

# Review of psychology and christianity 5 views

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



Assessment 1 Assessment 1 What does psychology have to do with the Christian faith? In *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, by Myers, Jones, Roberts, Watson, Coe, Hall, and Powlison (2010) is an introductory textbook for Christian psychology that provides sound arguments for an array of positions on psychology and faith. Each author contributed an essay and in return the other essayist respond by either agreeing or disagreeing by pointing out faults and explaining why. The first position by David G.

Myers titled, "A-Levels-of-Explanation View," who is a psychological scientist who supports that Christian theology and psychology are two very distinct disciplines, but they do share similar goals. Myers defines psychology as, "the science of behavior and mental processes" (2010, pg. 49) and that over time different variations of this definition have agreed that psychology is a science. By having curiosity and humility we should seek out to test each other's ideas. He has high regards towards empirical psychological research that it can reveal about a person's personality, behavior, attitudes, relationships and more.

He also confirms that psychology can affirm aspects of Christian faith, for example psychological science supports family values, and that at times psychological science might cause us to change our view on Christian theology and interpretations of scripture. Myers admits that he has changed his stance on homosexuals, as there is more research on psychological findings and genetic research. He concludes that, "sexual orientation is a natural disposition, not a voluntary moral choice" (2010, pg. 72). Secondly, Stanton L.

Jones writes about, "An Integration View," where psychology and Christianity should be intertwined with each other. He believes that science is a tool that God uses as an instrument of revelation. Although Jones upholds that scripture determines the foundational beliefs and understanding of Christians, it does not provide us with the full knowledge of understanding humans. Throughout Jones view, he emphasizes the importance of "a thoughtful Christian appreciation for science" (144) and as Christians we should be able to engage with secular psychology, but he also acknowledges this engagement has its limits.

Furthermore, Jones uses homosexuality, like Myers, as a test case, but is very clear on what scripture says about this behavior and does not let data change his mind on this topic since the Authority of Scripture cannot be mistaken. The Christian Psychology view by Roberts and Watson, have a more historical and philosophical approach. They do not deny modern psychology, but argue that psychology has been around for the past 2500 years. For example, he brings up issues relevant today with the Sermon on the Mount instead of the science offered by today's established psychologists.

Roberts and Watson also claim that Christian psychologists should approach psychology with the bases of the Christian tradition. "Christians must approach the subject matter of humanity embracing what God has told us about what it means to be fully human first; that then is our framework for engaging psychology as a social science" (p. 183). Roberts and Watson propose a two-stage method: "to first appropriate the resources of the rich, Christian psychological tradition, and then to employ it in the advance of empirical science and applied science" (p. 184).

This is how a Christian understanding of the person can come to hypotheses that can be tested, therefore advancing our comprehension on humans. Lastly, the Biblical Counseling Model, by Powlison opens up his view with, “Christian faith is a psychology” and that “Christian ministry is a psychotherapy” (p. 245). He uses these terms differently when compared to modern psychologist.. He further illustrates that psychology can be categorized into six lines (Psych-1 to Psych-6): the raw experiences of life, organized knowledge, interpretive and explanatory models, psychotherapy, institutional and professional arrangements and the ethos of culture.

He goes on and uses these terms with numerous biblical themes by providing a test case. Powlison is more interested in assisting the individual using biblical insights to better understand. I found that Stanton L. Jones, An Integration View, was the most persuasive for me. He emphasizes that if we Christians believe that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord of all and that there is no life outside of the scope of his sovereignty. An integrationist view believes the Christian psychologist should draw on the resource of God’s answers to these ultimate questions as the foundation both for how we engage the science of psychology and how we structure our practice in the profession of psychology” (p. 101). I also strongly agree with him that our human experiences should be based on scripture, but he also acknowledges that Scripture alone could provide every aspect for understanding people as well as their problems and solutions. He also argues that the Christian faith “can and should relate to science in general and psychological science in particular” (p. 06). He emphasizes that if Christian psychologist focus more on the Bible and Christian theology, it will help shape their work because

they will embrace biblical truth and theological principals. Jones also argues not just for the Christian faith in psychology, but for the science as well. “ Because by his sovereign choice, God’s acting and speech are limited. Further, he has created humans as rational beings capable of knowing more and more about reality around them through the exercise of their reason and curiosity” (p. 10). Therefore we should integrate the discipline of psychology with one’s commitment to Scripture to shape their work. Although I agreed with most of what Myers argued for, I strongly disagreed with his view on sexual orientation. He professes that he is a Christian who reads the word, spends time with the Lord daily, but also confesses that over time data has swayed him to change his mind and now believes that “ sexual orientation (most clearly for males) is a natural disposition, not a voluntary moral choice” (p. 73).

I believe that Scripture has clearly stated what is right and wrong in our sexual lives. Myers also states that, “ our assumptions and beliefs always shape our approaches to science” (p. 81). Since Myers is heavily influenced by science, this has led him to change his moral views on sexual orientation, therefore, ignoring the moral aspect that biblical teaching that the act of homosexuality is immoral and is a disorientation of what God meant for human life. I thoroughly enjoyed learning and reading the four out five views in this book.

It has made me acknowledge that I need to spend more time in theology and in the word in order to better grasp the understanding of people. By doing so I hope to become not only more knowledgeable in the area of psychology, but a better servant for Christ. References Myers, D. G. , Jones, S. L. ,

Roberts, R. C. , Watson, P. J. , Coe, J. H. , Hall, T. W. , Powlison, D. (2010).  
Psychology and Christianity five views. E. L. Johnson (2nd ed. ). Downers, IL:  
InterVarsity Press.