

CHRISTIAN DISCERNMENT PUBLICATIONS MINISTRY, INC.
111 MAGNOLIA LANE
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Book

A Way That Seems Right: Exposing John Bradshaw's False Gospel

John Bradshaw is an extremely popular proponent of the recovery movement. His teachings concerning "codependency," the "inner child," and victimization in general are repeated by many others, including leading Christian psychologists such as Minirth-Meier. This book reviews all of his writings to date, exposing the anti-biblical nature of his teachings as well as his New Age theology.

Book Reviews - Christian Psychology/Recovery

"Damaged" Emotions: Recovery or Redemption?

Reviewing *Healing for Damaged Emotions*, by David Seamands

Pastor David Seamands has incorporated much modern psychological teaching into his pastoral counseling ministry, utilizing the popular "inner healing" approach to "heal" childhood memories. This paper covers important issues such as self-esteem, forgiveness, depression, "perfectionism," and personality typing.

Toxic Teachings: Recovery or Redemption?

Reviewing *Toxic Faith*, recently retitled, *Faith That Hurts, Faith That Heals*, by Steve Arterburn

This book mixes false religions with misunderstandings of Christian doctrine, calling both "toxic faith," and offering solutions grounded in Freudian psychotherapy. The paper covers "addiction," biblical sufficiency, fear of the Lord, repentance, victimization, support groups, selfism, and a biblical understanding of the human heart.

Enslaved to Lust

Reviewing *Addicted to "Love,"* by Steve Arterburn

Arterburn applies the disease model of human behavior to sexual immorality. This paper, continuing the analysis in "Toxic Teachings," shows that perspective to be biblically flawed. "Recovery" is compared to righteousness, "addiction" to idolatry, and "need" to desire.

Hunger for Righteousness

Reviewing *Hunger for Healing: The Twelve Steps as a Classic Model for Christian Spiritual Growth*, by Keith Miller

This paper provides an in-depth biblical evaluation of the popular Twelve Step program, giving emphasis to its application in Christian settings. Included is a two-page summary of the Twelve Steps, showing their subtle clash with the Scriptures.

Hope in the Fast Lane?--or Hope in Christ!?

Reviewing *Hope in the Fast Lane*, by Keith Miller

(originally published as *Sin: The Ultimate Deadly Addiction*)

This paper is a useful companion to "Hunger for Righteousness," critiquing Keith Miller's belief that sin is a disease or "addiction." It demonstrates the confusion caused by equating sin and sickness, and also evaluates the concept of "denial" and the general practices of "recovery" meetings.

Response to the 12 Steps in a Christian Setting

This paper briefly summarizes biblical reasons why the 12-step approach is inappropriate for Christians even when the steps have been (supposedly) linked to relevant Bible verses.

Christian Discernment Publications Ministry, Inc.
Book Reviews - Christian Psychology/Recovery (continued)

The Bread of Life

Reviewing *New Choices, New Boundaries*, by Rich Buhler

This critique provides a helpful analysis of the increasingly popular "codependent" theories promoted so heavily by today's psychologists, showing that the Bible does *not* teach love of self as a prerequisite to love for God and others.

Love is a Command

Reviewing *Love is a Choice*, by Drs. Frank Minirth and Paul Meier

Here is another critique of "codependency" theory, along with victimization, "addiction," "denial," anger, and depression. There are frightening parallels between this book and the anti-Christian teachings of John Bradshaw.

Hiding from Judgment

Reviewing *Hiding from Love*, by Dr. John Townsend (Minirth-Meier)

This book is rooted in an unbiblical view of man as fundamentally a *victim* rather than a *sinner*. The author abuses the original languages of the Bible to support his Freudian orientation. This critique shows how man's "hiding patterns" are rooted in his fear of God's *judgment*.

Forgiving WHO?

**Reviewing *Forgiving Our Parents, Forgiving Ourselves*,
by David Stoop and James Masteller (Minirth-Meier)**

This paper is a critique of the psychologized, self-focused view of forgiveness that is highly promoted among modern counselors. In particular, it demonstrates that forgiveness of *self* is opposed to a truly biblical view of forgiveness.

The Path to Deception

Reviewing *The Path to Serenity*,

by Drs. Robert Hemfelt, Richard Fowler, Frank Minirth, and Paul Meier

This is another review of the Twelve Step movement, step by step, showing how its teachings counterfeit salvation, repentance, confession, restitution, sanctification, religion, and evangelism.

