

# IN PURSUIT OF APPROVAL:

## The Sexual Revolution and the Degradation of Conservative Christianity

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## INTRODUCTION

Until Christ returns, humanly speaking, there will always be debates about divine wisdom. In subtleties we repeat the question, “Did God really say?” This question, first uttered by Satan in the garden, has caused more controversy and consternation for the human race than all others combined. As finite and fallen beings, we are tempted to see things as they appear before our eyes much more than we are prepared to believe reality as God has revealed. Sin causes a spiritual astigmatism upon our human condition where we may see refractions of light but are unable to focus our eyes on the world as God made it. We fail to clearly see the full purpose, meaning, and value for which we were created.

More like the disciples than we care to admit, we struggle to understand the importance of Scripture as a guide for current events (John 20:9, John 12:12-16, Luke 18:34). We are told to be armed with the Word in order to “stand against the schemes of the devil,” and to remain pure so that “we would not be outwitted by Satan” (Ephesians 6:11, 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 4:19). Based on Romans 1, we should have known that a normal course of disregard for God’s honor leads to futile thinking and darkened hearts, “claiming to be wise, they became fools” in the great exchange of His glory. When that happens, God gives humanity over to their lusts and those dishonorable passions lead in succession to unnatural relations of sexual perversion. When there is a suppression and disregard for God’s

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revelation of His glory, the natural digression is the sin of unnatural relations and of sexual perversion (Romans 1:18-32, Revelation 17 and 18).

Concerned about the effects of our culture's sexual perversion in the counseling room, I wrote an article in the *Journal of Biblical Soul Care* titled, "A Case for Religious Liberty in Soul Care" where I attempted to provide a historical perspective of a particular area where it seemed the church was vulnerable. "Inconspicuous to many," I said, "religious freedom in the area of counseling has not yet become the primary focal point of social activists intent on eliminating traditional Christian values from American life."<sup>2</sup> How quickly that statement became outdated. Now clearly visible and brimming with attention, sexual orientation infects discussions of counseling, education, supreme court confirmations, and legislation. Even professional athletes are pressured to wear rainbow branded uniforms in support of modern sexual identity constructs. "If states are able to limit counseling practices," I concluded, "attempting to address deeply moral, religious, and spiritual issues such as sexual orientation, then the state is demarcating the boundaries of religious freedom."<sup>3</sup>

But how did we get here? The tide is moving at a much faster pace than I anticipated only six years ago. Why is it that conservative religious values are under such duress? Why is sexuality and *sexual identity* at the forefront of cultural discussions? Activists are not content with freedoms to pursue their own sexual perversion but are driven to seek more than toleration of their preferences—they are seeking approval, endorsement, and even sanction.

## TRUEMAN'S CULTURAL ANALYSIS

One of the most valuable cultural analyses of the twentieth century, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic*, was penned by Philip Reiff.<sup>4</sup> Carl Trueman updated many of Reiff's arguments helping us grasp the seasoned story lines which shape and mold our modern conception of the self, and its rotten fruit of sexual

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<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Biblical Soul Care*, Fall, Vol. 1, (1:2017).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2006).

immorality.<sup>5</sup>

Trueman's arguments are fascinating and instructive as they meander through philosophy, sociology, and psychology. My desire is to remain tethered to his arguments to avoid seeing things, as Schaeffer warned, "in bits and pieces instead of totals."<sup>6</sup> Acknowledging the sum of our circumstances as greater than their component parts is necessary to prevent myopia in our thinking. Yet, each component part is critical to the story. I am not attempting to improve upon Trueman's arguments but advance the application of those arguments for the work of biblical ministry.

Trueman claimed that "Freud's fingerprints are all over the Western culture of the last century."<sup>7</sup> Freud's psychological thought, the church's theological apathy, and Christian endorsements of Freud aided the current sexual revolution. Our modern story of sexual perversion follows the pattern from Romans 1. It begins with the intentional suppressing of God's truth, which leads to the acceptance of faulty views of man, then culminates in man's attempt at finding meaning, hope, and value in unnatural relations and false identities.

For our purpose, a major part of this story is the impact of the sexual revolution upon the church at large and her biblical counseling ministry more specifically. My goal is to demonstrate that the conservative Christian church and the truths she guards are primary targets of sexual activists today as they are no longer content with cultural tolerance but seek approval of their socially deviant and biblically immoral behavior. The sexual revolution, with the aid of the philosophies of psychology and psychiatry, falsely equates sexual expression with personal identity in order for individuals to become a *de facto* creator of their own authentic self and seeking to eliminate biblical truth regarding identity and sexuality.

## THE CHANGING SELF

The Puritan George Swinnock said, "We never come to a right knowledge

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<sup>5</sup>Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the road to Sexual Revolution* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2020).

<sup>6</sup>Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1981), 17.

<sup>7</sup>Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 203.

about ourselves, until we come to a right knowledge of God.”<sup>8</sup> We once believed that theology was the “Queen of Sciences” and that it afforded us the opportunity to understand the world God created, including human beings. The advent of Darwinian thinking certainly challenged that long-standing belief and provided opportunity for a changing of the guard. Darwin’s biological paradigm gave an intellectual framework that altered the focus of scientific inquiry and, therefore, altered a God-oriented understanding of man.

“Psychology,” Darwin stated, “will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation. Light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history.”<sup>9</sup> He knew that his framework would have implications for understanding anthropology. Friedrich Nietzsche crystalized that humanistic perspective when he said, “Psychology shall again be recognized as the queen of the sciences to serve and prepare for which the other sciences exist. For psychology is now once again the road to fundamental problems.”<sup>10</sup>

Before 1879, psychology had been considered a study of the soul or mind. Wilhelm Wundt attempted to “mark out a new domain of science,” that could be scientifically measured and quantified. He wanted to study human experience, emotions, and behavior, utilizing the “mainstream of German scientism by redefining psychology as a physiological rather than a philosophical subject.” Wundt placed focus on the brain and central nervous system in order move from speculation to science.<sup>11</sup> This type of gnostic inquiry into the self, however, deserves a rebuke from Scripture since it leads our understanding of man, and his needs, astray. Thinking that we can understand man only from observable component parts produces a myopic perspective of man which only further jades our perception.

