Hidden in Plain Sight

Throughout the church age until the advent of psychotherapy, the church majored on both evangelism and sanctification through the teaching and preaching of the Word. Throughout the New Testament, believers learned that faith in Christ’s death and resurrection saved them from eternal condemnation and also gave them new life: Christ’s life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. From the point of salvation, they had the means and power to live according to that new life to the degree that Paul said:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved [agapao] me, and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20.)

Christ’s life on earth was one of sacrificial love and love, the kind of love described in 1 Corinthians 13. The word charity is translated from agape with the idea of benevolent love that does what is good for others. Jesus’ love is agape love: sacrificial.

Charity [agape] suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Cor. 13:4-17.)

People say that this kind of love is impossible. Yes, in the flesh it is impossible, but in Christ it is both possible and commanded:

This is my commandment, That ye love [agapao] one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:12-13.)

Trials, tribulations, and suffering were expected. Such suffering was seen as one of God’s ways of maturing the believer and opening the believer’s eyes to God’s great love. In fact, Paul said he welcomed suffering:

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:3-5)

Christians were called to personally examine themselves:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Cor. 13:5.)

This examination was to determine if the person was both saved and walking according to the new life in Christ. Notice that the person was to prove himself, test himself: Am I thinking and acting according to the life of Christ in me, or am I thinking and acting according to the ways of the flesh (the old nature, or old man)?

Biblical mutual care was meant to remind, encourage, admonish, and pray for one another to walk according to their new life in Christ. Much instruction is given throughout the New Testament as to how believers are to live and how to get back into walking according to the Spirit after having shifted back to the self-centered flesh. That was an early purpose of confession. Christians were not given a platform for complaining about others or confessing the sins of others; they were to confess their own sins and repent.

Counseling today is drastically different from the way of the New Testament, which has been primarily teaching, preaching, and praying, along with believers encouraging, reminding, and at times admonishing one another to walk according to faith in the finished work of Christ and according to the new life He has given them. There was not a hint that people could or would help one another through sinful conversations about others, including tale bearing, dishonoring parents and spouse, self-biased stories, unloving words, revealing secrets, and even slander.

Today, neither licensed professional counselors nor those in the biblical counseling movement (BCM) would know what to talk about if they were not talking about problems and all the details of circumstances and people involved. Improving a person’s relationships and circumstances is the common goal. Christ came to give new life in the spirit, not simply to improve relationships and circumstances in the flesh.

This article reveals the hidden-in plain-sight fact that both psychological and present-day biblical counseling are comprised of sinful conversations in (continued on page 3)
Letters from our Readers

Hi Martin & Deidre,

Blessings. Reading your newsletter article on the medical model of mental illness, it is almost too easy to overlook the first sentence, that the Christian response is a tragedy. If we had a friend who hurt their leg we might not know if it’s broken but would not knowing that stop us from comforting and encouraging them in the Lord? Of course not! So why would not knowing the cause of a person’s mental, emotional or behavioral problems stop us from comforting and encouraging them? It shouldn’t, but the church has been tricked into thinking that they can’t when they can and should.

Having compassion on a person who’s suffering shouldn’t stop when their trials are emotional. In fact comforting them is probably more important than comforting those whose trials are only physical, although many times they are inextricably connected. There is no difference, comfort them all the same.

New York
Dear Bobgans,

Your latest book is a great blessing to me. God, our Lord, continues using you in His service with His anointing, giving you sharpness and focus and clarity of mind and thought, as well as continued discernment according to the knowledge of His Word.

I pray countless more of God’s children read your books and turn away from so-called “Christian psychology” and counseling. This deception runs too deeply in the church and, of course, “appears/seems/sounds” so reasonable, logical, “natural,” beneficial, etc. Such insidious working of seducing spirits!

