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WHAT SORT OF PERSONALITY SHOULD THE PASTOR-COUNSELOR HAVE?

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Department of Practical Theology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity

by

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Young men going into the service of the church only have a vague idea about the role of pastor as counselor. They realize that there is a certain amount of counseling they will be required to do as pastors and yet their seminary education provides them with few structured courses in this area of ministry. The student may suddenly realize that he is not prepared to function as counselor for personal problems and interpersonal relationships. In an effort to help the student prepare for counseling relationships this study will examine and present the most basic resource a pastor-counselor should have; the sort of personality the counselor should develop and the way this personality may appropriate the tools of counseling.

Concepts of Counseling

Listening and Speaking

Counseling is the function of the minister which involves a one-to-one relationship with various members in
his fellowship or with those to whom he is to bring the
Word of God in an institutional setting. Narramore places
the burden of counseling at the door of the Christian pastor,
"Actually no one would be better qualified to counsel than
the true man of God." The pastor has God's Word and prayer
as powerful resources in solving the problems of people.
The true man of God strives for the type of personality
which attracts people in need. "But the harvest of the
Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

fidelity, gentleness, and self-control." Gal. 5:22 (NEB)

These qualities are gifts from God and help make the pastor approachable. Such an attitude and life style is also the basis for the ultimate goal of pastoral counseling.

The goal of pastoral counseling is to present every counselee mature in Christ Jesus - that he may live not unto himself but unto Christ. When one reaches even the initial stages of Christ-centered living, his personality is well on its way toward becoming complete and made whole.²

This growth toward completeness and wholeness takes place in a mutual relationship between the Word of God and the diagnosis of personal interaction. To make this necessary diagnosis the pastor will need to observe trends in culture and in society as they effect his people. He does this by listening and being a prophet. He hears the problems of living and applies the Word of God to them. 3 Counseling is coming to be the chief function of pastoral theology and pastoral psychology. The speed at which our culture is changing, the development and unfolding of scientific technology, and the resulting dehumanization of the individual are producing a heightened sense of alienation among people in general and specifically among those who lack need satisfying relationships. Therefore, pastoral counseling is in a state of transition from former methods and techniques to those of guiding and sustaining people in need. The stress of the counseling is on reconciling ruptured relationships: man to man and man to God. 4

The counseling process is carried out through dialogical listening: Karl Menninger once wrote about psychiatrists;

who also function through listening: "listening is the most important tool possessed by the psychiatrist." The pastor is not a psychiatrist but listening is also his tool. Listening requires him to suppress his urge to interpret, reassure, or ask too many informational questions. He has to listen in depth with his third ear. The third ear hears feelings and is sensitive to the emotions that are behind the words and the subtle messages that are communicated in mood, posture and facial expression.

The importance of listening cannot be minimized because counseling implies a tension in which two sets of ideas are meeting and expressing themselves. If one of the participants tries to control the conversation the tension is lessened and the benefit is likely to be minimized or lost. Hulme contends that successful counseling should be "being rather than doing!" Each participant must keep in mind Howe's thesis that dialogue is the serious address and response between two or more persons, in which the being and truth of each is confronted by the being and truth of the other. Such a relationship is not easy and comfortable to achieve but it is the functional goal of pastoral counseling.

Reuel L. Howe's book, <u>The Miracle of Dialogue</u>, helps crystalize the sense of importance which dialogue and listening can have in the counseling relationship. The pastor meeting with a hostile parishioner will do well to remember Howe's statements:

Only through dialogue are we saved from enmity toward one another. . . . Dialogue can restore a dead relation-

ship. . . This is the miracle of dialogue that it can bring relationship into being, and it can bring into being once again a relationship that has died.

As the pastor approaches counselees and attempts to diagnose their needs he must remember that he has emotional associations with the problems they are bringing to him. When these are activated they can block the meaning the counselee is trying to convey. ¹⁰ It is the pastor's responsibility to overcome these barriers by taking concern off of himself. He should concentrate not on his own problems, but listen attentively and responsively to the feelings and thoughts of his counselee. ¹¹

The pastor can counsel only if the prospective counselee has a clear sense of need for participating in the counseling process. 12 This is the foremost axiom of counseling because, as Howe states: "Dialogue must be mutual." 13 Seward Hiltner's approach to the counselee also begins with the idea that a true counseling situation exists only when a parishioner recognizes that something is wrong. He has to sense that the problem is in some degree within himself, and is convinced that the counselor may be able to help him with it. 14

The counselor ought to develop an "eductive" approach to the counselee. In this way he answers the counselee's need for having the problem identified and clarified by leading out, or drawing out resources, strengths and weaknesses as they come to the surface in the counseling process. Being eductive also implies listening and understanding

what the person is prepared to communicate. Above all, the counselor must remember that being eductive means that the counselee is not a machine. Their relationship is an interpersonal one established to help with a person's problems. Therefore, Hiltner reminds counselors of the importance of listening to the other person: "Listening in depth is to hear the counselee's feelings rather than his external cover." Focusing on the externals of a conversation is the opposite of concentrating on the basic thing which the pastor is trying to discover by being eductive; the counselee's feelings and attitudes.

