God's judgment is prominent in the thinking of these theologians. The concept of God as a loving father is vague or lacking in their perspective.

If one's experience with God in the past has been that He exists but is really distant and unapproachable, then this person will have doubts and struggles when difficulties come to him in his daily activities.

The liberal interpretation of theology tended to bring God down to the level of man. They humanized God to the point that He is hardly more than a big brother. The humanistic approach to life tends to give much more stature to man by showing that he is able to cope with his problems by using his own intelligence and strength. The current emphasis upon self-confidence, self-assertion, and self-realization would reflect this attitude.<sup>1</sup>

Probably the more correct point of view is the middle of the road, the "golden mean" for the ancient Greeks, which represents the two poles in thinking. God's nature is incomplete if conceived either as immanent or transcendent to the exclusion of the other concept. We need to maintain a reverence for God because He is holy, sovereign, and just. But we also need to remember that He is with us in our moments of difficulty. We can depend upon Him to be present with us in moments of distress. We can call upon Him and be assured that He hears and ministers to us according to our needs.

### Is God friendly or austere?

The fundamental question that people ask as they face up to problems in their lives is this: "Is God friendly?" Is He a helpful, beneficent companion to man, who is anxious that man experience that which is highest and best in life? Or is God a wrathful, merciless judge, who is constantly looking for a chance to catch man out of line so He can punish him? Parsons refers to this conflict as one that symbolized the differences between men like Arius and Athanasius, Pelagius and Augustine, Abelard and Anselm, Erasmus and Luther, Locke and Hobbes, Paine and Burke, Mill and Newman, Weiman and Niebuhr.<sup>2</sup>

Many conservatives and fundamentalists have tended to insist that God is severe in requiring of man a standard of conduct which is in keeping with the strictest requirements as they are laid out in the Bible. The more liberal theological view would place a greater emphasis upon God's permissiveness, love, and goodness towards man, and

Match the statements in Column B with the terms in Column A.

A  
— Neo-orthodoxy

— Liberal theology

B  
1. God takes the initiative.

2. He is hardly more than a big brother.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

God's nature is incomplete if conceived either as \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

(immanent, transcendent)

What other question do people ask when faced with problems in their lives?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

emphasize that He overlooks man's short-comings.

Perhaps a more correct point of view regarding the nature of God would seek to follow the mean between these two extremes. An adequate theology of pastoral care would see clearly the severe aspect of God's nature and how His standards of conduct are to be taken seriously by man. But at the same time, it would recognize God's forgiving nature that is communicated through His grace and willingness to forgive man of his pride and rebellion. That the majority of men do not even give lip service to the idea of God and his omnipotence in the world, is evidence of the secular and humanistic age in which we live.

**Is God sovereign or limited?**

The pastor who is deeply involved in ministry to people in need will have ample occasion to reflect with those to whom he ministers upon the divine meanings that may be attached to the many events that transpire. He can emphasize the providence of God in every act, every accident, sickness, and misfortune. Or he can be less omniscient in his attempts to explain from a theological perspective everything that happens. He will emphasize that God is present with the person in moments of tribulation, but that God is not fabricating these events to bring punishment or suffering. God lets man's freedom work in ways that at times work against his own comfort and welfare.

This latter view seems to be a more adequate position as I understand God's actions. For instance, God has been aware of the limitations to the natural resources that are at man's disposal for centuries. Why has He not intervened to cause man to be more conservative in the preservation of these resources instead of letting man be so extravagant and wasteful in the use of them? Is God more merciful because He waits for man to discover for himself the limitations and be driven to take measures which can give him more years for meaningful living? Would not it have been better for God to intervene before this critical time and cause man to make changes decades ago which would have permitted his survival for a longer period of time? We cannot say that one decision on the part of God is better than another. We recognize and accept that God's wisdom is greater than ours, and that He is causing us to become His people through life's varied experiences. And so we insist that the pastor who is involved in pastoral care and counselling must approach his task with a tentativeness about giving explanations as to why God permits certain things and how God works in the lives of His people. Instead of coming forth immediately with a stereotype answer when people ask: "Why?", the alert minister will gently turn the question back to the counsellor or to the one who is seeking help. In this way he will be able to understand the perspective of the one who is grappling with life's perplexities. If the minister tries to respond without understanding the frame of reference of the one who is asking the question, probably he will not answer within the context of what the person really needs to hear.