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<sup>8</sup> George Swinnock, *The Blessed and Boundless God*, ed. J. Stephen Yuille (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), 131.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (London: John Murray, 1859), 488.

<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: A Prelude to the Philosophy of the Future*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), 36. It appears Nietzsche may be referring to a time in “psychology” when the Greeks, fifth century B.C., were enamored with the self. See also Arieti, 460-461.

<sup>11</sup> Paoli Lionni, *The Leipzig Connection: The Systematic Destruction of American Education* (Sheridan: Heron Books, 1993), 1-10. Wilhelm Wundt, *Principles of Physiological Psychology* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1904), 8-16.

Freud synthesized the thought of many but was principally in debt to Darwin for his foundational framework. He was not after a neutrality of the self. His views of man were an intentional departure from God as the creator, sustainer, and moral lawgiver. The psychosexual stages of development were infused with the growing thought of sexologists applying the framework of Darwinian biology to anthropology for normal patterns of growth and development. Freudian biographer, Frank Sulloway said, “Indeed, perhaps nowhere was the impact of Darwin, direct and indirect, more exemplary or fruitful outside of biology proper than within Freudian psychoanalysis.”<sup>12</sup> Two of the keys given to Freud by Darwin was an exploration of the irrational impulses of man akin to animals and phylogenetic stages of development which were critical to his theories of sexuality and human development.<sup>13</sup>

Freud was more significant than many realized, and his reach goes far beyond a branch of counseling psychology called Psychoanalysis. He was a moralist, even though his views of religion as an “illusion” are well documented.<sup>14</sup> His theories, by necessity, drew moral conclusions built upon his worldview which highlighted a disdain for and rejection of Judeo-Christian ethics and values.<sup>15</sup> His psychoanalytic theories were a sort of syncretistic appraisal of human life and, therefore, the inner drive necessarily had to rid itself of puritanical ethics, Victorian sexuality, and Augustinian depravity. All of these elements were quite inconvenient in Freud’s mind because explanations of hysteria or sexual perversion within each of these frameworks required categories of sin, guilt, and a moral lawgiver.<sup>16</sup> Freud rejected these categories and attempted to explain the vexations of the human soul from a decisively contrary worldview.

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<sup>12</sup> Frank Sulloway, *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 275.

<sup>13</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on The Theory of Sexuality*, ed and trans. James Strachey. (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 97-109.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Webster, *Why Freud Was Wrong: Sin, Science, and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 179. Sigmund Freud, *The Future of Illusion*. ed. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 38-42.

<sup>15</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Future of Illusion*. ed. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 38-57. Freud, *The Ego and The Id*, ed. James Strachey, trans. Joan Riviere (New York: Norton, 1989), 31-33. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (London: Hogarth Press, 1939), 202-207.

<sup>16</sup> Freud believed hysteria was a result of sexual desires or fantasies of a person’s parents or may include memories of childhood sexual abuse. In Freud’s thought the longings were suppressed emotions which created dysfunctional symptoms of psychogenic origin.

To demonstrate the point above, consider the musings of Silvano Arieti, a psychoanalytic thinker in the mid-twentieth century. In an article he authored in 1952, he asked a profound question which is quite instructive, especially given his commitment to Freudian ideals. He pondered, “Why did it take so long for Freudian thinking to pierce intellectual thought?”<sup>17</sup> In other words, why, in the history of ideas, did it take so long for Freud’s ideas to come forward. Arieti’s reasoned arguments shed light on the thought barriers to Freud’s dynamic psychology. If Arieti is correct, then it stands to reason that the forces which once were hindrances to Freud’s thinking are now themselves hindered by the flourishing of Freud’s views of man and his problems.

Arieti made an attempt to study what he called, “antipsychoanalytic cultural forces.” He claimed that psychology took a step backward with the first of these forces which can be summarized as platonic rationalism. The logic of Plato, he argued, divides the soul in “two parts, the rational and the irrational.”<sup>18</sup> This thought was furthered by Aquinas and exported to the whole of western civilization. The exaltation of reason removed focus from the individual and placed it upon the study of universals.

The second antipsychoanalytic force recognized by Arieti is the “suppression of the sensory and of the emotional.”<sup>19</sup> Here Arieti links God as creator and man as creature to sensations and emotions which make man and divine different. Therefore, “carnal urges must be suppressed. All emotions which may originate in the body, should also be suppressed. Only love is permitted and esteemed; but love is removed from any sexual connotation.”<sup>20</sup> He goes on to say that “This early Christian approach to life did not attempt to repress only sexual pleasure, but all pleasant sensations and emotions.”<sup>21</sup>

The third antipsychoanalytic cultural force is as critical conceptually as the

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<sup>17</sup> Silvano Arieti, “Anti-Psychoanalytic Cultural Forces in the Development of Western Civilization,” *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, Vol. 50, No. 4, Fall 1996, pp.469-472. Originally published in *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, Vol. V1, No. 1, 1952, pp.68-78.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 462.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 466.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 467.

<sup>21</sup> Arieti, “Anti-Psychoanalytic Cultural Forces in the Development of Western Civilization,” 468. Also see Webster, *Why Freud Was Wrong*, 192. He discusses transition in semantics for Christians regarding sexuality.

second. “Moral evaluation” tied to Christian thought from the sin of Adam and Eve was believed to be paramount. Arieti said that Augustine is most representative of this “concept of life.” In other words, the Augustinian concept of original sin served as arguably the most important antipsychoanalytic force in western civilization, according to Arieti, and “Freud had to fight against these very forces and to overcome them not only in the society at large, but also in the single patient.”<sup>22</sup>

Freud’s theories demonstrated incredible resilience to overcome those forces. However, Christians ought to be concerned that the acceptance of Freudian thought is an outright rejection of God’s view of sensuality and Augustinian original sin. In other words, Freudian thought is a radical departure from the biblical doctrine of humanity, a suppression of the truth, which remains dominant today.

Sigmund Freud hoped to rid humanity of guilt from sin.<sup>23</sup> Yet, he still had to acknowledge man had problems or, “inherited taints.” He theorized man-centered explanations of problems and thereby offered a man-centered redemption from those problems. This is the essence of the therapeutic model born of humanism as a suppression of the truth of God. When the doctrine of depravity is compromised or confused, the glory of the cross in Christ’s sufficient restoration is lost.