Thank you for your burden, passion, and faithfulness to turn and redirect the body of Christ back to worshipping the Father in spirit and truth and to stop practicing the “talking cure” of counseling and all of its sin-filled and self-centered conversations. Truly we are seeing Jeremiah 17:9 and 2 Timothy 3:1-5 practiced in these last days with basically no constraints or limitations whatsoever. This is scary. Thanks to Freud’s invention of “free association” and “infantile sexuality” (so sad and disgusting). All introduced to America in 1909 through the facilitation of Dr. Hall of Duke University. Missouri
Dear Martin & Deidre,

Thank you for your Christian Response to Mental Illness. A very good reference book to keep handy when considering this issue. I especially appreciate your comments on pages 190-193 on the section entitled Mutual Care for Spiritual Growth, describing mutual care and how and what it accomplishes. California
Dear Martin and Deidre,

We really appreciate your faithfulness to God and your adherence to His Word. We also appreciate your boldness in proclaiming God’s truth and your efforts to inform Christians, and all who will listen, about the dangers and consequences of psychotherapy. Your ministry is such a blessing to us and to many others. Oklahoma
Martin & Deidre,

Just started a monthly donation to you all finally, but really wanted to mainly say thanks for all your work in this area that is so badly needed. There are so few still speaking out against this practice of psychoheresy and we are thankful for your faithfulness to this ministry. We have learned so much over the years having been following you all for 20-plus years now. May God continue to bless your work and give you the strength to carry on this ministry for many years to come. Texas

Dear Martin,

I have been greatly enlightened by your articles and books, but am constantly amazed at how wedded so many Christians are to psychological ideas and approaches and how difficult it is to persuade people that the scripture is sufficient for all our needs. The authority of the scripture is being discounted in so many ways these days. You can give people quite clear reasons why certain ideas are not biblical, but they simply don’t always want to hear. Anyway, I do thank God for your work.

Australia
Dear Deidre & Martin,

I am almost through reading your most recent book [Christian Response to Mental Illness: Mutual Care in the Body of Christ]. It is a life changer. It clearly teaches truths that are too easily missed in our watered down “Christian” culture (not speaking evil of anyone not tale bearing). Oh, how we need these truths along with the encouragement that Christ and His Word are more than enough. Spiritual growth must be the foundation of our ministering to one another. Oklahoma

Dear Martin & Deidre,

Your recent book on mental illness was exceptional. I appreciate your dedication & diligence in making believers aware of the corruption that continues to plague the church. I pray God will continue to bless you in your service.

Pastor

Thank you for writing to us. We read every letter, even though we are not able to answer each one personally.
Hidden in Plain Sight (continued from page 1)
dealing with the trials and tribulations of life experienced by those in the faith.

Words Spoken in Counseling
Both psychological and biblical counselors elicit and encourage counselees to say words that violate Scripture, and counselees easily and often eagerly accept the invitation to speak evil about other people. Prior to the initial meeting many counselors require the counselees to fill out forms that seek personal information, back-ground, reasons for seeking counseling, and descriptions of persons in their environment. Counselees readily write words that should not be written about other people, such as personal opinions that are self-biased and unsubstantiated stories. These words give the counselor something to work with and most counselors will probe and pry into areas of complaint and dissatisfaction. Then, as counselees describe people and incidents, the counselor will ask for more information: such as after a counselee might say, “My wife is bossy,” or “My husband is too demanding,” the counselor will say, “Describe.” Thus, especially during the early sessions of so-called “data gathering,” much is said that violates Scripture.

We have viewed or read over 50 biblical counseling sessions by leaders in the BCM and find numerous violations of Ephesians 5:22-33. This Scripture describes God’s design for marriage in which the wife is called to submit to her husband and the husband is called to love his wife as Christ loves the church. In this God-designed relationship of self-sacrificial love, the two become one. The husband-wife relationship is to reflect the relationship between Christ and the church. The concluding verse commands every husband “in particular so love his wife even as himself” and the wife “to reverence her husband” (Eph. 5:33). These verses are not optional. They are obligatory! No counselor should enable the violation of these verses and no counselee should violate them.

Problem-Centered Counseling
In 1979 Bethany House Publishers published our book The Psychological Way/The Spiritual Way. After being published by two other publishers, we self-published PsychoHeresy: The Psychological Seduction of Christianity, because none of the many publishers to whom we sent the manuscript was willing to publish it. By then, publishers were moving into psychoheresy as Christians were turning away from complete reliance on the Word of God for the issues of life.

Every word, every sentence, every expression in counseling must conform to Scripture.