*State what the author believes an adequate theology of pastoral care includes.*

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*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

*Is the following statement true or false?*

*God allows man's freedom to work in ways that at times work against his own comfort and welfare.*

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*(true)*

*This latter view seems to be a more \_\_\_\_\_ position.*

*(adequate)*

*Is the following statement true or false?*

*The author feels that it does not matter how the pastor answers the questions of one going through a crisis.*

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*(false)*

Thus the question as to whether or not God is punitive is a basic issue which perplexes people as they cope with their difficulties. The pastor who is administering pastoral care will go to his people with a basic message that God is loving and good. While there are passages that make it clear that God does punish for sin, these passages are not be forced upon the counsellee as the interpretation of the meaning of what has happened to the person.

A few months ago I was awakened by the telephone at 11:30 p.m. It was a long distance call from the United States. The person on the line gave me the shocking news that the 21 year-old son of a colleague had been killed a few hours previously in a motorcycle-automobile accident. I was asked to go and give the news to the mother. My wife and I dressed and went to her home. We entered and sat down, and then explained that her son-in-law from the United States had called to give us the tragic news. She put her head in her hands and began to weep. In a few moments she sobbed: "I don't understand. I have prayed daily for my son through the years, that God would protect him." Later, as we worked with the legal papers to get her permission to leave the country to go to the funeral service, I mentioned that God had helped us to get through all the paper work quickly. She responded by questioning: "I don't understand how God works. If He was at work in helping us get the papers all processed in one day, why could He not have had the car pass by a few seconds sooner and thereby avoided the accident that took my son's life?"

The above case points out one of the paradoxes of the Christian faith: How do we reconcile God's sovereignty and the presence of evil and suffering? We believe that God is all powerful, and that He has power to control the universe that He has created. God has established the laws of nature by which all that is in the universe functions and fits together. These laws function consistently for the benefit of mankind. Yet in the operation of these laws, some people, at times, are hurt. Gravity, inertia, and centrifugal force, which work for the benefit of all mankind, can result in pain and suffering for some under certain conditions. The laws by which the universe operates cannot be annulled now and then to accommodate an individual in a special need. Some people pass through epochs in which they suffer intensely as a result of these laws, but all people would suffer more if they did not exist. A few years ago I ministered to a family that was grief-stricken because of the death of their daughter in a car collision. The father asked why didn't God interrupt His laws for that fateful instant and let the couple arrive at the intersection just a few seconds after the other car had passed? Why could not God have made it possible for the girl and her boyfriend to get to the intersection just a couple of seconds later?

To attempt to answer questions like these is to find oneself frustrated and to leave people unsatisfied. Even though our reason can tell us of the wisdom of the constant operation of God's laws, there comes a moment when each person would like to be able to interrupt that law for his

What was the problem of the woman whose son was killed in a motorcycle accident in the adjacent paragraph?

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(Compare your answer with the text.)

The above case points out one of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Christian faith.

(paradoxes)

own good. Perhaps it is better to assure the people that God loves them and is with them in this time of testing, and to pray with them for the grace that they need as they pass through the difficult experience. Later, the person will be able to accept what has happened and not need the explanation.

Perhaps it is better to assure the people that God \_\_\_\_\_ them and is \_\_\_\_\_ them in their time of \_\_\_\_\_.

(loves, with, testing)

### Is God punitive or forgiving?

I sat quietly in the hospital room as the young couple sobbingly expressed their grief upon receiving the news that their newborn son had died because of a malfunction of the heart. The young husband and father was trying to console his wife. She kept repeating the question: "Is God punishing us for something we have done?" The father was seeking to explain that he did not understand this experience as a form of punishment. I sought to assure them that God's relationship to us is such that He would not punish a sin through taking the life of an innocent infant or through causing him to be born in this condition. We spent a time in quiet conversation in which I sought to assure them of God's presence even in this sorrow. As I left their presence, I had the impression that the mother was still struggling with the perplexing question of punishment.