Freud’s impact today has not been squelched as his thought remains a pillar of influence. This should be considered the fertile soil of our immediate sexual revolution and cultural chaos. Freud replaced the driving force of man’s nature, which had been considered moral, with a drive that was sexual. We will now turn to the specific sexology of Freud that is historically vital for understanding the current sexual revolution.

## THE CHANGING OF SEX AND QUESTIONS OF GENDER

### Sigmund Freud

Admittedly there are other factors in the story of the sexual revolution. Yet,

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 469-470.

<sup>23</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Future of Illusion*. ed. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 51-57.

the purpose here is to highlight the impact of psychology on current questions regarding the fluidity of gender identity and sexuality. As mentioned earlier, once the truths of God are suppressed, futility of thinking and darkened understanding leads to an exchange of the glory of God. In typical fashion, the evil one covers sin in colors of virtue in order to calm the conscience and encourage acceptance.<sup>24</sup>

Since God designed sexual intimacy between one man and one woman as a primary earthly foreshadow of the beauty of the gospel and our union with Jesus, then it should be no surprise that the moral degradation of our culture is displaying itself through sexual perversion. A *gospel* is heralded, but not the true gospel. This false gospel is void of the wrath of God against sinners, death to self, full forgiveness of sin, allegiance to Christ, authority of the sovereign, and so on.

The therapeutic gospel is primarily focused on the pursuit of pleasure. Trueman helps us understand Freud's therapeutic framework which serves as an antithesis to the true gospel of Jesus. He summarizes Freud, "If happiness is the desired goal of all human beings, then for Freud the pleasure principle—the quest for pleasure focused on sexual gratification—is central to what it means to be a self."<sup>25</sup> The logical conclusion to this statement is anything that keeps you from happiness or the pleasure of sexual gratification is evil and must be removed in order for you to obtain happiness.

Let us examine some of the details of Freud's psychosexual philosophy which began to reshape views of sexuality and pleasure. Freud's psychoanalytic theory took quite some time to develop and mature as he synthesized the thoughts of others. Sulloway said, "It was in December 1896 that Freud first took the fundamental step of equating neurosis with a pathologically repressed, or 'negative,' state of sexual perversion. And with this one key insight, psychoanalysis became an integral part of the nascent science of sexology."<sup>26</sup> Freud acknowledged that man dealt with problems, but he did not accept a philosophy of moral degeneration to explain

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* (Feather Trail Press, 2010), 18-19.

<sup>25</sup> Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, 205.

<sup>26</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Origins of Psycho-Analysis, Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes: 1887-1902*, eds. Marie Bonaparte, Anna Freud, and Ernst Kris, trans. Eric Mosbacher and James Strachey. (New York: Basic Books, 1954), 180, 189. Frank Sulloway, Freud, *Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 277.

the existence and nature of those problems.<sup>27</sup> He believed hysteria must have a psychogenic explanation. Freud became convinced that hysteria was rooted in improper sexual development.<sup>28</sup> The driving force behind normalcy was moving through stages of sexual development without unconscious “libidinal fixation” or repression. Any fixation or repression, according to Freud’s theory, would lead to some form of neurotic symptoms, like hysteria.<sup>29</sup>

Freud applied the Biogenic Law of Ernst Haeckel, Darwin’s chief European disciple.<sup>30</sup> This was a critical piece of the synthesis, because the Biogenic Law allowed Freud to describe the unconscious as pathologized by evolutionary forces.<sup>31</sup> Webster summarized Freud’s thought:

In order to account for neurotic disturbances Freud thus came to rely on a makeshift version of the evolutionary concept of variation, holding that biological programme which determined the unfolding of the sexual instinct might vary from individual to individual and this would predispose some individuals to pathological disturbances in their sexual identity . . . Perhaps the most important element in Freud’s entire argument was his assumption that repression was

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<sup>27</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton 1989), 83-96.

<sup>28</sup> Francine Shapiro, *Getting Past Your Past: Taking Control of your Life with Self-Help Techniques from EMDR Therapy* (New York: Rodale, 2012), 48, 163-164; *Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy* 3rd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2018), 20, 299-300.

<sup>29</sup> Sulloway, 319. EMDR’s view of repressed memories finds its intellectual roots in Freudian psychoanalytic thought. See Karen M. Engelhard, “More than meets the eye: Taking a look at EMDR in trauma-focused therapy.” (*Educational Specialist*, 103) pg.15. retrieved 1/18/2023 <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1106&context=edspec201019>. See also Freud, “The origin and development of psychoanalysis” (*The American Journal of Psychology*, 21, 1910), 181-218. In a similar way to what Freud believed led to repression of a psychogenic nature, Francine Shapiro seems to have borrowed that basic philosophy and transferred it to a biogenic-like repression of trauma. Rather than memories being repressed in a psychogenic form which led to hysteria and neurosis in Freud, in Shapiro these repressions are stored in the body (or more particularly in the brain) which lead to maladaptive behaviors. Besser van der Kolk presents a similar ideology in *The Body Keeps the Score*. While the body is important, we must be cautious in ascribing determinative or causal features that remove moral culpability.

<sup>30</sup> Arieti, 490. Arieti said, “Freud believed that stages of development are repetitions of phylogenetic stages, and such belief has influenced his theories of fixation and regression of the libido.”

<sup>31</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on The Theory of Sexuality*, ed and trans. James Strachey. (New York: Basic Books, 1963), xv, 12-14.

primarily an organic, phylogenetically determined process.<sup>32</sup>

One of the reasons Freud's theory of psychosexual stages of development is so elusive, and yet so enduring, is he tried to encompass pathology of psychogenic and biogenic origins. He believed that sexual perversion may find its pathology in some primitive stage of animal sexuality as understood by his promotion of Biogenic Law—“ontogeny (the development of the individual organism) recapitulates phylogeny (the evolutionary history of the species).”<sup>33</sup> Freud utilized this concept which then rooted sexual pathology in forces that are outside of one's moral agency, thus, removing guilt, shame, and responsibility of any perversion.