The counseling pastor has several limitations and several advantages. The pastor is usually limited in the time he can spend counseling each week. He may also be doubtful of his ability to heal because he feels his training has not been specific in this area of ministry. The role of the pastor is also a limitation because he represents a set of ethical values. This tends to keep some people away from counseling with him because they are guilt ridden and fear censure. In long-term counseling the pastor may be the object of transferrance. He may not understand or be able to deal with this problem in which the counselee may see him in the image of father or mother. The lack of payment for counseling services tends to rob the counselor of a standard by which to test the motivation of the counselee. However, the advantages of the pastor's role are also numerous. Parishioners tend to trust their pastor's discretion and ability as a problem solver. The pastor, working within established relationships, often detects problems

Before they are serious. He can also use these relationships as reinforcement for the one with the problem. The pastor is often contacted by family members when a crisis is impending so that he is often standing by in moments of shock and loss. The advantages of the pastor as counselor are enhanced by his availability. More than any other worker in the area of personal relationships the pastor is readily available in times of need and distress. Finally, his role as the representative of a steady and sound value system suggests that he can be trusted not to exploit or threaten the counselee. ¹⁶

In order for the pastoral counselor to achieve an understanding of the dilemma and problems of the person seeking help there are several counseling techniques he may employ. The pastor's role is to listen, respond and help supply the meaning of life that may be missing. He can do this by avoiding informational questions. These questions are necessary at first and should be used to supply essential information and background to the person's problem. In the course of counseling informational questions tend to focus on externals rather than on feelings. However, information gained throughout the counseling process can be supplied later by the counselor to clarify the problem and help the person to achieve responsible living. 17

The counselor's goal is to listen to feelings. These

must be the object of his questioning and his responses. He will be able to draw out their feelings by responding, not to the information, but to the feeling content of their conversation. Concentration on a counselee's feelings may be maintained by the counselor as he watches for doors which lead to the feeling level of communication. "Feeling words" help to establish the emotional tone of the counselee and may include both positive and negative feelings. The counselor should be alert for negative feelings because these are frequently repressed and are most in need of being brought out. A word of warning to the pastor is in order; avoid premature interpretations and premature advice. ¹⁸ This tends to defeat the counseling relationship by cutting off the essential communication of feelings and attitudes.

Action is an essential ingredient in counseling. The counselor is attempting to help with burdensome feelings and then to help the counselee do something. The behavior of the counselee should be modified in the course of successful counseling. ¹⁹ Before behavior can be changed the counselor needs to help the counselee overcome the feelings that are blocking this healthy redirection. Behavioral modification begins with the prospective counselee setting aside time in which to counsel. The chances of helping are increased if the first visit is voluntary.

The counselor has a responsibility to fulfill when contact is established. He should provide a suitable location for the counseling. It should be a private and secure

place. He may also need to radiate a warm personality which will help the counselee overcome the sense of guilt that may accompany the initial voluntary contact. This sense of warmth may be accompanied by patience because the counselee tends to be anxious, nervous and fearful. The initial interview must be followed up because this tends to reinforce the counselee's feelings of trust and confidence in the counselor's concern about him as an individual. 20

Throughout the course of counseling the pastor must utilize different facets of his personality freely and flexibly. This is not an act because each block to communication is a block to changed thinking and modified behavior and must be dealt with individually. To someone floundering in catastrophy the pastor must be supportive. To those who are punitive and conscience ridden his more permissive side must become apparent. To those with no inner standards or controls he must be firm and accepting, but not a permissive parent figure. These are different aspects of the counselor as a person directed at various barriers which keep counselees from combining healthy attitudes and feelings with behavior that also speaks of their health.

Flexibility in counseling is important because it helps the counselor evaluate what is being said. He has to acknowledge what the counselee is saying as well as his reasons for interpreting this as he does. Honesty with himself will help keep the counseling relationship open as he disregards interpretations he feels are no longer valid. New feelings

and new background information will shed new light on the inadequacies of previous interpretations. ²² Flexibility in evaluating the progress and direction of the counseling relationship is strengthened by flexibility in counseling technique.

The Pastor's Theology and Counseling

A counseling pastor will want to have a firm grasp on the Word of God and be versed in the relationship between his counseling, his theology and his counselees. He will want to be really present in each interview and center all of his attention and resources on the diagnosis and needs of the counselee. Counseling becomes important to the pastor because he realizes that the person who comes to him is troubled and needs to know the love of God; that God cares and is concerned about the health, happiness and welfare of His children. The separation sin has caused between the world and the church calls the counseling pastor to serve people who desperately reveal this breach.

The ministry of counseling is a ministry of reconciliation. The troubled person may be unable to establish
mutually need-satisfying relationships. He may be blocked
or crippled in his ability to love deeply. He may be unable
to love God and his neighbor fully. Counseling's goal is to
help a person increase in his ability to love God, his
neighbor and himself more fully. The counselor serves as an
instrument for God's love, healing and growth. As a ministry
of reconciliation it helps people overcome the alienation

which is the result of sin. 24 The alcohol dependent person is an example of one who needs reconciliation in every sphere of his life. He needs to be reconciled with himself, his abilities, his defects and his aspirations. He may have, or will experience, ruptured relations with his family, his employer, his friends and society in general. Even his relationship with God has dried up. Christianity has much to say about the problems of the alcohol dependent because it has to do with the healing of man's broken and damaged relationships with the whole of the created order. 25

Communicating the Gospel is communicating the Good

News about reconciliation. The counselee may never hear that

message through the public channels the church has established. If the person is impeded from receiving the Good News

by a marriage problem, a drug dependency problem, or a

neurosis, then communicating the Gospel must proceed through

some kind of private channel and private dealing with the

problem areas. The Gospel has the potential of becoming

effective in the total life of the person as he works out

his problems. 26 This communication is the functional realization of God's grace in the life of an individual.