Is sickness and death a manifestation of God's punishment? Biblical revelation would indicate that some of it is, but it should not follow that all sickness, suffering, and death has the punitive element in it (Gen. 6:5-9; Heb. 12:7-11). When a patient asks the question if God is punishing, this should be a signal to try to probe gently to discover what is underneath the question. Why does the person feel that God may be punishing? At the same time the minister will seek to reassure people that God is with them in the experience and that each person has to discover what God is saying to them through the experience.

The minister should try to probe gently to discover what is \_\_\_\_\_ the question.

(underneath)

The attitude towards sin and one's concept of God are related.

If God for the minister is thought of primarily as a Judge, then the minister will tend to think of his function in the same light, and in his counseling he will pass judgment. If God is thought of in terms of sentimental love, the pastor may work out his role by figuratively patting troubled people on the shoulder and saying, "Don't worry. God will take care of it." If God is thought of and really felt to be redemptive love, seeking the fulfillment and redemption of each person, the clergyman will feel the necessity of expressing a similar attitude toward persons who seek help.<sup>3</sup>

In Phillips' little book, *Your God Is Too Small*, he points out how some people have false gods. Some see God as the "Santa Claus" who is always ready to give gifts to His children if they have been good during the previous year. Others see God as the policeman, who is ready to "zap" the one who steps out of line in disobedience to His commandments. Others see God basically as an authoritarian figure, towards whom they either have hostility or are completely

submissive. Phillips makes the point that the conception of God which is based upon a fear relationship in childhood is not a satisfactory foundation for an adult Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

“Much of the fear of God which characterized an earlier generation was the fruit of fear of parents, and it was not difficult to arouse a sense of sinfulness or fear of hell in those whose childhood was highly coloured by memories of guilt, shame, and the fear of punishment.”<sup>5</sup> The present generation has moved away from the use of fear as a basis for motivation for religious experience, but still tends to respond positively to God when a crisis arises. “It is not the outward storms and stresses of life that defeat and disrupt personality, but its inner conflicts and miseries.”<sup>6</sup> All these factors influence one, and the pastor will need to understand how his parishioners feel about sin and its effects.

Pastoral care implies that God’s grace can be helpful to people in their moments of need. Perhaps this is one of the greatest blessings that come to the pastor. As he ministers through the years he can give endless testimonies of how God works His grace in the lives of people who have trusted Him and lived on the periphery, but in critical situations they come to experience a deeper relationship with God than they had previously known. The minister can be the mediator of this grace through the comfort which he offers in times of need. “. . . And the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

God’s grace is experienced by the believer through providing a sense of forgiveness and restoration because of some sin which he has committed. The burdens of guilt are multiple and heavy, and they take their toll in sapping one’s energy, creating depression, and looking for means of expiation to relieve their effect. But it is only as people are led into the Holy of Holies in complete confession that people are alleviated of this burden of guilt. Many times these burdens will be lifted through the ministry of the pastor in the Holy of Holies as people confess and receive God’s forgiveness. The wise minister will not necessarily insist upon public confession, knowing that this can be more harmful than helpful for people. When one confesses sincerely with a contrite heart before God, and in the presence of a “significant other” (the minister) this will usually be sufficient to give the person a sense of cleansing. Occasionally the minister will be told by someone that although they have confessed repeatedly, they still feel guilty. They may need for the minister to listen again to the details of their suffering, and simply be the incarnation of God’s forgiveness.

People will be sensitive to the minister’s attitude after having made a confession, in order to determine whether or not their confession has made the minister less friendly, whether he cuts them out of places of leadership, etc. Paul Tournier, in his book, *Guilt and Grace*, offers guidelines

Pastoral care implies that God's \_\_\_\_\_ can be \_\_\_\_\_ to people in their moments of \_\_\_\_\_.