This new psychobiology became the wings of fledgling theories of madness and hysteria. Freud took liberty to apply Biogenic Law, rooted in Darwinian theory, to his wavering theories of human development. Yet he was merely representative of the ways psychobiology gained acceptance. Whether it was the sterilization of the mad or the theory of infantile sexuality, there has been an explanatory bias toward psychobiology—the idea that problems of the inner man have biological origins. As sociologist Andrew Scull observed, “These mental gymnastics point to a larger problem that the theory of degeneration created for psychiatrists and for patients and their families. For the former, biological determinism provided an excuse for therapeutic failure and a new rationale for the institutions over which they presided, at the price of their claims to be part of a therapeutic profession.”<sup>34</sup> Owen Whooley, author of *On the Heels of Ignorance*, added, “But most importantly psychoanalysis offered psychiatrists a new way to manage their ignorance. It did so through mystification, or the process of making expertise inaccessible to external judgment. As articulated and practiced, psychoanalysis, with its theoretical complexity and hermeneutic interpretation, was largely immune to public scrutiny and outside meddling.”<sup>35</sup>

For all its failures in the latter part of the twentieth century, psychoanalytic

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<sup>32</sup> Webster, *Why Freud Was Wrong*, 235.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 234. See also Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. Joan Riviere (London: Allen & Unwin, 1922), 297-299. Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on The Theory of Sexuality*, ed and trans. James Strachey. (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 12-14, 107.

<sup>34</sup> Andrew Scull, *Desperate Remedies: Psychiatry's Turbulent Quest to Cure Mental Illness*, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2022), 38.

<sup>35</sup> Owen Whooley, *On The Heels of Ignorance: Psychiatry and the Politics of Not Knowing* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 98.

thinking was a major digression toward the celebrated sexual expression and gender diversity of today. Freud left open the ideas that sexuality could be deviant, or it may simply be a normal phase of sexual development. While there may be inconsistencies, Freud did not believe that homosexuality was a “degenerative condition.”<sup>36</sup> Freud, “believed everyone is born with bisexual tendencies, expression of homosexuality could be a normal phase of heterosexual development.”<sup>37</sup> The point is that Freud began to unhinge the sexualized self from supposed moral oppression made up of a “patriarchal constellation.” This constellation included conservative theological and religious values, namely, any concept of original sin and moral responsibility to God.

After Freud’s death in 1939, “most psychoanalysts of the next generation came to view homosexuality as pathological.” This is evidenced by the categorization of homosexuality as sexual deviation beginning with the DSM I in 1952. The DSM I, and its second iteration in 1968, labeled homosexuality as a mental disorder.<sup>38</sup> Homosexuality was no longer categorized as sin, but the mental health label transitioned sexual deviation to the domain of mental health professionals. The results, then, were that mental health professionals became the arbiters delineating between sexually healthy identity and sexual deviation. As we will see, that which was once called sexual immorality, becomes a healthy means of creating, becoming, or discovering the true identity of self.

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<sup>36</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 123-246.

<sup>37</sup> Jack Drescher, “Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality” in *Behavioral Sciences* 2015, vol 5, pp. 568.

<sup>38</sup> It was during this time that Reparative Therapy and Conversion Therapy were popularized as means to repair the *labeled* mental disorder of homosexuality. I believe that homosexuality ought not appear in the DSM as a mental disorder. Homosexuality is sexual deviation, but it is an immoral expression of sexuality that should be called sin rather than a mental disorder. Conversion therapy for example, was an immoral attempt to eradicate homosexuality as deviant sexual behavior. Many Christians lacked discernment in accepting the DSM understanding of homosexuality as a mental disorder, rather than as a sin in the way God describes. Therefore, many Christians driven by deep empathy toward individuals who struggled with a *mental disorder* were vulnerable to the therapeutic approach of conversion therapy. Since the problem had been wrongly defined, the solution was also wrong and harmful. Biblical counselors are under obligation of the Scripture to speak the truth in love to anyone wrestling with questions of sexual orientation. There are no forced or coercive techniques involved in biblical counseling for sexual orientation change efforts. Any attempts at change are voluntary for the individual to accept the biblical wisdom, ethics, and counsel we share.

## Alfred Kinsey

We will return to Freud, but first a quick detour to follow the cultural digression which continued the disdain for moral bearings and sexual ethics. The shedding of the moral stigma surrounding sexual deviation gave rise to the sexual revolution of the 1960's. Alfred Kinsey was a "scientist" whose sexology gained prominence in the United States due to his studies at Indiana University. While there continued to be a stigma regarding sexual deviation, Kinsey aimed toward free expression and sexual exploitation. He viewed sexual deviation as more common than psychiatry maintained, especially homosexuality.<sup>39</sup>

The importance of Kinsey far outweighs his reports regarding homosexuality. He aided a sexual revolution which included a contempt for authority and establishment while capitalizing on cultural displeasure from the wars of the mid-twentieth century. Much like Freud, "Kinsey and his co-conspirators ambushed and vanquished three bedrock American values: the authority of Judeo-Christian sexual morals, the sanctity of marriage, and the protected innocence of children."<sup>40</sup>

The *Kinsey Reports* were said to have scientific evidence of the normalcy of homosexuality. American psychiatrists who had stood by the diagnosis of homosexuality were not pleased with the reports and questioned their validity. More critically to the moral downgrade of our culture is that even though his reports were stripped of their scientific vitality, they gained cultural popularity. Susan Brinkman highlighted the investigation of the *Kinsey Reports*:

In the 1954 Congressional investigation by Congressman B. Carroll Reece of Tennessee, the Rockefeller Foundation, Kinsey's main financier, came under intense scrutiny. The unscientific characteristic of Kinsey's conclusions led the Foundation's president, Dean Rusk, to terminate the financial support of the Institute.

Playboy stepped in to provide the funds that launched Kinsey's false sex data into mainstream America. Playboy, the Kinsey Institute, Penthouse, and Hustler went on to form an unholy alliance with

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<sup>39</sup> Alfred Kinsey, *Sexual Behavior in The Human Male*, (London: Saunders, 1949), 617-623.