A turning point for us occurred when Dr. Jay Adams asked us to evaluate the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF). In closely examining the counseling and teaching at CCEF, we found that they were following aspects of psychotherapeutic theories and therapies from the world. This is not to say that Adams agreed with what we found, but he did request that we critique CCEF. After seeing the psychotherapeutic influences at CCEF, we decided to look carefully at what Adams was doing and found that he had also been influenced by psychotherapeutic theories and therapies. As a result, we wrote a book titled Against “Biblical Counseling”: FOR the Bible.

After evaluating those at CCEF, we concluded that we had to ask Moody Press to put our book How to Counsel from Scripture out of print. When it was published in 1985 we were part of the biblical counseling movement (BCM), but after our investigation of CCEF and subsequent evaluation of others in the BCM, we decided that we could no longer recommend or promote the biblical counseling done by those in the BCM. From that point on we have been writing articles and books to expose the fact that the counseling done by those in the BCM is, sum and substance, comprised of sinful conversations.

Definitions for the various kinds of counseling all include the word problems, whether the counseling is for individuals, couples, or families. Problems are central as the counselor is expected to solve or fix or ameliorate the problems. Thus the counselor as problem-solver must investigate all matters that may be related to the problems and also search for additional problems that may be related. It is this very act of psychological and biblical counseling that results in unbiblical, sinful conversations. Whether discussing problems in individual, marital, or family counseling, both the counselor and counsellee participate in these sinful counseling conversations.

We pray that reading and understanding this article will help our readers recognize the clear fact that psychological counselors and those in the BCM are in serious biblical error with their counseling conversations, regardless of their psychological or theological backgrounds or popularity.

Words: What the Bible Says
In a prior article, we say: We all know the expression “hidden in plain sight.” The idiomatic definition is “seemingly hidden, but actually not hidden and easy to find.” We have often discussed the sin-saturated, “in plain sight” nature of biblical counseling, which applies even more so to psychological counseling. Over the years we have named and exposed the sin-saturated counseling of both psychological and biblical counselors. Because of the many sinful conversations that occur in both psychological and biblical counseling, Christians should not be participants or practitioners in either one.

(continued on page 4)
Hidden in Plain Sight

To Christians who support, promote, or practice either psychological or biblical counseling, we continue to offer the following challenge: “Provide one live, literal (not enacted) psychological or biblical counseling session that does not violate Scripture.” To date no one has been able to provide one for us!

Every word, every sentence, every expression in counseling must conform to Scripture. However, many of the very words that are used in counseling by both the counselor and counselee do not conform to the Word of God. Both are in violation of Scripture as shown in many counseling DVDs and in what has been provided by both psychological and biblical counseling case studies. The words spoken in counseling are regularly contrary to the admonitions, prohibitions, and restrictions of Scripture. They are sinful. Live, literal counseling conversations, as well as those that are play-acted to present counseling at its best, are in violation of Scripture.

In contrast, there are many words in Scripture that need to be heeded and followed that are regularly violated in counseling. We choose one of the many verses spoken by Jesus that are violated in counseling conversations: Matthew 12:36-37:

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Albert Barnes, in his Notes on the Bible, defines “idle word” in the context of Matthew 12 in which the Pharisees said Jesus cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub:

Idle word - This literally means a vain, thoughtless, useless word; a word that accomplishes no good. Here it means, evidently, “wicked, injurious, false, malicious, for such” were the words which they had spoken.

Adam Clark, in his Commentary on the Bible, says that “every idle word” “signifies not only vain or empty, but also wicked and injurious, such as a false testimony against a neighbor.” Clark further says, “Our Lord must be understood here as condemning all false and injurious words: the scope of the place necessarily requires this meaning.”

Jay Adams created a form of counseling that uses the Bible but also depends on the sinful conversations of psychotherapy.

Of course the next verse, “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned,” includes all words—all speech. This should be a great warning for individuals to remember that God hears every word spoken and every word thought.

Another example is Ephesians 4:29: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

“Corrupt communication” refers to a broad array of evil speaking. John Gill, in his Exposition of the Bible, says it is:

As unsavoury speech, foolish talking, light and frothy language, that which is filthy, unprofitable, noxious, and nauseous, and all that is sinful; such as profane oaths, curses, and imprecations, unchaste words, angry ones, proud, haughty, and arrogant expressions, lies, perjury, &c. which may be called corrupt, because such communication springs from a corrupt heart; is an evidence of the corruption of it....