Counseling for God's grace to be accepted is a complex task because man struggles against the free grace of God.

Many people find their personal identity is more clearly defined by their sins. 27 However, the grace of God shifts the person's attention away from his alienation, away from his sin, and directs him to trusting and believing in Christ.

A man may struggle with grace because he fears the loss of personal identity. His new identity, his healthy identity, is found in renewed relationships with God, other men, and himself. The Christian will want to continue living in reconciliation by using the Means of Grace because he is constantly reminded of his being reconciled to God through Christ. 28

To prepare the way for the Gospel the counselee needs to experience painful consequences from his problem. This is easily seen in cases where the problem is drug dependency because the person may be physically damaged or frightened by the results of taking drugs. This painful experience demonstrates to the person that his behavior is inappropriate. Knippel calls this pain an "internal law experience." The counselor is able to make a Law Proclamation to the person who has just realized this experience. The counselor's task is to relate the inappropriate behavior to the pain. The counselee will immediately need to know that there is help and hope for him. If the problem is a drug problem or a neurosis both medical and relational help is available. The hope of help in both respects demonstrates the Gospel enabling the Law to function. Counselees who believe in help and have hope for the solution of their problems also receive the Gospel message of Christ's love and forgiveness. In this way the message of reconciliation may be taught with great success. 29

The counselor as shepherd performs four functions which

have historical existence in the church: healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling. 30 He uses these as a unity rather than as isolated techniques. Three of these elements have been demonstrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Healing is that function of the pastoral counselor which binds up the wounds (physical and emotional) in the sense of the parable. Sustaining is giving courage and comforting. It is the same as standing with one who suffers even if the situation cannot be changed. The Good Samaritan sustained the man by placing him on his animal and taking him to the inn. Guiding took place in the parable when the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper to care for the man. 31 He helped the man beyond his own ability to help directly. All three are intimately involved in the fourth function. Reconciling is bringing men together with other men, together with themselves and together with the love of God.

Ultimately, the presence of counselors is the will of God and proceeds from His grace and concern for lost human beings. Proverbs 11:14 states: "Where there is no guidance, a people falls; but in an abundance of counselors there is safety." In II Corinthians Paul writes:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in affliction.

The orientation of Jesus ministry bears out shepherding as a function of God's grace: "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." (Mark 2:17)

In speaking about the sick, those who need relational

healing, the pastor recognizes that all healing and growth are from God. In such a role the counselor stands between God and the sick and acts as a catalyst. 32 He is God's tool. Healing from God has a clear focus in what is felt to be central and fundamental in relation to "functional wholeness." Hiltner explains,

The nature of that wholeness cannot . . . be defined in itself but must include reference to the fellowship of the church and the person's connection with it, and to connection with God and Jesus Christ. 33

Hulme expands this concept:

Healing through counseling can only be a reality or conceived of as a real goal by someone who envisions the healing function in terms of faith in God. 34

Therefore, healing is the result of God's grace functioning through a counseling relationship.

There are several things that affect people from which they are in need of healing. The first type of situation is the "defect." This is described as the state of being in which the person suffers from swings of mood. It is usually accompanied by incapability for social relationships and is characterized by feelings of alienation. The second type is "invasion." The person who is suffering in this state is feeling insecure, impaired or threatened. This is usually the result of one person invading another in the realm of securities and beliefs. "Distortion" is the third problem area. Distortion results in moral problems and interpersonal relational breakdown. It can come from false or inferior goals and methods of living. If "invaded" or "distorted" decision, the fourth problem area, is thrown out of perspec-

tive or off balance. ³⁵ The result is disruption of relationship with self, others, and God. Healing aims at becoming whole again. The counselor's goal is to help the person back to functional wholeness; healing of overall functioning including behavior, feelings and renewed faith and trust in God. ³⁶

Hiltner states that in the course of dealing with sinners for their salvation the counselor as well as the counselee will come to a deeper appreciation of, and acquaintance with, saving principles and how they operate in the lives of people in trouble. There are several theological issues at the base of pastoral counseling which recur in each counseling situation. These issues are: sin and salvation; guilt and forgiveness; judgment and grace; spiritual death and rebirth. In recalling Christ's injunction, "You must be born again," one finds the goal of counseling. The ministry of counseling provides the means by which the church helps people experience that truth about themselves, others and God which exposes sin, shows the law and creates faith and hope through the Gospel. 38

Personal Development of the Pastor

for Counseling Relationships

Resources for Counseling

The successful pastoral counselor is not born overnight. This section of the study will attempt to answer questions about the personality and preparation of the pastor for counseling relationships. What sort of personality should the counselor have? What personality problems upset counseling relationships or minimize their effective-ness? Hiltner discusses the importance of the pastor's personality in <u>The Counselor in Counselling</u>. He states,

Relationship, parishioner, pastor - all must be studied. And the greatest of these, from the point of view of what we can do to improve our counseling, is the pastor, for the simple reason that we have access to ourselves. If we change ourselves we automatically change the potentialities in the relationship and, therefore, the possibilities of help for the parishioner. 39