(grace, helpful, need)

God's grace is experienced by the \_\_\_\_\_ through providing a sense of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ because of some sin which he has committed.

(believer, forgiveness, restoration)

whereby the minister can be more effective in the appropriation of God's grace for those who are struggling with the problem of guilt.

Several years ago I read the statement that soon man would lead God to the edge of the cliff, thank Him for His services, and then push Him over the cliff because He is no longer needed. There are many who have symbolically done this, as they have begun to live their lives apart from any spiritual foundation. The pastor who ministers to people in life's crises today is still pointing them to a source of strength and inspiration that is relevant and helpful.

In the sixties the theologians pronounced the shocking news that "God is dead." Reactions were extreme and varied. What the theologians were saying is that the archaic concepts of God as the one in heaven, up and apart from man, are no longer viable as man comes to a better understanding of the universe.

Psychologists, specifically Eric Fromm, teach that God is created in man's image.<sup>7</sup> What this statement says is that man out of his deep need for security and protection fabricates the idea of God in his mind. This gives him a sense of security which he would lack if he did not have the belief in a supernatural power that was taking care of him. These recent concepts of God indicate the extremes to which man has gone in recent years. Still, man reaches out and up for help in times of stress.

Frequently the minister will have people seek him out. Their problem is that in the midst of all their focus upon so many things in life they have neglected the spiritual dimension. They will want the minister to help them to understand more clearly our teaching about God. Others who have been reared in a religious tradition that is different from ours will be open to ask questions about how our faith in God helps us. These questions give the minister the opportunity to explain to people the nature of our God.

Others are saying that our decade is going to turn to God in huge numbers, because they have realized that science and technology have not given them the peace of mind that they thought they would achieve through material prosperity. This may be true for a part of our world, but many in the Third World are still struggling for the basic needs in life. Their struggle is closely associated with God and what He can do for man.

## The Nature of Man

### Different viewpoints regarding the nature of man

Pastoral care and counselling are practised within the framework of interpersonal relationships. The pastor who works with people daily will have ample opportunity to ask the question: "What is man?" He will see man at his best and worst. He will need to have as much understanding as possible of the nature of man as revealed in the biblical teachings, as well as his own observations of personal theory and an understanding of the dynamics of human behaviour. There is abundant material in these areas for one to spend

Is the following statement true or false?

The pastor who ministers to people in life's crises today is still pointing them to a source of strength and inspiration that is relevant and helpful.

(true)

Frequently the minister will have people \_\_\_\_\_ him \_\_\_\_\_

(seek, out)

Pastoral care and counselling are practised within the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ relationships.

(framework, interpersonal)

his lifetime in study. The minister will be perplexed at times with the demonic in man that comes out in his attitude and relationships with others. He will also stand in awe as he observes the altruism of others. The following paragraphs attempt to hold up some of the basic issues as they relate to the nature of man and the struggles which people face in their daily living.

Strong and competitive systems have arisen in the world today as a result of the different points of view concerning man's nature. "There is no more fundamental debate in the world today than about the nature of man."<sup>8</sup> Darwin made his ideas popular in the last century with his theory of evolution, saying that man has descended from more simple animal forms. This theory has come to be accepted more or less by science as the probable explanation of the origin of man.

Nietzsche, a German philosopher of the last century, based his philosophical points of view upon Darwin's theory, and combined his own religious skepticism to come to the conclusion that "supermen" should rule over the weaker and less adequate ones in this world in which God is dead.

Karl Marx has added to this naturalistic point of view by adopting the philosophy of Fierbich that "man is what he eats," and by insisting that there are no eternal nor moral values. An increasing number of people in the world live under the shadow of the hammer and the sickle. What is life, faith, and meaning for these multitudes?

What are the issues that are related to man and his nature for those of us who minister in pastoral care and counselling? The effective minister must be alert to the needs of man, his conditions which call for ministry, and the struggle with evil which is a part of each one's life.