Twelve Steps: Tool for Evangelism or Another Gospel?

Reviewing *Steps to a New Beginning*, by Sam Shoemaker, Frank Minirth, Robert Hemfelt, Richard Fowler, and Dave Carder

This paper is a helpful companion to "The Path to Deception," briefly reviewing the background of Alcoholics Anonymous and its spiritual fuzziness. The critique refutes the claim that the steps are rooted in biblical principles, reviews the practices of 12-step groups, compares sponsorship with Christian discipleship, and discusses the counterfeit evangelism practiced by the Twelve Step movement.

Boundaries: Political or Personal?

Reviewing *Boundaries*, by Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend (Minirth-Meier)

This paper concentrates on a thorough biblical evaluation of the popular "boundaries" concept, showing it to present a flawed understanding of our responsibilities before God, along with feeding man's inherently sinful inclinations.

Multiple Personality Disorder: A Multitude of Errors

Reviewing *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD*, by Dr. James G. Friesen

This paper analyzes the flawed, unbiblical view of man that underlies the increasingly popular "MPD" diagnosis. It covers the claimed causes and treatments promoted by psychologists, comparing them with the Scripture.

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Book Reviews - Christian Psychology/Recovery (continued)

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

Reviewing *The Wounded Heart*, by Dr. Dan Allender

This paper is a concentrated study in the counseling of persons who have been abused as children, covering such keys issues as self-concept, "denial," anger, forgiveness, guilt, shame, sin/repentance, sanctification, and compassion. It includes a discussion of the highly questionable therapeutic practice of "memory retrieval," which many times results in the creation of false memories. This author is more biblical than most, but still fails to present a thoroughly biblical perspective on this important matter.

"Bold Love" -- God's Justice or Ungodly Revenge?

Reviewing *Bold Love*, by Dr. Dan Allender

This book follows *The Wounded Heart*. While based on a generally good biblical principle--confronting the sins of others in love in order to restore them--the danger is primarily in its combination with the teachings in *The Wounded Heart*. There is danger to family relationships in these teachings. Allender fails to consider the crucial role of the *church* in confronting the sins of others, leaving "bold love" primarily to individuals who perceive themselves as victims.

Christ-Esteem or Self-Esteem: What is the Real Problem?

Reviewing *Christ Esteem*, by Don Matzat

This book is frequently recommended as a biblical alternative to the psychological literature emphasizing self-esteem. There are many excellent points concerning sin, self-examination, renewal of the mind, and crucifixion with Christ. However, this paper also points out weaknesses in the author's position on Scripture, as well as his focus on "identity crisis."

The Masculine Journey: A Turn Down the Wrong Road!

Reviewing *The Masculine Journey*, by Robert Hicks

This book, promoted by Promise Keepers, utilizes six Hebrew words to describe the "developmental journey" of the adult male. The original biblical Hebrew is misused to promote a psychological and highly unbiblical view of man.

"Recovery"...or the Bible...or Crabb's "Third Way"?

Reviewing *Finding God*, by Larry Crabb

This is one of Crabb's most recent books. Many readers believe that perhaps he has changed his position concerning psychology. Although he does make some critical comments about the "recovery" movement, he also rejects the position of biblical sufficiency and promotes instead his "third way." This "third way" differs little from Crabb's past psychological teachings.

Homosexuality: Choice or Chance? Sin or Sickness? -- Letter to a Pastor

This is an actual letter to a pastor (names omitted) demonstrating the biblical view that homosexuality is a *sin*, but urging the same compassion and love that is demonstrated to other sinners.

"Think On These Things"

Reviewing *Telling Yourself the Truth*, by William Backus & Marie Chapian, and *The Lies We Believe*, by Chris Thurman

These two books are both "Christianized" versions of the teachings of atheist Albert Ellis. (See the paper about Ellis in "Exposing the Roots" series.) Although the Bible emphasizes the renewal of the mind, this type of counseling is primarily man-centered rather than grounded in the work of the Holy Spirit.

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Book Reviews - Christian Psychology/Recovery (continued)

Medieval Theology Meets the New Age

This paper explores religious pluralism in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church, giving consideration to official teachings, theologians, and the influence of modern psychology.

