

Theory critique – anderson assignment

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Anderson Anonymous Graduate Student Liberty University In what proves to be a compelling presentation of the Journey to spiritual freedom, Dry. Neil T. Anderson (2000) presents his theory of how one may be liberated from negative thoughts, irrational feelings, and habitual sins in his book, *The Bondage Breaker*. Anderson (2000) suggests the cause of a majority of problems which are discussed within the walls of a counseling session may have roots in the supernatural. This critique will examine Andersen's theory of ways to combat the dark forces which cause spiritual conflict within the mind. Theory Summary

In his clarification of the nature of psychological problems and mental illness, Anderson (2000) places a high emphasis on spiritual warfare; reminding the reader, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Corinthians 10: 4, KAVA).

Anderson provides many examples of counsel whom he believes have succumbed to the deceptive tricks of Satan, explaining what may have been diagnosed as mental illness is actually spiritual oppression; or in cases of non-Christians, actual demon possession (Anderson, 2000). By drawing attention to scripture in Pall's letter to Timothy,

Anderson illustrates his point: "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4: 1, NASA). Thankfully, Anderson (2000) provides a detailed method of obtaining daily victory over the spiritual forces of darkness by outlining what Hawkins (2010) would refer to as a method of "discipleship counseling" – the seven steps to freedom in

Christ. The freedom and protection which is afforded by the Christian is stressed, as well as the position of authority Christians have over the enemy.

Freedom is accomplished by taking the first step of acknowledging one's dependence upon and affirming one's identity in Christ and renouncing past or present involvement in any practice, teaching, or ritual which could be considered demonic or non-Christian in nature. Anderson (2000) further explains, not only is it important to renounce non-Christian activity, but also to recognize and renounce instances of idolatry. Additionally, forgiveness, submitting to higher authority, adopting a humble attitude, confession of sins, and finally breaking generational curses is necessary.

As every thought is taken captive and brought into alignment and obedience to Christ (I. E. II Corinthians 10: 5), the deception which has caused one to live amidst shadows, shackled by the power of the enemy, may be traded for truth, grace, and a freedom in Christ (Anderson, 2000). Evaluation of Strengths and Weaknesses While readers of *The Bondage Breaker* may consider the handling of the subject matter controversial, depending upon their background and experience in things which occur in the spiritual realm, Anderson (2000) does well in his presentation of the influence Satan has on the thought processes of individuals.

A great amount of focus is spent on encouraging readers to grasp the main objective of truly knowing their value or self-worth in Christ. Not letting one's guard down is imperative. Once the enemy is given a foothold into a person's life via a thought process, it can become overwhelmingly disabling to try to maintain a positive outlook (Anderson, 2000). In adopting the

principles of The Bondage Breaker, the counselor becomes equipped to engage in spiritual warfare within the counseling arena (Anderson, 2000).

Through the use of prayer, and “warfare theology” (Hawkins, 2010, slide 5), the appropriation of freedom may become a reality in the life of the counsel. Anderson (2000) references the scriptures throughout and is careful to confirm his writing with God’s Word. As is it this author’s opinion that God’s Word is the final authority, comfort was taken in the fact Anderson was thorough in his scriptural references (Anderson, 2000). In addition, Andersen’s (2000) explanation of demonic oppression was described in a way as to eliminate any sensationalism such as what may be arrayed in movies or books.

Instead, Anderson presented the reality of Satan’s tactics as being sly in his method of simply infiltrating peoples’ thought processes. Stories shared were compelling in their ability to illustrate the workings of the enemy in that respect (Anderson, 2000). However, as compelling as most examples appeared, a weakness in Andersen’s theory was that he placed much emphasis on what might be interpreted by some as “the devil made me do it” and not enough consideration that some psychological problems could be caused by environment or experiences (Anderson, 2000).

For example, a female client who presents with severe cognitive trauma over years of sexual abuse may not simply be suffering emotionally because of a thought introduced by the enemy, but has some tough issues with which to deal based on her experience. While it is true our thoughts are responsible for our natural state as evidenced by Proverbs 23: AAA: “For as he thinks

within himself, so he is,” (NASA), credence must be given to what happens in the physical realm. In fact, in one of the most celebrated books of biblical literature, Job is tormented by Satan, not just in his thoughts, but physically and materially as well.