### **The biblical concept of man's nature**

The biblical concept of man must be examined through a study of the terms used in the Old and New Testaments in order to understand man and his complex nature. It must be recognized that the Hebrews had a very limited knowledge of psychology and physiology. Added to this fact may be the nature of the Hebrew language which at times has no basic idea for a specific word that they used. The same word may have several meanings which appear to us to be quite unrelated. Also, the working of the Hebrew mind, which was not analytical or philosophical, as was true in the case of the Greeks, further complicates their effort to develop a definite idea or concept of the nature of man. Another factor must be recognized as the growth and development of words during the periods of the Old Testament.

*Old Testament concept.* – From the terminology in the Old Testament we may conclude that the Hebrews felt that man was composed of two basic elements— one material and the other immaterial. The word "man," or Adam, has the basic idea of redness and comes from a verb form which

*List competitive viewpoints of the nature of man presented in the adjacent column.*

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*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

*Name three things to which a minister must be alert.*

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*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

*List the factors that make it difficult to discover the Hebrew concept of man's nature.*

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*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

*The Hebrews felt that man was composed of two elements: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_*

*(material, immaterial)*

means "to be red, ruddy," and from the noun for "earth." This term is often used in the generic sense to refer to the human race (Gen. 1:26, 27; 6:1; Ps. 68:19; 76:11; Job 20:29).

The term for "flesh" is used at times to distinguish the muscular part of man from his bones, blood, etc. It is also used to refer to the entire human race (Gen. 6:12; Ps. 65:3; Isa. 20:5, 6), and also of the whole body to point out man's weakness or proneness to sin (Eccles. 2:3; 5:5). It is used as opposed to God and His power in the world (Gen. 6:3; Job 10:4; Isa. 31:3; 40:5).

The term "body" does not have its equivalent in the Hebrew. The Greek word *soma*, "body," was used to refer to eleven different Hebrew words in the translation of the Septuagint (The Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was used by the Jews and Christians in the first century).

The immaterial part of man was referred to by the Hebrews with the term translated "breath," *nephesh*. The word may originally have meant "neck," or "throat," but the basic meaning in the Old Testament seems to be "principle of life." Of the 754 uses of this term in the Old Testament, 282 carry this connotation. It is translated "soul" 482 times in the Old Testament, and "life" 117 times.

The use of this term is varied. It is used of the personal physical life which is lost at death. It also is used to refer to the physical processes of sadness, joy, anger, desire, love, distress, trouble, grief, and hatred.<sup>9</sup> Most significant is the fact that the term is never used of a disembodied spirit or any idea of pre-existence or immortality.

Another term, *ruach*, used 378 times in the Old Testament, has the basic meaning of "wind" and is translated "spirit." This term refers to a supernatural influence which acts upon man, and is the element in man most closely related to God. Man is not a spirit, but has spirit, according to the Old Testament.

On the basis of Old Testament terminology, we cannot be too dogmatic about the nature of man. In fact, we must agree with Robinson who says "The final emphasis must fall on the fact that the four terms (including that for "flesh") simply present different aspects of the unity of personality."<sup>10</sup>

*New Testament concept.* – Christianity and its sacred writings began in a world which was strongly Hellenic. Greek culture was a dominant influence in the world of that day. The New Testament was written in Greek and the thought patterns of many people were influenced by Greek philosophy. "The greatest single intellectual influence which has ever been exercised over the thought life of mankind was Greek culture."<sup>11</sup>

The Greeks thought of man as a dichotomy—that is, two parts: mind and body. The body represented a part of material substance, which was evil. From this philosophical position the ethical implications divided into two opposing practices: asceticism on the one hand and libertinism on the other. The erroneousness of both of these is exposed repeatedly in the New Testament.

Draw a line to match the following items.

Ruddy	<i>soma</i>
Muscular part of man	<i>ruach</i>
Breath	Adam
Wind	flesh
	<i>nephesh</i>

(Compare your answers with the text.)

According to the Old Testament, we cannot be too \_\_\_\_\_ about the nature of man.

(dogmatic)

The New Testament was written in \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ patterns of many people were influenced by Greek \_\_\_\_\_.

