

# A personality theory of christian spirituality



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In the book *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* (2011), Mark McMinn grasps attention of the readers to the role of the Christian faith in counseling practice. The author explains through the practical examples how psychology, theology, and spirituality have an effect on the mental health of people. He considers the Christian faith as a reliable means to achieve trust and understanding in patients while practicing cognitive therapy.

According to McMinn, " Our knowledge of God, self and Scripture are all interrelated, but our capacity to understand any one of these elements will add to our ability to understand the others (2011, p. 24). This is the main thesis of the book *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*. As McMinn (2011) asserts, the counselors are able to execute sessions with the help of their spirituality supporting patients by the Christian guidance. It assists the patients in strengthening their trust in God to cope with their problems.

In this connection, McMinn points out the role of Scripture and emphasizes positive effects while counseling. The author states that spiritual practice should become an everyday occupation for counselors to help their patients with applying Christian values in their lives. The researcher states that everybody is in need of a healthy sense to cope with difficulties (2011, p. 47), and prayers are important means to achieve that. He points out, " Those who pray often tend to experience more purpose in life, greater marital satisfaction, religious satisfaction, and a general sense of well-being" (McMinn, 2011, p. 6).

Confidential relations with a patient are the main criteria for success. He notes positive and negative effects of prayers in the counseling practice and concludes, " The counselor's level of spiritual maturity will provide an upper limit for the potential impact of prayer in counseling" (McMinn, 2011, p. 87). McMinn considers four problems pointed out in Bible: sin, confession, forgiveness, and redemption. He defines the role of sin in practice and claims, " Generally psychologists have been uninterested in sin, preferring to ignore it or to discuss the effects of the concept of sin" (McMinn, 2011, p. 61).

The scholar emphasizes that sin is a source of many negative feelings such as depression, sense of guilt. Sin should be overcome with the help of the Christian counseling. Christian counselors decide sin from the viewpoint of Bible stipulating confession as the necessary means to cope with the negative consequences of sin. Of course, confession stipulates self-humility, but it makes persons evaluate their deeds honestly in order to remove a burden of sin by receiving forgiveness.

Forgiveness is the Christian virtue treated by McMinn as human capacity " to forgive one another dependent on our capacity to understand both our need for forgiveness and God's gracious gift of forgiveness" (2011, p. 235). With the help of forgiveness, the counselor takes a patient's responsibility helping him or her to acquire a healthy view of the wrong deeds of other persons. Redemption is a final part of liberation from sin and return to harmony with God. It is an essential point to sum up sin, confession, and forgiveness; by other words, the whole way of the patient while coming back to harmony with God (McMinn, 2011, p. 65).

Meanwhile, McMinn underlines, “ The most effective Christian counselors are able to process several ideas simultaneously” (2011, p. 269). In order to treat patients successfully, it is necessary to combine and apply psychology, theology, and spirituality while exercising sessions. The author teaches how to apply knowledge in everyday counseling practice. He shows how one can integrate Christian principles into counseling therapy. McMinn emphasizes it is necessary to have everyday learning Scripture to be succeed in practice. The researcher describes all danger of misusing Scripts, prayers, etc.

One of the dangerous things in the book is contemplative spirituality. It empties the mind to improve sensing God. Contemplative spirituality has never been supported by Script. Under the influence of contemplative spirituality, unskilled persons can raise ghosts. Moreover, applying psychotropic substances to improve meditation is life hazardous. It is a widely known fact when bigots of Hinduism and some other non-Christian religions use various drugs to achieve nirvana. They are said to communicate with numina. They used to cope with psychological problems with the help of drugs. Moreover, many people in the world suffer from drug abuse.

It is nothing else than ostrichism. As a matter of fact, a person does not cope with his or her problems. After being drugged, a person needs another dose and sooner or later he or she will die. Indeed, it is a typical example when a human being lives in contradiction with his or her own self. That human being needs the psychological and spiritual assistance of a Christian counselor. The book is helpful in this case. In fact, everyone should follow the

principle “ No do harm. ” Only ordained priests can apply the perfect spiritual assistance, and McMinn points out all danger of wrong-using spirituality.

As I read the book, one thing comes in mind, my experience with God thru prayer. It was always bother me when I was 15, and didn't know how to pray. I used to think that praying was the most difficult thing to do until when I was 22 someone told me that praying is talking to god. As I was reading about prayer, I can felt like that I was using the first type of prayer, which is petition according to McMinn. According to McMinn, Prayer is a petition when asking God for something. I never thought that prayer could be worshipping because I have always ask when praying.

The book furnishes readers with wide information of Christian counseling to improve practical knowledge how to cope with psychological problems and help people to achieve reconciliation with God. The work is designed to improve the quality of Christian counseling with new approaches to solve problems of the human psychological health. Integrating psychology, theology, and spirituality are an effective method to rouse persons from depression. Every Christian counselor should be intent on one's improvement. McMinn explains how a counselor can improve comprehension of others through comprehension of God.