Rapha Review

One short paper reviews Rapha's "12 Steps in the Wrong Direction." Three full publications review several of Rapha's major books. Part 1 reviews *Search for Significance* and *Search for Freedom*, by Rapha founder Robert S. McGee, focusing on key theological issues and Rapha's unbiblical emphasis on self-worth. Part 2 critiques Pat Springle's book, *Codependency*, showing the unbiblical nature of this popular concept. Part 3 analyzes two books about the influences of parent-child relationships, *The Parent Factor* (multiple Rapha authors) and *Father Hunger* (Robert S. McGee).

Changes That Hurt

Reviewing *Changes That Heal*, by Dr. Henry Cloud

This book combines the ideas covered in *Boundaries*, which Cloud co-authored with Dr. John Townsend, and *Hiding From Love*, by Townsend alone. Each of these books is covered by other critiques. *Changes That Hurt* is currently used by Campus Crusade for Christ in the training of its leaders.

"Exchanged Life" Theology

Reviewing *Handbook to Happiness*, by Charles Solomon

This paper reviews the psychology and theology taught by Charles Solomon, including his use of trichotomy, his expectation of a *second* experience following salvation, and his emphasis on rejection as a primary motivation for human behavior. Although Solomon claims to be critical of modern psychology and to emphasize our union with Christ, his writings reveal another example of psychological speculations integrated with God's Word.

Bondage to Demons...or Sin?

Reviewing *Breaking the Bondage*, by Neil Anderson

Neil Anderson's popularity in the church has escalated in recent times, with his seminars drawing huge crowds. At many points, he appears to question the use of modern psychotherapy. However, a careful analysis reveals that he does not adequately critique such unbiblical counseling methods. Furthermore, his excessive focus on the power of demons blurs biblical teachings about sin, repentance, and progressive sanctification.

Meet the Moms

Reviewing *The Mom Factor*, by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend

These two popular psychologist authors have now devoted a volume to blaming the sins of adults on six different styles of mothering. They assume the existence of certain psychological needs that *must be met*. The responsibilities of mothers, grown children, and "support groups" are confused, with the role of church undermined and the focus always remaining on "how to get your own needs met."

Healing the Homosexual Pain

Reviewing *The Broken Image and Crisis in Masculinity* by Leanne Payne

Payne is an Episcopalian author who borrows heavily from the distorted theories of Carl Jung, emphasizing individual "dream" revelation, "healing" of memories, love and acceptance of self. She devotes significant space to the problem of homosexuality, concluding that although it isn't a biblically acceptable lifestyle, it is a "gender disorder," explained away in psychological terms, rather than strictly a sin.

Theophostic Ministry: Light or Darkness?

Reviewing *Beyond Tolerable Recovery* (2000 edition) by Edward M. Smith, D.Min.

Theological analysis of Theophostic Ministry, under such categories as the nature of man, sin, justification, sanctification, forgiveness, demonology.

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EXPOSING THE ROOTS

This series is designed to expose the anti-Christian bias of the founders of major psychological systems of thought, showing believers why they dare not trust their speculations concerning the nature of man and how he can change.

Introduction

This paper reviews some general principles that apply to all the critiques in this series, showing why Christians cannot rightly integrate God's Word with systems of thought invented by unregenerate men. Such men do not engage in a neutral study of human behavior, but in hostility they oppose the gospel as well as the biblical view that man is created in the image of God for the purpose of bringing glory to Him.

"Psychology" of Religion: Van Til in Dialogue--and in Conflict!--with Modern Psychology

This paper is a detailed exposition of the book, *Psychology of Religion*, written by apologetics professor Cornelius Van Til. It is more philosophically technical than some of the other papers, but shows some of the faulty, anti-Christian assumptions underlying modern psychology.

Varieties of Religious Deception

Reviewing *Varieties of Religious Experience*, by William James

William James is a key writer in the "psychology of religion" movement, attempting to analyze the experiences of *all religions* according to the standards of modern psychology. He is a key forerunner to the New Age movement and also to the vague "higher power" concept of the 12-step program.

Freudian Frauds

Reviewing *Totem and Taboo; Future of an Illusion; and Moses and Monotheism*, by Sigmund Freud

Freud has had a major impact on counseling theory and practice, and his deadly influence continues to this day among Christian psychologists. This paper exposes in detail Freud's extreme hostility to the Christian faith, and to religion in general. This outspoken atheist made every effort to "explain" religious faith and practice in psychoanalytic terms, and thus to destroy it.