<sup>40</sup> Judith Riesman, *Sexual Sabotage: How One Mad Scientist Unleashed a Plague of Corruption and Contagion on America* (Washington, D.C.: WND Books, 2010), 96-97.

prominent sex institutions in the United States, the same institutions that provide the nation's sex education.<sup>41</sup>

It has even been said that no two men have done more for "sexual freedom" in the West than Freud and Kinsey. The popularizing of sexual expression spread rapidly through sex institutions and sex education, which created a growing pressure upon the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to remove homosexuality from the DSM.<sup>42</sup>

### **Sexual Deviation and Robert Spitzer**

Opportunity presents itself in historical moments. Robert Spitzer became the DSM-III Task Force Chairman, due at least in part to a controversy in the early 1970s over the diagnosis of sexual deviation, namely homosexuality. It was at a meeting of the APA's Committee on Nomenclature where the sexual activists group, New York Gay Alliance, demanded a hearing. Robert Spitzer became an integral figure in removing the homosexual label from codification in the DSM-II. Ronald Bayer said that "... Spitzer was persuaded 'that being homosexual had little to do with one's capacity to function at a high level'"<sup>43</sup> Hannah Decker agreed that "... Spitzer had become increasingly convinced that there were many homosexuals who led perfectly 'normal' lives and functioned successfully in society. Why, then, should they be considered to have a 'psychiatric disorder'?"<sup>44</sup>

The change was not without major controversy. Many psychiatrists did not want the change, but others did. Some said that scientific research—the *Kinsey Report*, Evelyn Hooker's published study in the 1950s, and others—backed the proposal. That is still a belief today according to Douglas Haldeman, author of *The Case Against Conversion "Therapy,"* when he claimed, "Based on the preponderance of scientific research, in 1973 homosexuality was removed from the diagnostic manuals used by mental health professionals."<sup>45</sup> There are many

<sup>41</sup> Susan Brinkman, *The Kinsey Corruption: An Exposé On The Most Influential "Scientist" of Our Time* (Westchester, PA: Ascension Press, 2004), loc. 253

<sup>42</sup> Hannah Decker, *The Making of the DSM III: A Diagnostic Manual's Conquest of American Psychiatry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 31-33. See also Reisman, *Sexual Sabotage*, 168. Drescher, 571-572.

<sup>43</sup> Ronald Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 126.

<sup>44</sup> Decker, *The Making of the DSM III*, 32.

<sup>45</sup> Douglas Haldeman, ed. *The Case Against Conversion "Therapy"* (Washington D.C.: APA, 2022), 22.

who question the politics of the nomenclature change. Yet, basing the change on *scientific research* is quite a stretch in the data. The *Kinsey Reports* were said to be *scientific*, but the testimony of Spitzer tells a different story.

Robert Spitzer admitted that political forces were at play in the removal of the diagnosis. He simply came up with a definition to remove the homosexual diagnosis in a vote that some have called “democratic” rather than scientific.<sup>46</sup> Spitzer said, “I came up with a definition in 1973 that made it possible to argue that homosexuality was not a mental disorder.”<sup>47</sup> It can be concluded that this was more an issue of political activism under the guise of civil rights rather than the “science of psychopathology.”

Sexual activists believed a homosexual person could never change. Their hope was for society at large to be convinced of the same. If there is no opportunity for change, according to their logic, then *all* sexual orientation change efforts are harmful.<sup>48</sup> “The symptom-based model of mental illness that emerged in the DSM-III exemplifies how scientific revolutions can emerge not just from the discovery of new facts but also from changing worldviews.”<sup>49</sup>

Spitzer called the new disorder “sexual orientation disturbance,” which only labeled homosexuals who were *uncomfortable* with their same-sex desires.<sup>50</sup> The compromise of Spitzer was a clear move toward a personal sense of well-being as the threshold between mental disorder and mental health. Pathology was determined by the individual’s feelings—progressive individualism in Trueman’s word—rather than some outside governing morality, whether God or biological science.

While Freudian concepts of neurosis and psychosis died with the controversies

<sup>46</sup> Decker, *The Making of the DSM III*, 33. Speaking about the vote of the APA Decker said, “Observers were astonished. Psychiatric disorders would be decided by a democratic vote? . . . The press had a field day, and psychiatry’s reputation as a scientific field sank even further.”

<sup>47</sup> An interview with Robert Spitzer (YouTube, “APA’s Political Decision—Spitzer”)

<sup>48</sup> Haldeman, ed., in *The Case Against Conversion “Therapy,”* stated that “Sexual orientation is tied to physiological drives and biological systems that are beyond conscious choice and involves profound emotional feelings, such as ‘falling in love.’”

<sup>49</sup> Allan Horwitz, *Between Sanity and Madness: Mental Illness from Ancient Greece to the Neuroscientific Era* (New York: Oxford, 2020), 214.

<sup>50</sup> This language is similar to what has more recently been labeled gender dysphoria.

surrounding the new DSM III, contrary to what many believed, Freudianism overall did *not* die with its publication. There was an attempt to rid us of his psychological explanations of neurosis and psychosis. Yet, the biogenic framework remained steadfast and was reinvigorated by Spitzer through the discussions regarding identity and sexuality. There is actually a sense in which Freud's labors to rid individuals of guilt and shame has spread to any expressed sexual deviations. Rather than being viewed as pathological, psychogenic, biogenic, or immoral, the triumph of the therapeutic now celebrates the variations of expressive individualism in sexuality and gender identity. Everyone has "become wise in his own eyes" (Isaiah 5:21, Proverbs 26:21, see also Ecclesiastes and Judges), rid of all shame and not even knowing "how to blush" (Jeremiah 6:15).

## Mark Yarhouse

How did Christians in mental health professions respond to the changing language of sexual deviations? Many continued to use the unethical practices of conversion or reparative therapies—a negative consequence of accepting the homosexual label of the DSM without biblical critique. Haldeman, et. al., stated, "Respect for religion and religious diversity is important also, but we cannot discriminate or violate the rights of sexually diverse clients based on our religious beliefs, practices, or identification."<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, many Christians working in mental health take the position of the APA regarding sexuality and religion.

Mark Yarhouse is probably the most well-known professing Christian studying gender identities. In his recent book, *Emerging Gender Identities*, he suggested, "The Christian doctrine of free will highlights God's capacity to tolerate and honor human choices."<sup>52</sup> Yarhouse likens navigating gender identity concerns to "the heavy weight of the cross being carried."<sup>53</sup> He goes on to suggest that an array of pragmatic management strategies "may help a person suffering from gender dysphoria," which includes medical interventions.<sup>54</sup>

Yarhouse and Sadusky give much credit to the psychiatric and medical community's "distinction between sex, gender, and sexuality." Which they say,

<sup>51</sup> Haldeman, *The Case Against Conversion "Therapy,"* 119.

