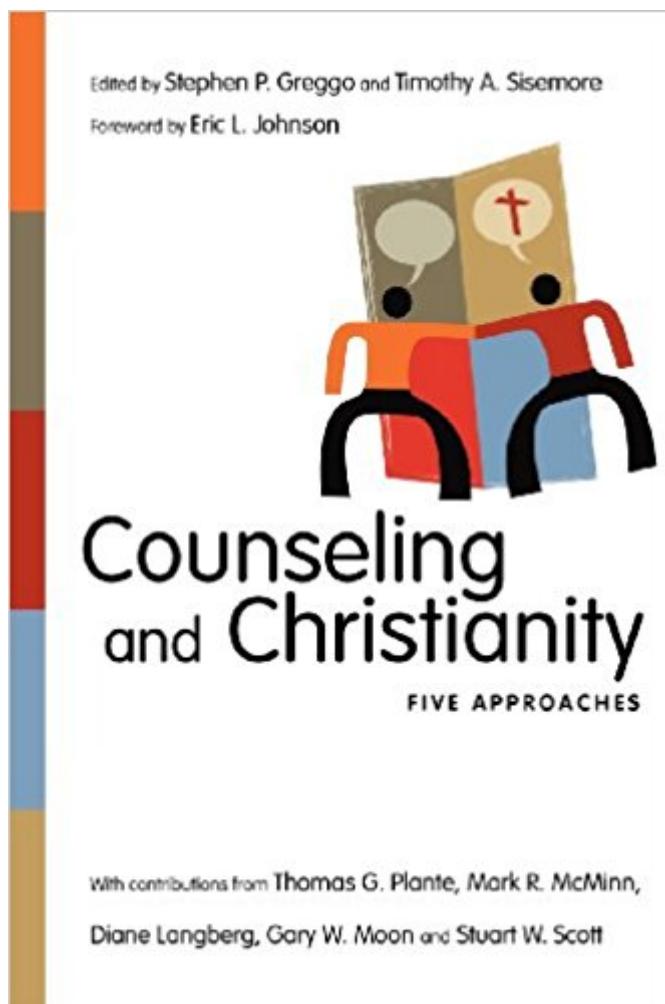


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# Counseling And Christianity: Five Approaches



## Synopsis

What does authentic Christian counseling look like in practice? This volume explores how five major perspectives on the interface of Christianity and psychology would each actually be applied in a clinical setting. Respected experts associated with each of the perspectives depict how to assess, conceptualize, counsel and offer aftercare to Jake, a hypothetical client with a variety of complex issues. In each case the contributors seek to explain how theory can translate into real-life counseling scenarios. This book builds on the framework of Eric L. Johnson's *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*. These include the Levels-of-Explanation Approach, the Integration Approach, the Christian Psychology Approach, the Transformational Approach and the Biblical Counseling Approach. While Counseling and Christianity can be used independently of Johnson's volume, the two can also function as useful companions. Christians who counsel, both those in practice and those still in training, will be served by this volume as it strengthens the connections between theory and practice in relating our faith to the mental health disciplines. They will finally get an answer to their persistent but unanswered question: "What would that counseling view look like behind closed doors?"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Stephen P. Gregg (Psy.D., State University of New York, Albany) is professor of counseling, training clergy and mental health counselors at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He is author of *Trekking Toward Wholeness*, is a licensed psychologist and maintains a

long-standing association as partner and consultant with Christian Counseling Associates in Delmar, New York. Timothy A. Sisemore (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary) is Director of Research and Professor of Psychology and Counseling at Richmont Graduate University in Chattanooga, TN, and maintains a clinical practice at Richmont's CBI Counseling Center. He is author of several books, the most recent being *The Clinician's Guide to Exposure Therapies for Anxiety Spectrum Disorders* (New Harbinger). Eric L. Johnson (PhD, Michigan State University) trained as an academic psychologist and is Lawrence and Charlotte Hoover Professor of Pastoral Care at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of *Foundations for Soul Care* and the coeditor of *God Under Fire and Christianity and Psychology: Four Views*. An associate editor of the *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, he is the director of the Society for Christian Psychology and the Institute for Christian Psychology.

The Five Approaches are Levels of Explanation, Integration, Christian Counseling, Transformational, and Biblical Counseling. Each one provided a practitioner. Now, depending upon the writing skills of the contributors, books like this tend to be uneven. Personally, I found the overall writing quality to be quite strong across the board. The book gives a solid overview of the different perspectives/approaches to counseling by those men and women who are practicing Christians. I think this book is a good place to start for those Christians desiring to enter the counseling field, and desiring wise guidance into what approach or approaches to embrace and/or reject. If there is one weakness with the book, then it has to do with the Transformational approach as presented by Dr. Gary Moon. This perspective has been given unique theological grounding and practice by the scholars and practitioners at Biola University and their graduate division, Talbot School of Theology. I spent one year at Talbot taking some courses and found their approach focused and methodical on the maturation of souls. Dr. Moon's presentation seemed all over the place while lacking the necessary doctrinal foundation that I witnessed at Talbot. With all due respect to the editors, I believe that they could have made a better choice.

This book is based on the work "Psychology & Christianity: Five Views" edited by Eric L. Johnson. I won't go into a ton of detail, but this book explores how the five views of psychology are practically used in "everyday counseling." This book's contributors are trained counselors and offer sage advice for counseling students and those already in the counseling field. The perspectives are quite helpful in understanding my own view of psychology and counseling and understanding other people's understandings. If this book seems academic it is because it sequels "Psychology &

Christianity: Five Views" and because of its intended audience.

I bought this book for a college course dealing with the integration of Christianity in counseling. I found it to be very informative.

Don't get me wrong; it's not that this book does not offer instruction, it offers a multitude of conflicting instruction, and then advises the reader to choose the best approach. Therefore, the authors do not suggest a specific methodology (though I believe biblical counseling is the proper method). A little too subjective for my taste, but at the same time, it makes for great discussion!

This was a really good book outlining 5 different approaches to Christian counseling. Having read the 4 competing views, it was obvious from the book that Biblical Counseling was the best solution by far. One of the others really shouldn't have even called itself Christian, given that it ignored the Bible's answers to life's problems. It was blatantly anti-Christian. The other 3 tried to blend the Bible with secular psychology, but again showed a lack of trust in the Bible's answers. Only the Biblical Counseling approach faithfully used the Word of God and the Gospel to deal with a difficult situation.

Absolute go to book. Great direction into everyday problems.

Very informative on counseling in different perspective.

very useful to stimulate thinking about Christians working in varying contexts, and how to maintain their distinctly Christian worldview. Comparison of models by doing a case conceptualisation was very valuable exercise to explore strengths and weaknesses of approaches.

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