(Greek, thought, philosophy)

The Greeks thought of man as a \_\_\_\_\_.

(dichotomy)

The New Testament writers were aware of the Greek concept of man's nature but adhered to the Hebrew concept, although at times the terminology is Greek. In the Synoptic Gospels we have in the most part the connotation of the Hebrew terms transferred to the corresponding Greek words. *Psuche* (O. T. *nephesh*) occurs thirty-seven times, but the significant difference is that eleven of these times denotes a continuation of life after death. *Nephesh* does not carry this significance in the Old Testament.

*Pneuma* (O. T. *ruach*) indicates a somewhat higher and spiritual aspect of life than does *psuche*. The Greeks had a general term for body (*soma*) which the Hebrews did not have.

Paul was more influenced by Hebrew than by Greek thought patterns. It is true that Paul does use terminology such as "the inner man," "mind," "conscience," "flesh," and "carnal." However, upon examining more closely these terms, we see that Paul was more Hebrew than Greek in the meaning that he sought to convey.

Paul used the term *sarx* (flesh) ninety-one times. Among the uses are references to physical structure, kinship, sphere of present existence, fleshly weakness, and ethical experience.<sup>12</sup> The last two uses interest us here more than the others. Paul implies a general relation between "flesh" and sin, showing that the flesh is active in the production of evil. Galatians 5:17 says: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary the one to the other." It should be noted here and also in Paul's use in Romans 7 that the ultimate enemy of God is not flesh, but the sin of which the flesh has become the weak and corrupted instrument.

The New Testament makes it clear that God's ultimate purpose is the redemption of man—his soul, spirit, and body. The Greeks thought that the soul was immortal, but that the body would decay. They longed for the liberation of the soul from the prison house of the body. But Paul shrank from the idea of a disembodied spirit; he longed for the transformed body that would not be limited to the weakness of sin. This concept is important for us because in pastoral care frequently we find people who blame their sins upon their "flesh," as if to imply that it is under the control of Satan, and that they long for the day when the flesh and spirit or soul will be under the complete control of the Spirit.

Thus we see that the New Testament makes it clear that God's message is for the whole man, and is not intended to be interpreted as relevant for the soul of man apart from the body. Our theology for pastoral care and counselling must take this fact into account.

In pastoral care we will see many cases of psychosomatic illnesses. Psychiatry has sometimes followed a pathway far removed from religion and especially Christianity, but it has come to the same final destination—a recognition that health involves body, mind, and soul. Jung stated that in all of his treatment of illness he had not encountered a single person over the age of thirty-five with emotional problems who had a healthy religious outlook on life and

The New Testament writers adhered to the \_\_\_\_\_ concept of the nature of \_\_\_\_\_

(Hebrew, man)

Paul was more influenced by \_\_\_\_\_ than by \_\_\_\_\_ thought patterns.

(Hebrew, Greek)

Paul implies a general relation between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

(flesh, sin)

The New Testament makes it clear that God's message is for the \_\_\_\_\_ man.

(whole)

What did Carl G. Jung discover about religious perspective in healing?

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that he had failed to see any cure that was not made possible by finding or regaining a religious perspective.<sup>13</sup>

We must conclude then that man is not to be divided into various component parts whereby his physical maladies are treated by the physician, his emotional problems by the psychiatrist, and his spiritual problems by the minister. Sickness in one area of life affects the other aspects of life. The physician, psychiatrist, and minister will view the patient as a person intrinsically immortal in the biblical terminology "created in the image of God" who finds maximum health and happiness when he lives in harmony with God and His laws for the universe. An adequate theology for pastoral care and counselling will result in an attempt to minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of man. It will recognize that man is a unitary being. It will seek to employ the best scientific advance and behaviouristic knowledge, as well as the best in spiritual therapy.

The pastor who ministers to people in need will develop an anthropological point of view with which he can be comfortable. Doubtless, many times he will come into contact with people whose point of view is materialistic in relation to the nature of man. For them, man is what he eats. And when this life is ended, his body becomes fertilizer for the plants, which in turn feed man and animals.