Clinebell also expressed the idea that the key to counseling is in the counselor's personality. He explains,

There is one factor which is more important than either of these (knowledge or skills): his personality and particularly his feelings about himself in relation to deeply troubled persons.⁴⁰

The attitude the counselor should possess toward himself and others is a therapeutic one. This will be reflected in his relationship with troubled persons and their families. It will show in his tone and manner as he participates with counselees. Carl R. Rogers points to three elements of this attitude. "Congruence" refers to the counselor's genuineness as a person. He knows his own feelings and accepts them. Rogers believes that the most important thing a person brings to any helping relationship is himself. "Empathetic understanding" is the ability to "tune in" on the inner world of feelings and meanings of another person. "Unconditional positive regard" is warm, human regard for the individual as a person of unconditional worth. 41 This attitude manifests itself in the acceptance for which the troubled may be hungering. Put in other terms by Truax, the

counselor is: "non-phony; non-defensive; authentic or genuine in relationships with counselees." He is also one who can provide: "a non-threatening, safe, secure or trusting atmosphere through his own acceptance, love, valuing, or non-possessive warmth." He is able to: "Understand, be with, grasp the meaning of, have a high degree of empathetic understanding for the counselee on a moment by moment basis."

The quality of personality mentioned by Rogers and Truax comes through maturation. The empathetic attitude begins with some genuine warmth of personality and grows as the pastor lets himself become known by his people. 43 Hiltner feels the pastor needs to convince his people that he is genuinely interested in them, and to have this be true in fact and in practice. The capacity to lay aside temporarily his own problems and to concentrate on theirs, while retaining his sensitivity to the nuances of their communication, comes with love and time. 44

A lack of experience and maturity results in poor ego control by the pastor. Lacking ego control the pastor may feel obligated to solve problems people bring to him eventhough he hasn't the resources in himself for a therapeutic relationship. He fails in counseling when this attitude is lacking because he is a phony. He need not be a perfect counselor to be a successful helper but he does need a certain kind of attitude toward his personal inadequacies as well as his imperfections. The time it requires for

maturation demands cultivation of the gift God has given the shepherd or he may never develop a successful helping attitude.

The ability to counsel and do it more effectively is cultivated through shepherding activity, through self-criticism in the course of that activity and through intellectual and spiritual reflection on what shepherding contributes to the understanding of his faith. The course of his self-criticism will result in growing if he learns how to handle his insecurities. Hulme wrote, "A pastor's insecurities also come to the surface in counseling. The pastor always faces the prospect of disappointing those who come with problems." His inferiorities can become a burden as they produce sadness, resentment and uneasiness in his mind. Hulme also describes counseling in the context of the entire ministry. He writes, "The pastor must go from talker-leader to listener. This is hard to do and failures to make a successful shift are many." *47

Some of the pastor's inadequacies can be compensated for if he remembers certain things about counseling and parishioners. Parishioners are not quick to run to the pastor with their problems. Usually a problem has driven prople to despiration before they will seek help. They have not avoided the pastor because of mistrusting his ability. Failure to identify problems and procrastination in searching for help is part of the human condition. These things often block the counselor's sensitivity to the counselee's feelings because he feels overwhelmed by their

problems. The result is often an overconcern and preoccupation with personality theories and counseling techniques. He may attempt premature solutions for their problems and thereby shake their confidence and trust in his ability to counsel effectively. In such a situation the counselor may become anxious and project his anxiety to the extent that the counselee will become uneasy and lose faith in the counselor's concern. 49

The pastor confronted by his inadequacies has several positive things to remember. Approachability is an essential and was discussed previously. Humility is a necessary part of being a helping person and demonstrates itself in tolerance. His love for the sinner must not be confused by their massive problems and their behavior. Only through being a human himself can he hear and listen; can he be the type of person people will want to have hear their problems and be their counselor. Only through being a human himself can he hear and listen; can he be the type of person people will want to have hear their problems and be their counselor. If they come to talk then he has to listen; to show interest; to have insight and be able to reflect and summarize their feelings.

There are several essential resources for carrying out counseling. Concentration is an essential. It has several opposites: diversion; coercion; moralization and generalization. These oppose concentration because they are directed for the sake of the counselor rather than for the benefit of the counselee. The conselor needs to accept what the counselee may say about himself and his feelings. Any denial of the counselee's communication is harmful to this relation—

ship.52

Timing is another essential. It means knowing when to plant ideas, when to shout, and when to be calm and collected. Counseling is only useful if timed properly. Watchful waiting is part of good timing because many problems have not reached the point where counseling would be effective or desired even though great pain and distress are being experienced. 53

Timing is also an essential for five types of counseling responses. These five are the evaluative, interpretive, supportive, the probing and the responses indicating that the counselor understands the dialogue. In an evaluative response the counselor implies what the counselee might or ought to do. The interpretive response indicates what the counselee might or ought to think. When the counselee need not feel as he does the pastor reminds him of this with a supportive comment. Probing responses are used when the counselor feels a certain line of information should be explored for the sake of discovering feelings and relationships. The final response is that of understanding. This response helps prepare a ground of mutual acceptance and understanding as well as indicating the genuine interest the counselor has in the counselee.

Finally, there is the personality of the pastor as he engages in interpersonal counseling relationships. His strategic position has its assets and liabilities. He has prayer, the Word of God and counseling tools to work with.