Paul clearly says that believers are “To speak evil of no man” (Titus 3:2), and James says quite a bit about words and the tongue:

“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.... And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.... But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison” (James 3:2b, 6, 8).

Dr. Jay Adams

In his attempt to give Christians an alternative to psychological counseling, Jay Adams created a form of counseling that uses the Bible but also depends on the sinful conversations of psychotherapy.

The Institute for Nouthetic Studies states that “Dr. Adams is the founder of the modern biblical counseling movement and is the author of the groundbreaking book Competent to Counsel.”

In his book Competent to Counsel, Adams reveals that he worked one summer under Dr. O Hobart Mowrer, who was a research professor of psychology. Adams says:

During the summer of 1965 we worked in two state mental institutions, one at Kankakee, Illinois, and the other at Galesburg, Illinois. In these two mental institutions, we conducted group therapy with Mowrer for seven hours a day. Along with five others, I flew with him, drove with him, ate with him
(continued from page 4)

five days a week. I learned much during that time, and while today I certainly would not classify myself as a member of Mowrer’s school, I feel that the summer program was a turning point in my thinking.  

The turning point in Adams’ thinking resulted in the adaptation of the psychological counseling model in which sinful, problem-centered conversations become the means of cure. Adams’ psychological counseling model then became the gold standard for all the biblical counseling that followed. All of the biblical counseling videos and written case studies we have seen and read follow the Adams’ gold standard of the psychological format of transparency.

The sinful content of biblical counseling arises from Adams’ exposure to the kind of counseling that calls for transparency. Self-exposure during counseling is a psychotherapeutic necessity. Adams’ use of the psychological format of transparency came out of what he experienced with O. Hobart Mowrer in 1965. Learning the techniques for encouraging transparency in encounter groups influenced Adams’ thinking. Thus, for Adams, self-exposure became a therapeutic absolute in the formation of his nouthetic counseling and set the gold standard for biblical counseling from Competent to Counsel in 1970 to this day. The biblical counseling movement (BCM) is predicated on Adams’ gold standard of transparency and most all counselors today follow this same sin-saturated method of counseling.

The following example is of a couple in contention, who need instruction and perhaps discipline rather than a platform for complaining and demeaning each other. This example is from Adams’ book The Case of the “Hopeless” Marriage: A Nouthetic Counseling Case from Beginning to End, in which he demonstrates how to counsel.

We often use Adams’ example because he has set the standard and the psychological pattern for the BCM to follow. However, in Adams’ ideal counseling, a couple is allowed to express themselves according to the flesh from the very beginning of the first counseling session. The couple’s very words are expressions of such works of the flesh as “hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife” listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

Counselors evidently think they need to hear many harmful, sinful words and many expressions that violate Scripture before they can help.

Instead of being warned at the beginning, counseling allows the violation of Galatians 5:15: “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” That is because counselors evidently think they need to hear many harmful, sinful words and many expressions that violate Scripture before they can help.

The following is the kind of dialog expected and elicited. As you read this brief example of the kinds of statements made in counseling, notice what would be damaging to another person, wicked, injurious, slanted, untrue, self-biased, dishonoring, unloving, offensive, or defensive. In other words, what words are violating Scripture as these statements are being made to a third party who will accept what is said at face value and make conclusions about other people whether they are present and known or not. And nobody seems to even think about these words being offensive to God as well as to others. Comments in brackets that follow are ours.

Bert & Sue

“Bert: Well, we haven’t been getting along for some time now. It seems that she won’t let me be the head of the house. I… [Bert not loving and protecting wife (Eph. 5:25-33), blaming her for contention.]

“Sue: Won’t let you? When did you ever try? You know full well that you… [Sue dishonoring husband to another person (Eph. 5:33), false accusing (Prov. 18:17).]