Job suffered greatly. He found himself depressed, sitting in a pile of ashes. By no means was his depression a result of sin, as Job was called righteous (I. E. Ezekiel 14: 14). Perhaps he was listening to the enemy’s accusations, however, the catalyst for the depression were the events that Satan caused in his life. The wretched boils Job suffered were not a result of his inability to resist temptation, or reject the accusations of the enemy, as Anderson (2000) might have agreed, based on his presentation of other medical cases wrought his book.

In comparison to the discussion Anderson (2000) presents regarding his client with multiple sclerosis, this author also lives with MS. While in complete agreement there are days when the disease process is made worse by thoughts induced by the enemy, the symptoms of the disease do not disappear simply because the thoughts the enemy incites are renounced. Andersen’s (2000) description of relapsing-remitting MS or the type of MS where “ symptoms which seem to come and go’ (p. 4) are presented as being psychosomatic, or induced by the client’s response to thoughts from the enemy. This author takes umbrage of Andersen’s (2000) assessment and would expect a more careful understanding of the science behind the disease process in spite of his discussion of the Two-Tier Worldview in which he states “ the spiritual world has no or little practical bearing on the natural world; we have practically excluded it from our understanding of reality’ (p. <https://assignbuster.com/theory-critique-anderson-assignment/>

30). This brings up another weakness: lack of empirical evidence for the theory.

Andersen's (2000) theory may be extremely difficult to prove scientifically, therefore causing concern among the secular counselors who would be reluctant to purport any theory not backed by empirical evidence. While there is no question God is powerful enough to heal without the help of modern medicine, care should be taken not to negate the members of the medical and mental health communities whom this author believes have been granted wisdom by God to be used in the healing process.

Personal Reflection and Application Having been raised in a church environment which taught members of the congregation to recognize and appreciate the existence of what may be occurring in the concentric circle of the supernatural system (Hawkins, 2010) or spiritual realm; his author was familiar with the theory presented by Anderson (2000) in *The Bondage Breaker*. An appreciation for the three channels of temptation about which Anderson speaks had been in the forefront of this writer's mind; especially the "pride of life," as it is believed pride is the root of all sin (Anderson, 2000).

Looking back over the past, there was a time when pride was an issue in this author's life, yet it was unrecognized. On a Sunday evening church service during testimony time, this then high school student sat listening to stories of friends who were praising God for ringing them out of a life filled with drugs, promiscuity, and any number of other sins. The testimony shared by

this author bestowed praise to God for keeping her from all the sins which seemed to plague her friends.

Pall's first letter to the Corinthian church warns, " Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10: 12, INKS). In just a few short weeks as a college freshman, this writer found herself in a lesbian relationship. The inability or refusal to recognize pride allowed the enemy to gain a foothold into this future counselor's life. That foothold eventually became a stronghold. The end result was years of living in disobedience; in bondage to a lifestyle of homosexuality which obviously managed to wreak havoc on any previous connection shared between this writer and her Lord.

Peace was impossible. After years of encountering the gentle wooing of the Holy Spirit, eventually, the conviction experienced was too much for this author to bear; at which time, the employment of Andersen's (2000) seven steps to freedom in Christ was set in motion: confession of sin, a willingness to renounce completely the homosexual lifestyle, repent, recognize the deception of the enemy and instead embrace God's truth, forgive, submit to God, swallow pride, experience freedom, and finally receive the blessing.

The process of moving from bondage to freedom in Christ was laborious, and physically and emotionally draining. However, the end result of a happy marriage with a loving husband and beautiful daughter, as well as the knowledge of living in right relationship with the Lord brings a peace like no other. The positional peace which once was evident when she became a Christian as a young girl, again was ruling in this author's heart as she

allowed God's Word to dwell there (I. E. Colombians 3: 15-16). The process of embracing the Truth became a liberating friend (Anderson, 2000).

Realizing in this day of tolerance and political correctness, the subject of homosexuality may be extremely controversial; however it remains the belief of this author that one cannot pick and choose which parts of God's Word one is willing to accept as truth. One of the reasons this author seeks to become a Licensed Professional Counselor is that she hopes to eventually work with young women who are willing to shed the blinders set upon them by the enemy of their souls; who share a willingness to embrace God's truth for their lives, and escape f life of sin.

As work will be done when counseling individuals in order to apply the principles set forth in *The Bondage Breaker*, this future counselor understands the process of sanctification is not an easy one. However, as Anderson (2000) reminds the reader, while never-ending; the rewards far outweigh the weight of the struggle. Reference Anderson, N. T. (2006). *The bondage breaker* (New and Expanded Edition). Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers. Hawkins, R. (2010). *The contribution of Neil Anderson and discipleship counseling*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University.