However, if there is no warmth of personality, no personal attachment to the help-seeker, he is missing a vital instrument of the helping role he serves. Hiltner describes the ideal personality as "friendliness." It is an approach to the counselee with warmth, genuine interest and real concern. The Christian counselor should combine this warmth with his faith and attempt, through counseling, to have the counselee arrive at a greater realization of the presence of God in his life. He has the means of Grace; the Gospel and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper which speak about and bring about reconciliation if the counselee accepts them. Through these same means the pastor will allow the Lord to renew his mind and prepare him for shepherding the people of God.

Limits and Goals

The growth, development and popularization of modern psychology has Carl Rogers to thank for freeing psychoanalysis from the complexity with which Freud envisioned it. In 1942 Rogers published, Counseling and Psychotherapy. ⁵⁸ Almost every new personality theory since that time has appeared in print for mass consumption. Current popular works include guides and examples of Transactional Analysis. This is the latest technique of getting at the meanings and roots of behavior and attitudes. Even more important than the popularization of personality theories is the stress these works place on relational and rational living. They have placed into the hands of pastors tools for more effective

minisrty; for more effective shepherding.

William Glasser writes on the underlying causes for counseling:

Everyone requiring psychiatric help suffers from one basic inadequacy: the inability to fulfill his essential personality needs. They have an indispensible need to experience authentic love in a dependable relationship. 59

This relationship is available to people through their pastors. The pastor as counselor in his own right, can serve the same one-to-one relationship a professional, non-sectarian counselor or psychiatrist can serve. The counseling done by a pastor is more intense and more extensive than the pastoral care given in most regular services (i.e. shut-in calls). Therefore, counseling may not receive the publicity other forms of pastoral care receive even though it is a fact of pastoral life and work. Pastors fulfill counseling relationships at two levels; the congregational and the institutional. A pastor may receive specific training in counseling under the supervision of psychiatrists and other functioning institutional or clinical counselors.

There are some warnings pastoral counselors should be aware of. Hiltner reminds pastors of their human condition and states,

All too often do our conseling minds resort to rigidities. A principle or procedure which we have found widely applicable becomes a rigid dogma or rite, and we then apply it where it has no relevance. 61

The trap he describes is simple and may dominate counseling.

Pastors may take the seemingly easy way out by ignoring

flexibility and the need for a wide variety of counseling

techniques. He falls into a rut; into a readily acceptible pattern which may or may not be adequate or appropriate to the person and problem before him.

Many psychiatrists voice objection to pastoral counselors because they lack the variety of counseling techniques. They suggest that pastors stay in the role of religious helpers. His sphere is natural for dealing with guilt and God, prayer and worship. Therefore, they would rather see the pastor as their local "spotter." However, religion is not just a few interests in the personality and life of a person. It is the way of life of the Christian The Christian faith speaks about the same anxiety, fears, guilt, and hostility dealt with by psychiatrists.

Fortunately the referral obsession pastors had in the past is virtually ended. The pastor may have more confidence as a professional. His involvement with psychology, psychiatry, and their case working practicioners has dispelled the illusion that just a few professional hold all the answers to healing broken relationships and confused minds. Pastors are learning that only as the counselee is able to talk out his problems will he overcome them. He pastor can and does fill this role, this need of the troubled individual. However, the great danger remains that the pastor will not acknowledge his own problems, and so will not be able to understand the problems of his people. Therefore, he must acknowledge barriers created by his own attitudes and thinking which may hinder his guiding, sustaining, healing and

reconciling. 66 If he cannot accept or recognize counselee feelings they cannot be talked out or concretized and the counselee goes away confused and possibly further damaged.

Clinebell makes a strong case for the pastor as referral agent and cooperative partener with other agencies. He makes direct reference to Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon for the families of alcoholics, Ala-Teen for the children of alcoholics, and others as they apply. If the pastor is to take counseling seriously he has to learn how not to hurt the counselee and how not to set him back. Counseling presents the pastor with this responsibliity: to obtain help for his counselees when he is unable to meet their needs. Implicit honesty with himself and with his counselees comes with his maturation in counseling experience. He should become a referral agent when he cannot help people cope with their needs.

The clergyman will want to remember the major difference between his role and that of the psychiatrist. Pastors see their counselees as they continue to carry out ministerial responsibility toward them. The services and availability of the pastor in the community provide him with a much broader context in which to work. 68

Pastoral counselors also have a stability which the psychiatrist often lacks. This is very important to the Christian counselee. For himself and for others the pastor should have theological stability. Theological stability is conveyed by his personal life, his preaching, and his teach-

ing. This stability supplies the psychological need for explicit expression in regard to the fundamentals of belief. 69 This is not to be understood as narrow-minded dogmatism but as an expression, in no uncertain terms, of God's law and Gospel as they function in our lives and make us responsible agents of His kingdom. This understanding accepts man as a sinner who lives in the condition of sin with the burden of human nature and the propensity for sinning daily. 70

Theological stability will help the pastor to greater rapport with his people. He will be able to understand them in their sin and in their need for God's grace. As he counsels them for healing they will help form in him the characteristic of the Christian counselor. As he matures he will grow in his ability to use counseling so that through it life situations will acquire new possibilities for his people and for himself. 71

The Pastor in Drug Dependency Counseling Understanding the Dependent

Through the years a great amount of work has been done with counseling alcoholics. In a sense this problem serves as the basis for understanding work with other drug dependents. However, alcohol remains the number one dangerous and destructive drug in our country. For these reasons this section of the study will set the pastor in his role as counselor with those who are dependent upon the use of alcohol.