“Pastor: Now, Sue, please let Bert finish. Your turn will come soon enough. We can’t all talk at once. And I’d appreciate it if you addressed me—as we agreed—rather than arguing with Bert. Now, Bert, go on. [Sinful talk expected, accepted, elicited by counselor-pastor, but he does not allow direct arguing, probably because it’s difficult to control in the counseling setting (Eph. 4:29).]

“Bert: Well, as I was saying—before she flew into one of her tirades…[Bert expresses enmity with his wife, violating Eph. 5:25-29, Col. 4:6.]

“Sue: See, pastor, he can’t be civil. A tirade? Hummph! [Sue dishonoring her husband (Eph. 5:33), false accusing, acting like the foolish woman tearing down her house (Prov. 14:1).]

“Pastor: Sue, you simply must not interrupt. But I am glad you addressed me this time instead of Bert. Thanks! And Bert, be careful how you say things. There’s no need for inflammatory language. Go on, Bert. [Counselor-pastor does not like interruptions, but accepts contentious, unkind, unloving, derogatory words as long as they are not “inflammatory.” In fact he encourages sinful speaking as he asks Bert to “go on.”]

“Bert: As I was trying to say before she… [Bert not loving and protecting wife (Eph. 5:25-33), blaming her for contention.]

“Pastor: Be careful, Bert. [Counselor-pastor interrupts Bert in an attempt to keep things under control, but he is still allowing, encouraging, and even eliciting words in violation of Scripture, as he invites Bert to “go on.”]

“Bert: As I was saying, every time I try to assume my duty as the head of...
Hidden in Plain Sight
(continued from page 5)

my home, Sue undermines me. She always knows better. She always has another way. She always contradicts me. The kids don’t know who to believe.” [Bert is not loving or protecting his wife in front of a third party, false accusing with “always,” self-justifying, speaking of her as an enemy (Titus 3:2).]

At this point the counselor-pastor tells Bert not to exaggerate, and Adams comments that Greg, the counselor-pastor, “will probably have little trouble training them how to talk in the next session or two, if not sooner.” They may be more civil in their words, but Scripture will be violated as long as they are complaining about each other to a third party. For instance, quite a bit further in counseling the following dialog ensues:

“Sue: You’ve never done much disciplining, Bert—I’ve had it all on my shoulders. You know that. Don’t make it sound like you have!” [Still dishonoring husband, blaming, accusing, taking authority over her husband rather than submitting.]

“Bert: Now, Sue, you know how hard I’ve tried, but to be honest, you also know that you always contradict what I tell them [the children] and they get confused. In time, I finally gave up.” [Bert is self-justifying, blaming, accusing, unloving, unkind.]

Another problem that comes up has to do with Bert’s mother. Sue begins with, “You see, Bert’s mother lives two blocks away from us. So she’s always coming over to our house. When she does, she is always trying to run our lives. She comes over and tells Bert what to think and do; and most of the time he listens to her…” Such talk continues on in this counseling.

Such evil speaking and tale bearing are often indulged in during counseling and thereby violate Scriptures having to do with honoring parents. Exodus 20:12 says: “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

Jesus spoke of the deadly consequences of violating that command. He said: “For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.” Parents are often dishonored in counseling and are often victims of the tales told in what ends up being counseling kangaroo courts.

Love should be the goal of all personal ministry: loving God and one another.

A couple in contention may need to be ministered to separately in such a way as to teach and encourage them to walk according to their new life, wherein they will bear the fruit of the spirit rather than the fruit of the flesh.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-25.)

Love should be the goal of all personal ministry: loving God and one another. Those who minister to fellow believers need to protect them from the sin-saturated counseling conversations as revealed in The Case! which are tre mendously unloving and unkind. With all the sinful speaking enabled in The Case, it is apparent that The Case of the “Hopeless” Marriage is actually a case of hopeless counseling.

There is absolutely no need to conduct counseling via the psychological way or the BCM way in order to help Christians who are suffering trials tribulations, temptations, troubles or tumults. Instead, believers can teach and encourage fellow believers to live according to their new life in Christ, to walk daily with the Lord in prayer and worship, and to be prepared for spiritual battles according to Ephesians 6:10-18.