Many without a Christian perspective will see the work of the minister as useless. Others, because of materialistic teachings, will oppose the Christian faith, saying that it is a part of the imperialistic goals of the more prosperous nations. Others may be influenced by atheistic existentialism and their idea will be that life is meaningless and that existence only brings emptiness, pain, and frustration. Their appreciation of spiritual values will be minimal. Others will tend to see man as having the same instincts of the animal world. They feel that man responds to stimuli just as Pavlov's dog responded to the sound of the bell when he was fed. For them, man's behaviour is the result of a process of conditioning which can be determined by those who establish the goals and values.

### **The current challenge**

All these ideas are current in our world today. The Christian preaches and believes that man is created in the image of God, and because of this image, man's behaviour is the result in part of the presence of the spirit of God in each human being. This means that man is capable of communion with God and that he is at his best when he accepts God's values as his own and lives in accordance with the laws which God has established for man in the world today. The Bible contains a record of what God requires of man. Man through disobedience to and disregard for God's laws becomes frustrated and loses his pathway. He also brings sorrow upon himself and others through his disregard for God's norms. Much of the work of the pastor is helping people to find their way through this maze of conflicting concepts and achieve happiness and harmony

*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

*Man is not to be divided into various*

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*(component, parts)*

*The pastor who ministers to people in need will develop an \_\_\_\_\_ point of view with which he can be*

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*(anthropological, comfortable)*

*Why must the minister develop a point of view about man's nature with which he is comfortable?*

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*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

with God, themselves, their family members, and the community at large.

The pastor can do a great deal for people in his preaching and pastoral ministry by helping them to find meaning in life through following the teachings of Jesus related to the greatest commandment (Matt. 22:34-40). If they follow it, they will be able to live a life that is meaningful and harmonious. When relationships become estranged in one's life, it is usually the result of changing the order that is established by Jesus in this commandment. If we can help people to follow the basic teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, we will do a great deal to keep peace in the home, in the place of work, and even in international relations. So the pastor can preach upon these themes and seek to put them into practice in his relationships with his congregation. Then when he has opportunity to minister to people in a personal way, he will seek to follow these same principles.

Man is at his best when he is in fellowship with God and in harmonious relationships with others. The goal of the minister is to help people to achieve this ideal and to maintain it. Man can best maintain this relationship when he seeks to follow the teachings of God's Word.

Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?  
He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,  
And speaketh the truth in his heart.  
He that backbiteth not with his tongue,  
Nor doeth evil to his neighbour,  
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.  
In whose eyes a vile person is contemned;  
But he honoureth them that fear the Lord.  
He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.  
He that putteth not out his money to usury,  
Nor taketh reward against the innocent.  
He that doeth these things shall never be moved. (Ps. 15)

### Conclusion

What is God like and how does he relate to man today? What is man? These are the two basic questions for theology and anthropology. The pastors or laymen who are interested in helping people will plunge into their work with enthusiasm and confidence when they have theological and anthropological viewpoints which show that God is active and interested in what happens to man and that man's nature is such that he is most happy and fulfilled when he lives in harmony with God's laws for mankind. The task of the minister is to help people to understand these laws and to chart his course in life so he can experience the maximum in happiness and effectiveness.

Much of the work in pastoral care and counselling will deal with the results of erroneous concepts in these areas. Man's behaviour is a commentary upon his beliefs and values. To help in the latter involves corrective efforts in the former sphere of ideals. The pastor and other helpers will work in both areas with ease, knowing that this ministry is a positive contribution to our welfare.

The pastor can do a great deal for the people in his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ministry by helping them to find meaning in life through following the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus related to the greatest \_\_\_\_\_

(preaching, pastoral, teachings, commandment)

When is man at his best?

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(Compare your answer with the text.)

Is the following statement true or false?