<sup>52</sup> Mark Yarhouse and Julia Sadusky, *Emerging Gender Identities: Understanding the Diverse Experiences of Today's Youth* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020), 209.

<sup>53</sup> Yarhouse and Sadusky, *Emerging Gender Identities*, 209.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 209, 59.

“contributed to the later idea that there is no necessary relationship between the biological sex and gender identity.”<sup>55</sup> A troublesome position when we see God as creator of male and female. In case this small portion is unclear, the authors provide clarity on their views and methodology:

We approach gender dysphoria as a real experience—a diagnosable disorder—that can be quite painful for a person. If gender dysphoria does not resolve on its own by late adolescence or early adulthood, we consider interventions to gender dysphoria as residing on a continuum of options for managing distress. We do not begin with medical interventions; rather, we begin with a wide range of coping strategies, in response to an undeniably painful experience. If a person is not sufficiently helped by noninvasive coping strategies—strategies that are often utilized in a stepwise manner, moving toward increasing alignment with a transgender identity—a person might consider more invasive coping responses, such as medical interventions (e.g. cross-sex hormones, gender confirmation surgery).<sup>56</sup>

The capitulation to expressive individualistic ideologies is not without consequences. It remains a mystery as to how one would square that approach with Scripture, even if they do not believe in sufficiency to the same degree as biblical counselors. I cannot help but think of Francis Schaeffer’s warning: “Liberal theology is really humanism expressed in theological terms . . . as the materialistic view takes over more thoroughly we can be certain that what we so carefully take for granted will be lost.”<sup>57</sup> The Church may have to pay a high price in the increasing hostile culture.

When the church abdicates absolute truth, we will find ourselves adapting to the world’s version of good and evil. As David Wells said, “For what succeeds in this world is not necessarily what is true or what is right.”<sup>58</sup> In the mind of man, categories of good and evil are constructed from appeals to epistemological authority and it is to that subject that we now turn our attention.

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<sup>55</sup> Yarhouse and Sadusky, *Emerging Gender Identities*, 16.

<sup>56</sup> Yarhouse and Sadusky, *Emerging Gender Identities*, 59.

<sup>57</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1982), 21 and 71.

<sup>58</sup> David Wells, *The Bleeding of the Evangelical Church* (Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 2021), 7.

## APPEAL TO LESSER AUTHORITY

The God of Scripture is the Sovereign Creator and occupies the position of dominion over all creation. His declaration regarding good and evil as it relates to human sexuality is clear in both Scripture and nature (Romans 1:18-32). But what has happened to a culture that suppresses His moral authority over sexuality? Understanding of the self could only change as the revelation of God is dismissed.

In terms of authority, once God is removed as moral authority for sexuality there is no guilt or shame in sexual perversion. The parading of sexual immorality is demonstration that God gives people over to their own lusts to the “dishonoring of their bodies . . . because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator” (Romans 1:24b-25, emphasis added).

Even as God’s authority was cast off, exemplified in Freud and Kinsey, there was an appeal to another authority. Practice is always rooted in epistemological appeal. The shift toward a biogenic reduction of sexual perversion was an attempt to morally justify homosexual behavior. This is a clear attempt to remove sexual deviation from the moral categories of good and evil. The movement was represented by the slogan “born this way” to describe homosexual expression as a product of *normal* genetic variation of sexuality.

Appeal to biological authority has now been trumped by the transgender movement. The point is that when man thinks himself to be wise, he does foolish things. Man-made philosophies turn inward to destroy and create chaos rather than build and restore. When following the science does not accomplish the outcome, there is an appeal to identity that supersedes the morality of God and the biology of sex given at birth. Man becomes the maker of his own image and identity.

Let us not forget the influence of humanistic psychology as a means to achieve this new philosophy of sexual perversion. Abraham Maslow’s self-esteem and Carl Roger’s self-empowerment aided in casting off any outside authority in order to be the person you are on the inside, which has now come full circle to give

“scientific” respectability to the transgender movement.<sup>59</sup> Dignity and worth in personhood, according to modern theory, is discovered and created if we have the power to fashion who we are from the inside, divorced from godly morality or natural biological science.

In the end, the freedom of self-expression becomes the true authority that man wants. Biology is now simply a surrogate serving the agenda of the psychological self. In the end, those empty philosophies always crumble because they were not meant to bear the weight of the reality of God’s world. Therefore, we see a rapidly changing secular culture attempting to appeal to different authorities in order to satisfy their own desires. While arguments are different from feminism and transgenderism, it is the same taskmaster calling the shots—the prince of the power of the air exalting the self and attempting to subvert the glory of God from His creation of humanity in His image as “male and female” (Genesis 1:27). We are witnessing the degradation of epistemological authority from a moral and good God to biology and now from biology to psychological impulses.

The Church is faced with a myriad of challenges related to modern sexual perversions and a faulty view of man. Attempts to add theological language as a coating upon the systems of secular theory and practices led to theology being altered much more than the other way around. As Wells said, “It is not that theological beliefs are denied, but that they have little cash value . . . if we do not recover our theological character and our sense of truth, in the same way, all that we are going to have left is power, politics, and persuasion.”<sup>60</sup> Of course, “hindsight”, as we say, “is twenty-twenty.”

The scheming of the evil one is not primarily focused on the exaltation of man, but the veiling of God’s glory. Man becomes a pawn in the scheme of the evil one where man is promised glory and exaltation. While being deceived into thinking he is his own creator, man becomes used and abused to join the work of the father of lies to steal the glory due to the one Creator of heaven and earth. In the end of that story, man is left “desolate and naked” (Revelation 17). Research is beginning to demonstrate that stigma and discrimination do not account for the increased

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<sup>59</sup> Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1962). Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist’s View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin).