"Can a minister hope to be effective in dealing with

alcoholics?" This is the one question which plagues ministers every time they are approached by an alcoholic or his family. Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy contends that only an alcoholic can help an alcoholic. This has influenced the thinking of many ministers to the detriment of their confidence. In a survey of ministers graduating from Yale, 146 said they had much success in counseling alcoholics once they gained insight into the psychology and functioning of the alcoholic. 73 As one's reputation for helping became known more alcoholics were attracted to him. Dealing constructively with alcoholics is a major opportunity as well as a major problem for the parish minister. To be a helping person to the alcoholic a pastor must free himself from prejudices and hostilities he has learned in the past about this disease. Understanding of the person and learning the facts about alcoholism are two of the pastor's greatest responsibilities and tools for healing alcoholics. 74

The pastor has several ways of proceeding when he comes in contact with an alcoholic. In the initial contact it is essential to find out to what extent he is open to help. This is essential and in consonance with the axiom in counseling that people can be helped only when they recognize their problems and want help with solving them. If the alcoholic wants help the minister proceeds with a one-to-one relationship to work toward removing the problem of uncontrolled drinking of beverage alcohol.

Working with alcoholics can be full of disappointments

but is worthwhile and important. A minister may help the alcoholic by establishing an accepting, understanding and genuine relationship. In this relationship they will share information and appropriate personal feelings about the problem of alcoholism. The pastor will want to use the counselee's feelings in moments of ambivalence and painful experience to identify the source of the problem. In moments of pain the defense system of the alcoholic is not functioning as efficiently and he may be open to identifying his drinking as the source of his trouble. The pastor may want to help the alcoholic avoid the painful consequences of his drinking. However, in order to break down his defense system, his ego, his alcoholism, he must face and experience pain. The counselor must be willing to follow the conversation initiated by the alcoholic as it deals with his feelings and needs. Remembering to be helpful to the counselee where he is, is a Gospel experience which is likely to facilitate more comprehenseve changes in his life style than initially perceived. 77

Alcoholics are characterized by extreme emotional immaturity which manifests itself in egocentricity, egotism, narcissism, and feelings of omnipotence. These work themselves out in his alcoholism through severe hostility towards other people who should form appropriate dependencies. His hostility may be seen in his intense need for self-justification, rationalization and tremendous self-idealization. This glorification of himself is accompanied by failure in

all spheres of his life. He is also characterized by a low threshold to pain and a very low tolerance of emotional pain. In moments of pain he has an enormous sense of guilt and remorse, both neurotic and real. Kellermann states, "Alcohol is a quick-acting and specific drug for escaping from these painful situations." Therefore, the pastor may find himself counseling the alcoholic on two levels. "Casualty caring" occurs when the alcoholic is in a crisis. He may be in a mental hospital, in jail, or lost and confused in the community. "Long term caring" will result when the alcoholic knows he needs help and resolves to find it. In both the emphasis is on healing and restoring him to full potential as a person. 79

What goals should the minister adopt for counseling with alcoholics? The first goal validates counseling as a viable way of handling the alcoholic; to move him to accept the fact that his drinking is a problem with which he needs help. The second goal is a physical one; because the alcoholic's body has been abused he must seek medical help. Interrupting the addictive cycle and keeping it interrupted by learning to avoid the first drink is the third goal and one which will lead the alcoholic to abstinance. The alcoholic needs to be helped beyond these three goals to a resynthesis of his life without alcohol. Clinebell suggests that achieving these goals depends on the minister involving at least one other person from the following: an A.A. member; or a physician. 80 It must be remembered and echoed frequently

that the alcoholic disease can be arrested and treated, but not cured.

There are several limitations of the minister's role in dealing with alcoholics. The alcoholic has a strong fear that the minister will censure him. He resents the minister as a professional do-gooder as well as a representative of religion. The alcoholic sees the minister's tendency to moralize and to "preach at" rather than to listen to and counsel with an individual. An alcoholic's strong dependency needs make it easy for him to turn the counseling relationship into an unconstructive dependency relationship. It is, therefore, essential for the minister to keep the responsibility for recovering with the alcoholic. 81

The minister's role is not without advantages. He has a natural entree into the family structure through its members. The alcoholic and his family can trust in the confidentiality of the counseling relationship. Anyone can afford help because the minister charges no fees. The role of the minister is significant because many people naturally bring their problems to a clergyman. In his role the minister has the dynamic of the Christian faith and the fellowship of the church in which to involve both alcoholic and spouse. 82

The minister may be open to helping the alcoholic but may become the alcoholic's victim. The alcoholic has two weapons which he will use once he has taken advantage of the minister's role. The first weapon is an ability to make the other person angry and thereby to arouse disgust or

criticism. The second weapon is his ability to manipulate the relationship so that the minister will fulfill his dependency needs. 83 The advantages of the minister's role are not immune from the alcoholic's destructive tendencies.