The task of the minister is to help people to understand these laws and to chart his course in life so he can experience the maximum in happiness and effectiveness. \_\_\_\_\_

(true)

**Footnotes**

- <sup>1</sup>Paul C. Vitz, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self Worship* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977).
- <sup>2</sup>Howard L. Parsons, "Rooted and Grounded in Love," *The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective*, ed. Simon Doniger (New York: Harper and Bros., 1962), p. 78.
- <sup>3</sup>Carroll A. Wise, *Pastoral Counseling – Its Theory and Practice* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1951), p. 10.
- <sup>4</sup>J. B. Phillips, *Your God is too Small* (England: Wyvern Books, 1956), p. 17.
- <sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17.
- <sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 32.
- <sup>7</sup>Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself* (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1947), p. 148ff.
- <sup>8</sup>David Cairns, *God's Image in Man* (London: S. C. M. Press, 1953), p. 9.
- <sup>9</sup>A. B. Johnson, *The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: The Univ. of Wales Press, 1949), p. 25.
- <sup>10</sup>H. E. Dana, *The New Testament World* (Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1937), p. 178.
- <sup>11</sup>H. W. Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1913), p. 27.
- <sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.
- <sup>13</sup>Carl G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), p. 264-65.

**Recommended Reading**

- Wayne E. Oates, *The Christian Pastor*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951.
- David Roberts, *Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man*. New York: Charles Scribner's, 1950.
- Eduard Thurneysen, *A Theology of Pastoral Care*. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1962.

**Home Study Exercise**

**Basic activity**(Levels 1,2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. How does Dr. Giles answer the question "Is God immanent or detached?"\_\_\_\_\_

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2. How does an adequate theology of pastoral care answer the question "Is God friendly or austere?"

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3. What does the author mean by this statement: "The pastor who is involved in pastoral care and counselling must approach his task with a tentativeness about giving explanations as to why God permits certain things and how God works in the lives of His people."?\_\_\_\_\_

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4. According to the author, what seems to be the best approach in answering people who question God when tragedy strikes them?\_\_\_\_\_

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5. Why must the minister try to discover the reason behind a statement like “Is God punishing me?”

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6. How may the pastor minister God’s grace to people who feel guilt in the midst of crisis situations?

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7. Within what framework are pastoral care and counselling practised?

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8. List the different viewpoints of the nature of man given by the text.

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9. What factors make it difficult to discover the Hebrew concept of man’s nature?

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10. How did the Hebrews see the nature of man?

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11. Name and briefly define the four terms used by the Hebrews to describe the nature of man.

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12. How did the Greeks see the nature of man?

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13. What outlook on the nature of man did the New Testament writers follow?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. What relationship does St. Paul see between flesh and sin?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. According to Dr. Giles, what is the biblical view of the nature of man?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
16. How can the pastor help people to find meaning in life?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
17. According to the author, what is the task of the minister?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
18. What has been the stated aim for this lesson?\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Supplementary activity**(Levels 2 and 3). Read pages xv-33 in *Pastoral Care in the Church* by C.W. Brister and answer the following questions.

1. What is the prime motivation for Christian pastoral care?
2. Beyond love, what other things does the Christian minister need for well-rounded pastoral care?
3. Name the threefold process to guide Christian shepherding given by Dr. Brister.
4. What are the biblical motifs of pastoral care given by Dr. Brister?
5. List four caring concerns of the church.

**Advanced activity**(Level 3.) These activities are based on the Supplementary reading assignment.

1. What assessment does Dr. Brister make of the pastoral care provided by the pastor to the Redd family given in the introduction?

2. Why is theology important to the work of Christian pastoral care?
3. What bearing does the servant motif have upon contemporary pastoral care in the churches?
4. Explain how Christian shepherding both includes and transcends the concept of “tender solicitous care.”
5. Justify this statement: Pastoral care is considered to be the task of the entire church family.
6. What does a comprehensive ministry of pastoral care include?

### **Seminar Discussion**

1. Discuss the nature of God and its relationship to pastoral care.
2. Contrast the Greek and Hebrew concepts of the nature of man.
3. What is the New Testament view of the nature of man?
4. Summarize the biblical view of the nature of man.
5. Name questions asked by people of the minister when they face a crisis. How can these questions be answered?