Blasphemy from Fromm

Reviewing *You Shall be as Gods; Man for Himself; The Dogma of Christ; Psychoanalysis and Religion; and The Heart of Man*

After admitting to being an atheist, Fromm engages in a "radical reinterpretation of the Old Testament," attempting to support his theory that man is the equal of God. Much of his teaching concerning self-love provides ammunition for the numerous selfisms that run rampant today.

The Teachings of Carl Jung:

A Bizarre Blend of Blasphemy, Mythology, & Psychology

Reviewing *Answer to Job; Memories, Dreams, Reflections; Psychology and Religion*

Carl Jung has been highly influential in the New Age movement, the 12 step movement, and even some "Christian psychology" books (such as *The Masculine Journey*). This paper documents and exposes his extreme bias against Christianity along with his involvement in the occult.

Christian Discernment Publications Ministry, Inc. Exposing the Roots - continued

The "Case Against" Albert Ellis

Reviewing *Reason & Emotion in Psychotherapy*, and *The Case Against Religion*

Albert Ellis founded Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy in the last half of the 20th century. It is based largely on changing thoughts and beliefs in order to change emotions and behavior. This paper exposes the aggressive atheism underlying the system.

Adlerian Aberrations

Reviewing *Understanding Human Nature* and *What Life Should Mean to You*

This paper reviews the teachings of psychologist Alfred Adler, including such concepts as the "inferiority complex" and the "style of life." Adler's teachings are linked to the modern focus on self-esteem, the New Age movement, and the epidemic "false memory syndrome."

Maslow's Hierarchy: How the House of Cards Crumbles

Reviewing *Motivation and Personality; The Psychology of Being; Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences; The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*

This publication reviews the religious and philosophical underpinnings of Maslow's "hierarchy," showing not only that his psychology is contrary to Scripture, but that it is internally inconsistent. This paper is more of a philosophical critique analyzing the self-destructive nature of non-Christian thinking.

On Being a Christian

Reviewing *On Being a Person*, by Carl Rogers

This paper reviews a major work by the extremely popular psychologist, Carl Rogers, founder of "client-centered therapy." His approach is thoroughly unbiblical in assuming the inherent goodness of man and in its rejection of all authority outside the individual's feelings and experience.

The Errors of Erik Erikson

Reviewing "Youth: Fidelity and Diversity" (in *The Challenge of Youth*); *Childhood and Society; Identity and the Life Cycle; The Life Cycle Completed; Young Man Luther*

This publication reviews the "life cycles" and "life crises" proposed by Erik Erikson, exposing the conflict between his theories and the biblical view of man. A special section explores in depth Erikson's psychoanalysis of Reformer Martin Luther in *Young Man Luther*, a book which basically discredits the entire Protestant Reformation as the expression of one man's "identity crisis."

I'm Not OK -- You're Not OK -- But That's OK

Reviewing *I'm OK -- You're OK*, by Thomas A. Harris, M.D.

This paper reviews a formerly popular book whose ideas continue to be recycled through self-esteem and other popular psychological theories. The author divides the inner man into Parent, Adult, and Child, then builds a therapy around the transactions between these three. There is much in this book about *religion*, but it is thoroughly man-centered and rejects absolute truth.

Through the Biblical Looking Glass

Reviewing *Reality Therapy and Choice Therapy* by Dr. William Glasser

Glasser gives a welcome, scathing criticism of failed Freudian psychology, but along with Freud, he fails to ground his counseling in biblical truth. The problems of man are explained as (1) the failure to meet basic "needs" and (2) "external control psychology." Glasser exalts the autonomy of man in a manner that dethrones God and deifies "choice."

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Book Views - Psychology/Other

God's Successful Woman

Reviewing *The Successful Woman*, by Dr. Joyce Brothers

Popular secular psychologist Joyce Brothers presents a view of woman that aligns with the feminist movement but defies biblical standards. This paper compares her self-centered feminist perspective with the scriptural view of a godly woman.

God's Definition of Meaning

Reviewing *Man's Search for Meaning*, by Dr. Victor Frankl

Existential psychiatrist Victor Frankl founded a system of treatment he titled "logotherapy," in which man is a free agent who must create his own life's meaning and thus become his own savior. This paper exposes the unbiblical view of man that underlies this system.