It is important for the counselor to understand the kinds of anxieties the alcoholic feels. Anxiety alone is something much more serious than a sense of fear. Anxiety arises from a threat to the essential security of an individual and is therefore an experience of the total personality. The alcoholic demonstrates three types of anxiety patterns. Neurotic anxiety arising from unreal reasons serves to keep unacceptable feelings and drives out of the awareness of his mind. This serves to protect him from a sense of insanity. at sober moments. Historical anxiety arises from the crisis of our time. All of the alcoholic's philosophic props are gone. They have seemingly been destroyed by the speed at which society is moving. Certainties in his life have been destroyed and all he feels is impotence in the face of mass social forces. Existential anxiety is the third form he feels after historical anxiety has destroyed his Weltanschauung: this is the sense of essential loneliness and seclusion. Items such as his temporality, his contingency and his struggle for autonomy come into sharp focus for him. He finds himself setting high standards for his life but all he sees is failure. 84 Each of these anxiety states makes him progressively vulnerable to help as he reaches "bottom"!

There are three phases in initiating the recovery

process made possible by alcoholic anxiety states. The first step demands that a traumatic event occurs in his life. This must be so shocking and painful that it results in (2) a deflation of egoism in depth. If at this point the alcoholic chooses humility instead of restoration of his giant ego and (3) seeks help and finds help, he has had the healing process initiated in him. 85 The minister's role as counselor is to facilitate this process. The key to this process is often in the home of the alcoholic. Clinebell explains, "A key factor in elevating the bottom of the resisting alcoholic consists of working with the spouse to release him emotionally."86 This release creates a crisis in the psychic world of the alcoholic which renders him vulnerable and ready for help. The minister has a tremendous resource for working toward this end in Al-Anon. It was established to help the spouses of alcoholics toward helping the alcoholic and helping themselves toward good mental health.

There are several personality types which refer to the spouse of an alcoholic. These may be present before the spouse becomes an alcoholic or may be developed during the course of their relationship. "The sufferer" or martyr type receives gratification through bleeding emotionally. This spouse may turn other members of the family against the alcoholic and produce a hateful atmosphere in the home. "The punisher" or sadist gives the alcoholic something to fight. He can brag about his bouts with the "mean old woman." "The controller" personality of some wives robs the alcoholic of

the responsibility for finding a cure. She takes over the household to avoid utter confusion and collapse of decision making and financial footing of the family. The last type of problem personality is the "waivering wife." She wants to bring about the crisis that will release her husband but she waivers when he promises to improve on his own. Consequently the alcoholic with the waivering wife continues toward a low and dangerous bottom. 87

The minister is usually last to know if a family in his congregation is going through these difficulties. However, there are several distress signals that he may observe. These are: disturbed children; veiled antagonism between spouses; chronic financial problems; repeated job losses for no apparent or convincing reason; drinking at inappropriate times; guilty avoidance of the pastor or embarrassment when he calls; and a radical change in the behavior of families such as withdrawal from church participation. These signs may give the concerned pastor reason enough to intervene in the lives of his people.

There are numerous other drugs which will concern pastors as their use spreads through all levels of society. Joel Fort, M.D., criticizes the position many people are finding themselves facing:

Nothing more clearly reveals the overwhelming hypocrisy of American society than the massive, completely authenticated abuses of alcohol and the relatively scant public or professional attention given to this problem. At least six million of our citizens are alcoholics or problem drinkers, meaning chronic excessive users of alcohol to an extent damaging to their health, or social and vocational adjustment.

The hypocrisy he refers to is the open and abusive use of alcohol, nicotine and caffeine while drug laws, enforcement officers and politicians hammer at drugs of abuse for which little evidence of lasting harm can be validated. Each of these common household drugs is considered to be dangerous to health and is capable of mind alteration. Alcohol is reputed to be more dangerous in withdrawal than most of the so called hard narcotics. Caffeine is found in cola drinks, cocoa, coffee and tea. Cigarettes are consumed in every socioeconomic group and total 600 billion in yearly production. The widespread prescription of tranquilizers, mood elevators, mood depressors and sedatives is some indication of the abuse these drugs are involved in by housewives, children and others in our society. 90

The American drug scene apart from alcohol, as well as including it in that category, is a complex interweaving of sociological and psychological factors. The society itself is drug-ridden and drug-saturated. From infancy on up man is taught that there is a chemical way of solving every problem. Producers promote alcohol and tobacco products to appeal to the youngest possible audiences. Adults provide role models. Children observe their parents using from three to five drugs daily. Peer group pressure demands conformity and denies the individual the right of freedom of choice. Drugs of all types are characterized by their "overavailability." There is an interrelatedness between certain drugs; smoking cigarettes is similar to smoking marijuana. Sociocultural

reasons for drug use include national identity and religious characteristics. Ethnic specificity comes into play when certain drugs satisfy the needs of certain ethnic groups. Deviant behavior, alienation by society, dehumanization by technology, and many other reasons provide part of the American rationale for drug use, and increased drug use by people tomorrow. 91

Pastoral availability to people in the drug crisis is demanding because the drugs are many, are not fully understood, act differently in different people, and are used for different reasons. The clergyman counseling drug users needs to be aware of the false information created by politicians and drug law enforcement officials. They would make it illegal to be young. They place the blame for all discontent, all questioning and unrest on the young, drugs and education. They do not see their own hypocrisy. The pastor may be misled by this smokescreening which the politician uses to divert attention from more important matters. Editors scapegoat the drug scene and use it to sell their product. They capitalize on the sensationalism, slander and baseless drug information that is produced by pseudo-drug-specialists.92 The pastor needs to remember to deal with each individual who comes to him as a person. Each person with a drug problem has been blocked from need satisfying relationships. He has been blocked from developing as a person because he tends to feel alienated from others. The pastor's role is one of listener and shepherd, not drug policeman.