<sup>60</sup> Wells, *The Bleeding of the Evangelical Church*, 11-12.

risk of poor mental health.<sup>61</sup> It is even suggested that sex reassignment surgery, or “Gender Affirming Surgery” as it is now called, leads to less stable mental health outcomes.<sup>62</sup>

## MORE THAN TOLERANCE

It is critical to consider the ways in which the church lost its saltiness by being trampled under the foot of systems of psychoanalytic and humanistic psychology. Following the supposed progress, it is clear that the culture is not content on simply gaining the tolerance of religious conservatives, but desire their approval for sexual perversion. My aim in this section is to argue that the Christian counseling room is a means to the pulpit in the cultural wars regarding sexual perversion and gender identity.

Conservative Christian views are not tolerated in the new morality of expressive individualism. As we have been discussing, Romans 1 warns man against suppressing God’s truth. The outcome is a steep downgrade in futility of mind and unnatural practices. But careful attention to the passage warns not only those who participate in sexual immorality, but likewise anyone who may “give approval to those who practice them” (Romans 1:32).

As is the custom of the evil one, he schemes to invert the Scripture. So, if man will be judged not only by practicing sexual immorality, but also by giving approval—then is it any wonder that sexual activists are not content with tolerance of their behavior?

The sentiment against biblical truth, however, did not just begin in psychiatry’s history. Hannah Decker explained:

Psychiatry began as a medical specialty as it ousted religious beliefs in

<sup>61</sup> *The New Atlantis: A Journal of Technology and Society*, “Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the Biological, Psychological, and Social Sciences” (No. 50 Fall 2016). Retrieved on February 21, 2022 [https://www.thenewatlantis.com/wp-content/uploads/legacy-pdfs/20160819\\_TNA50SexualityandGender.pdf](https://www.thenewatlantis.com/wp-content/uploads/legacy-pdfs/20160819_TNA50SexualityandGender.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> Abigail Shrier, *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters* (Washington D.C.: Regenerey Publishing, 2020) 194-204. Nancy R. Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions About Life and Sexuality* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018) 209-224.

sin as the origin of mental pathology. In its early years, the new field placed stress on ‘moral’ treatment, basically a psychological approach that viewed the environment and the emotions as crucial to the formation of psychopathology.<sup>63</sup>

Seeking tolerance, the gay pride movement utilized slogans like “born this way” in order to gain acceptance. The conscience desires approval from others in order to remove any guilt and shame. This explains why there are attempts to have bakers and photographers provide their services, against their will, in support of non-traditional marriages. It is not simply the toleration of the acts of sodomy, but the giving of approval that is the highest aim.

The need for approval is why activists remain diligent to target counseling, especially Christian versions of counseling. The ultimate goal is not simply to gain control over the counseling room, but to establish precedent that will muzzle the pulpit. The biblical counseling room is a front-line ministry for application of God’s word to the moral problems of our day.

When activists view sexual perversion as a healthy pursuit, anything that may hinder their view of health will come under attack. If counseling philosophies, like biblical counseling, uphold a Judeo-Christian worldview regarding sin and sex, grounded in Scripture, then the counseling room is a battleground. As in Canada, if the counseling room is bridled from speaking the truth of God’s word, the goal is to muzzle the pulpit, “because the word of the Lord is to them an object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it” (Jeremiah 6:10). The prophet Jeremiah enlightens us as to the result when the Word of God is not heard. He asked, “Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No,” he said, “they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush” (Jeremiah 6:11-15).

The removal of guilt and shame for an abomination against the Lord brings us full circle back to the greatest work of Sigmund Freud—removal of personal guilt in the concept of Augustine’s view of original sin. Ideas have consequences and so we must strategize and stand upon God’s word as we “guard against empty philosophies and vain deceptions,” which are at war with the truth of God.

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<sup>63</sup> Decker, *The Making of DSM-III*, xix.

Consider, also, the aim of the APA to target conservative Christianity with the rhetoric surrounding Conversion or Reparative Therapy. It is a bait and switch to talk of the evils of Conversion Therapy and then use the phrase Sexual Orientation Change Efforts (SOCE) as a synonym to equate conservative Christian views as if we promote the evils of Conversion Therapy. It is clear that they believe conservative Christians are a threat to their construct of *mental health* and, therefore, we should be regulated in what we say regarding sexuality. Below is an example of that type of rhetoric put out by the APA in 2022:

The term *sexual orientation* change efforts in the United States describes methods based on psychotherapeutic techniques and theories (e.g., behavioral therapy, psychoanalysis, medical approaches) and religious and spiritual approaches (e.g. prayer and Bible study) that aim to change a person's same-sex sexual orientation to other-sex orientation (e.g., gay to straight), regardless of whether mental health professionals or lay individuals (including religious professionals, religious leaders, social groups, and other lay networks, such as self-help groups) are involved.<sup>64</sup>

The rhetoric continues:

For most who have undergone SOCE or GICE [Gender Identity Change Efforts], there is probably no stronger motivating force than affiliation with an organized religion whose dogma forbids same-sex behavior or any noncisgender identity or presentation.<sup>65</sup>

SOCE [Sexual Orientation Change Efforts] and GICE [Gender Identity Change Efforts] are the systems of a patriarchal constellation of medical, social, cultural, religious, and historical factors. That same-sex attraction and transgender identity call for interventions intended to change or control them is a vestige of heterocentric and cisgender privilege and power.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Haldeman, *The Case Against Conversion “Therapy.”* 20.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 15.

This demonstrates the philosophy of critical theory at base, which destroys reality or suggestion of external authority outside of modern views of progressive individualism. What contemporary pundits seem blinded to is the fact that expressive individualism becomes an “authority” of sorts that naturally leads to societal anarchy and chaos. Bible-believing Christians, and the truth we hold dear, become the collateral damage.

The spirit of the age is the destruction of legitimate authority. Critical Race Theory, Duluth, feminism, egalitarianism, etc. all have a similar underlying thread to remove authority because according to the theories, authority carries with it inherent evils. The vacuum of authority that remains is then filled with one philosophy, “every man does what is right in his own eyes.”

Ironically, this is not an anti-authority structure as many may believe. Rather, it becomes a chaotic war of competing individualistic versions of authority. The modern “cancel culture” demonstrates the reality of mob rule. The menagerie of morals built by what Trueman calls “expressive individualism” is not simply an alternate moral code but a competing authority against the absolutes given by our Creator.