The Road Broadly Traveled - Part I

Reviewing *The Road Less Traveled*, by Dr. M. Scott Peck

This book remains a bestseller among both Christians and unbelievers, but it is grounded in Buddhist and New Age theologies, asserting that man can and must *become God*. This paper exposes the anti-Christian nature of Peck's teachings, and his reinterpretation of traditional Christian terms such as grace and love.

The Road Broadly Traveled - Part II

Reviewing *People of the Lie, Different Drum, A World Waiting to be Born*, and *Further Along the Road Less Traveled*, by Dr. M. Scott Peck

Although Peck claims to have become a Christian after writing *The Road Less Traveled*, this critique analyzes his mythological interpretation of Scripture, his reliance on evolution, and his highly unorthodox theology in areas such as heaven, hell, salvation, heresy, blasphemy, the devil, and the nature of man. It also covers his unique "community" concept which he claims to be the answer for global peace and unity. Peck has not traveled far from the New Age teachings of his first book.

The Contemporary Theology of Henri Nouwen: Wounded "Healer" or Deceiver?

Reviewing *The Wounded Healer*, by Henri Nouwen

Henri Nouwen interprets the problems of modern man as fundamentally much different from those of men in other ages, rejecting the basic gospel message as being inadequate to answer "modern" needs while hinting at universal salvation and substituting a humanistic approach to ministry. This paper reveals the flaws in Nouwen's theology and compares his teachings with the glorious, eternal hope of the gospel.

Sinful Things People Do

Reviewing *Ten Stupid Things Women Do and How Could You Do That?*, by Dr. Laura Schlessinger

"Dr. Laura" is an increasingly popular voice over public radio. She reacts strongly to the victimization culture made popular by John Bradshaw and others, calling for a return to personal responsibility. However, her approach omits biblical principles of morality and has no concept of responsibility *before God*. Also absent is any sense of God's grace in helping people change.

Dr. Laura and the 10 Commandments: The Law Without the Lord

Ever popular "Dr. Laura" has converted to Orthodox Judaism and co-authored (with Rabbi Stewart Vogel) a book on the 10 Commandments. While seeming to advocate biblical conduct, Dr. Laura utterly fails to understand God's grace and the Christian gospel.

Render Unto Caesar?

This is not a critique, but a biblical study concerning the biblical basis for an ordained minister to elect out of the Social Security system on religious grounds.

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THEOLOGICAL PAPERS AND CRITIQUES

This series of papers addresses topics related to biblical counseling, and the issue of psychology vs. Scripture, from a more technical perspective, referencing the original biblical languages and perhaps using terminology that is not familiar to all readers. *There is no intention here to suggest that all believers must have formal theological training in order to understand and apply the Scriptures.* Often, however, references to Greek and Hebrew are *abused* by those who promote psychology. This is highly deceiving to people who have not studied the languages. Some of the critiques in this series seek to answer such abuses through extensive consideration of both context and biblical languages.

These papers would be particularly useful to pastors and seminary students, but are (hopefully) written so as to benefit all interested readers.

Ephesians 4:26--Command, Concession, or Condition?

Numerous psychologists lift this verse (be angry and do not sin) out of context...in order to support a Freudian ventilation of anger. This paper examines the context, the Greek grammar, Greek word studies, and other passages on anger, demonstrating conclusively that this psychologized understanding has no foundation.

United With Christ - Set Free From Sin

This paper includes a translation and detailed exegetical commentary on Romans 6:1-14, showing how Christ has delivered the believer from both the eternal penalty, as well as the *power*, of sin. This analysis should be useful to pastors and others who counsel biblically, providing a solid basis for hope in overcoming sinful habits.

"Christians in Crisis" -- God's Purposes, Your Response

This paper looks at human suffering from a biblical perspective, drawing primarily from the book of First Peter. Several of God's *purposes* for our trials are examined: testing, testimony, transformation, and teaching.

The Musical Marriage-Go-Round: An Exegetical Study of Divorce and Remarriage

Centered around an exegesis of Matthew 19:9, this publication studies major biblical texts concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage, including Matthew 19:1-9, Matthew 5:31-32, Mark 10:10-12, Luke 20:27-38, Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Romans 7:1-3, and 1 Corinthians 7.