False Justification for Counseling

Think of all the verbal violations of Scripture in the above dialog. Because of the psychotherapeutic practices that have been embraced by the BCM and are now assumed to be correct, many people will read those examples and think, “My, those people really need counseling so that they can learn to speak in a sound biblical manner.” But, think again. These words are part and parcel of the counseling environment and spoken in response to the counselor who is looking for this kind of talk. And why? Because counselors believe they must “understand” completely so that they can give wise advice. They use Proverbs 18:13: “He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”

Proverbs 18:13 sets the stage at the beginning of many of the counseling cases we have read or observed. However, it is falsely applied, as all counselors would have to hear from all the people their counselees talk about behind their backs. Counselors naturally describe their problems from a self-biased perspective and often see themselves as the injured ones. However, “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him” (Prov. 18:17). Counselors do not investigate whether or not a counselee’s words about other people are accurate. That is why much counseling turns into kangaroo-court proceedings, where people (who have been talked about behind their backs) are condemned and convicted without a hearing and without witnesses to testify as to the truth. Of course the Bible is clear on this.

Shortly after the apostle Paul expressed his concern about “debates,
Old Paths: Edifying Words

Believers who desire to minister God’s mercy, grace, and truth to fellow believers need to abandon everything they have adopted and adapted from psychological counseling theories and therapies and return to the old paths of Scripture:

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls But they said, We will not walk therein. (Jer. 6:16.)

Endnotes
8 Ibid., pp. 11, 12.
9 Ibid., p. 12.
10 Ibid., p. 75.
Enneagram Occultic

“Enneagram is relatively new to evangelicalism but is now becoming popular and can be found in some evangelical colleges and universities....

“As I read the three Enneagram books [The Enneagram A Christian Perspective by Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert. The Sacred Enneagram by Christopher L. Heurtz, and The Road Back to You—An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile] it did not take long to see the pagan sources of the Enneagram as the authors tout its ancient, pagan sources. The point of the Enneagram is to discover the ‘true self’ and thus find God....

“Since Enneagram is occultic, mystical, unscientific, unbiblical, and comes from various esoteric sources, one would think that it could not be taken seriously. But sadly it is. Since people are arranging their lives, spiritual hopes and personal relationships around the categories and processes of Enneagram, we must deal with its details and explain the dangers and pitfalls.... One must ask how something suitable for the service of God can come from the occult and pop-psychology....

“This theme of the true self and one’s true identity is certainly central to Enneagram. These teachers believe that Enneagram is a ‘sacred’ tool for finding one’s way from the false self to the pristine, inner ‘True Self’ and in so doing finding the way to God....

“Pop psychology is evident throughout these books, including the inner child idea, staving off shaming messages, social determinism, temperament theories, brain hemisphere theories and other versions of self-discovery and self-enhancement. The true self vis-a-vis the false self is the unifying theme. The ‘True Self’ is somehow connected to their panentheistic version of God. Each author claims that finding this ‘True Self’ is the way to finding God. The process requires contemplative spiritual practices as taught by mystics....

“There are two things I see that make Enneagram attractive to people. One is that it requires no Biblical worldview or faith in the exclusive claims of Christ. It requires nothing more than being human, and it works with all religions. The other is that the temperament studies that have been recently integrated into it fascinate people.... My guess is the temperament material is the “hook” that draws people to Enneagram.

“But this is far more than identifying temperaments and differences; it is filled with religious claims which are antithetical to the Bible.... The Christ of Enneagram is not the Christ of the Bible.... Those who reject the faith once for all handed down to the saints in favor of this mystical, ecumenical spirituality had better think very seriously about what they are doing.


Tea Benefits Brain

A hot cup of tea can be especially comforting this time of year, and recent research also suggests that regular tea consumption is associated with better brain health. A small study of adults over age 60, published in the scientific journal Aging, suggests that tea drinkers have better organized brain regions compared to people who don’t drink tea. Researchers also noted that better brain structure is associated with healthy cognitive function. This was an observational study, so there was no cause-and-effect relationship established between tea consumption and improved brain health. However, the study does echo the results of many past studies demonstrating a strong connection between tea intake and better health, including improved mood and cardiovascular disease prevention” (“Study Points to Brain Benefits Among Tea Drinkers,” Mind, Mood & Memory, Vol 15, No. 12, p. 1).