There is reason enough to want to counsel. Fort states that there are more alcoholics in metropolitan San Francisco alone than narcotic addicts in the entire United States. Cirhosis is the sixth leading killer of Americans and as many as 20% of the inmates of state mental hospitals are there because of chronic psychosis due to alcoholicabrain damage, an irreversible condition. Statistics cannot hope to include the amount of job absenteeism, divorce, child neglect, sexual offences, murder, theft, burglary and embezzlement which are the result of excessive alcohol use. 93 The same may be true of other drugs and their use. Cassens points out the need for renewed human relationships without the benefit of chemicals when he quotes a drug user. He states, "Through drugs we have found bonds of brotherhood with one another. We share love. We are no longer alone. What have you to replace it?"94

Positive Steps in the Congregation

Action can be taken in the congregational setting to bring healing to alcoholics and other drug dependents. Most parish alcoholics remain hidden and necessitate the minister's wanting to discover them so that he can help relieve the chaos hidden in their homes.

The minister's general attitude toward the alcoholic has a direct relationship to the number of alcoholics who will come to him for help. In a study of 148 ministers those who advocated prohibition and total abstinance of alcohol in preaching and public teaching saw from 3.6 to

3.9 alcoholics per year. Advocates of moderation saw 6.5 per year. Those who left the choice up to the individual and left the decision open saw 11.9 alcoholics per year. Ministers who diagnosed alcoholism as an illness saw 9.3 as compared to those who view it as a sin and saw only 2.3 alcoholics per year. Other views included those of ministers who associated alcohol and drinking as the prime cause of alcoholism. They saw 1.9 per year as compared to 6.9 per year for those who associated its causes with sociopsychological and physical factors. 95 These statistics indicate how the alcoholic likes to think of himself and in what general ways the minister who wants to counsel alcoholics will present his case. The teaching of the pastors in the survey became known to the alcoholics in their congregations through remote preparation for counseling. Their interest in people was generally known, their preaching and teaching helped establish the acceptance of their understanding of alcoholism in the congregation.

The pastor who establishes counseling relationships with alcoholics has let the Good News become a creative thrust in his life and ministry. It serves to meet the relational needs of people in three ways. It gives the assurance of God's forgiving love and acceptance in Jesus Christ. It gives the ability to give and receive love. Finally, it gives a place in the Christian community where there is a mutual acceptance, concern and care among people for the creation of satisfying relationships. The "servant-

mind of Christ" can also be seen in the congregation that lives the Good News. 96 Christ involved Himself with all sorts and conditions of people in need. He humbled Himself to death on a cross to restore us and all men to God and to the abundant and eternal life. His Holy Spirit has chosen Christians to share this life with others and to bring wholeness of life here on earth. No other helping profession has a comparably supportive fellowship available year-in and year-out. The congregation can undergird the work of the ministry if it is organized for fellowship and sharing Christ. 97

The minister has several tools at his disposal for organizing the congregation for fellowship and sharing the Word. Through his sermons the pastor can solve the problems of some people and help draw people with other problems to him. His sermons need to show that he grasps their lives and their problems. He knows the things they face and the decisions they have to make. 98 Sermons that focus on the inner life move people to seek counseling because the focus is on personal relations and personal religious life. The person in the pew has a need for God and requires renewal of his spiritual strength and renewal of his picture of the Kingdom of God as it is promised to him. 99

Communicating the Word is not limited to the sermon. The pastor communicates the Word in each of his pastoral functions. Through calling the pastor grows closer to his people. He manifests his interest in them as he goes into

their homes. Calling helps him convey a picture of himself as open, easy to talk to and responsive to their words and feelings. He finds in the course of calling that resistence lessens as he develops interest in their lives. Alertness for the symptoms of trouble is essential in calling. He looks for signs of conflict. 100 Through calling the minister attempts to meet the needs of his people with the Gospel which is not encased in the church building, but is out building up the body of Christ. His closeness to the lives of people and the Gospel will reflect in his life style by making him approachable and a blessing to those who are in distress.

Apart from preaching, calling and counseling there are programs a minister can establish for the purpose of preventing drug abuse. There are a variety of approaches to the prevention program. The minister may develop programs of education within groups already established in the congregation, or he may devise special programs for congregational participation. These programs work first to educate about drugs and then to strengthen people through the renewal of interpersonal relationships. The place to begin is the recognition of drug misuse and abuse as symptoms. Focusing on the causes of this behavior will serve to demonstrate the need people have for accepting and loving relationships. Emphasis in any program should be placed on the individual and his relationships. A significant advance in drug education was the advent of alternative patterns of behavior

for people to follow. "Turning on to life" and living life to the hilt are turning many youthful people away from drug use to developing consciousness of relationships with others and with the world around them. 101

Conclusion

Pastoral counseling may be in greater demand in the future as the population grows and mass society becomes more complex. It is hoped that this study will be of value to anyone interested in helping people whether they are seminarians or pastors desiring an education in the counseling ministry.

FOOTNOTES

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7Hulme, Pastoral Care, p. 48.

⁸Reuel L. Howe, <u>The Miracle of Dialogue</u> (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), p. 4.

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¹⁰Howe, p. 27.

¹¹Howe, p. 36.

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