That tension is being codified in statements on ethics that guide counseling relationships regulated by the state. Representing the APA, Haldeman said:

Ethics codes also underscore efforts to be nondiscriminatory toward others and to respect diversity, most especially diversity based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and identity, and religion. Thus, it is important for us to treat everyone in a similar manner and not to deny or discriminate against those from LGBTQI+ communities. Respect for religion and religious diversity is important also, but we cannot discriminate or violate the rights of sexually diverse clients based on our or their religious beliefs, practices, or identifications.<sup>67</sup>

The morality here is nondiscriminatory, but this seems an impossible position when different systems of belief hold tightly their convictions regarding what is most helpful or healthy for humanity. If nondiscrimination is one’s highest value,

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<sup>67</sup> Haldeman, *The Case Against Conversion “Therapy,”* 119.

then they believe that self-pursuit and self-sovereignty is the means of health for humanity.

In that case sexual perversion becomes the means of health and a moral good, rather than the rotten fruit of a downgraded culture that God considers evil. It is through this therapeutic pursuit that we see the Christian faith as a hindrance to the therapeutic progress and the APA has conveyed as much in their book, *The Case Against Conversion “Therapy.”*

The Scripture explains the rotten fruit of sexual perversion in a very different manner than our cultural analysis and celebration of sexual expression and diversity. Our culture heralds sexual expression as a right to personal autonomy and declaration of freedom from any moral law. The Bible proclaims that sinful sensuality and sexual immorality are due to a rejection of God’s truth, the futility of the mind, and the foolish wisdom in unnatural practices (Ephesians 4:19, Romans 1:18-32).

The intensity of the sexual activist agenda is not simply to gain popularity and broad acceptance. Rather, it is to decimate any who would question the validity of or immorality behind such sexual perversion. There should be no doubt that conservative Christianity is in the cross hairs. Activists will not rest while there remains a viewpoint that Christ is supreme and demands our sexuality be reserved between one man and one woman in covenant relationship that expresses the beauty of His gospel—a relationship between Jesus and His bride. We must remember that anything we allow in the relationship between genders regarding fluidity—sexual expression—or roles must also be theologically reflected in the relationship of Jesus to His bride. The theological implications in gender diversity can never display the truths presented in Scripture regarding Jesus and His church, and must therefore be rejected (Ephesians 5:22-32).

## CONCLUSION

Once you reject God’s natural order of sexuality there is a downward spiral of chaos which deteriorates social order. We have seen in the history of psychiatry that there have been intentional efforts to build ideologies which are opposed to

the Christian faith. As God's moral authority is rejected, the individualized self becomes the sovereign.

Finally, we are in a war over ideas of what is most healthy for individuals and the counseling room is one of the primary battlefronts. This is a war worth engaging. As George Swinnock eloquently stated, "Our words can provoke outward reformation, but only God's word can produce inward renovation . . . Human counsel can do something to hide the corruption of nature, but only divine instruction is effectual for the healing of corrupted nature."<sup>68</sup>

For Christians, we believe that submission to God, living under His providential care in union with Christ, is the healthiest disposition for humanity. But the secular worldview believes that personal well-being, which is measured by perception of personal feelings, desires, and passions, is the measure of health. And this is the collision course that religious conservatives are on with the culture.

The world wants to squelch any speech they deem may be "harmful" to individuals wrestling with their gender identity.<sup>69</sup> Activists have been moving toward ordinances that eliminate any type of counseling, including biblical counseling, which aims to speak truth regarding God's design of male and female or sexual expression. An ordinance presented in West Lafayette, Indiana was an attempt to cease biblical counsel in cases regarding sexual orientation. But the counseling room is merely a gateway to the pulpit. If ordinances may be passed to regulate speech in a private counseling room, activists will move forward with attempts to limit the speech of conservative pulpits, as demonstrated in the Canadian Bill C-4.

One observation of this story is the Christian embrace of worldly ideologies. Freud was well accepted among Christians, even those considered conservative Christians.<sup>70</sup> We must be careful in our appraisal of secular methodologies and the worldviews which support them. We must remain as watchmen for the ministry

<sup>68</sup> Swinnock, *Blessed and Boundless God*, 105.

<sup>69</sup> Here I am not advocating for rude, harsh, or harmful counsel. I am suggesting how society will understand truth from God as harmful. I am advocating for the Christian responsibility to be gentle and speak the truth of God in love, even when the secular may deem it harmful to one's health. Consider Haldeman, *The Case Against Conversion Therapy*, ch.5.

<sup>70</sup> Samuel Stephens, *The Psychological Anthropology of Wayne Edward Oates* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2020).

of the Word of God as we proclaim it and guard it against empty philosophies which attempt to compromise it. Why is that such an important task? First, the glory of God remains veiled when the Word is compromised. Second, man can never understand himself without first knowing God. Third, sin remains hidden without the Word. Fourth, the Word of God keeps us from being deceived by cultural norms and guards us from giving approval of perversions against God.

We find ourselves abandoning the Word, not in confessional commitment as much as in the hearing and doing of it. The waning of confessional commitment is much later in the process of deconstruction. Describing the later part of the twentieth century, Wells says, “. . . the Church was quietly unhitching itself from the truth of Scripture in *practice*.”<sup>71</sup> This is an issue of both the authority and sufficiency of Scripture. Wells goes on to warn:

Biblical inspiration was affirmed but its consequences were not worked out for preaching, our techniques for growing the Church, our techniques for healing our fractured selves. These all happened largely without the use of Scripture. It is as if we think that the Bible is inspired, it is nevertheless inadequate to the tasks of sustaining and nourishing the twentieth-century church! It is almost as if God, when he inspired the word could not see what was coming in the late twentieth century! The result of this divine myopia is that he has left us with something that is inadequate to the great challenges that we face today.

If we do not recover the sufficiency of the word of God in our time, if we do not relearn what it means to be sustained by it, nourished by it, disciplined by it, and unless our preachers find the courage to preach its truth, to allow their sermons to be defined by its truth, we will lose our right to call ourselves Protestants, we will lose our capacity to be the people of God, and we will set ourselves on a path that leads right into the old discredited liberal Protestantism. We have to recover a vivid other worldliness by making ourselves once again captives to the truth of God regardless of the cultural consequences.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Wells, *The Bleeding of the Evangelical Church*, 13.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*