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PSYCHOLOGY IN RELATIONSHIP TO THEOLOGY

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

by

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Theological concern and responsibility as he defines the demands a theo-
logical system must fulfill.

A Theological system is supposed to satisfy two basic needs: the statement of the truth of the Christian message and the interpretation of this truth for every new generation. Theology moves back and forth between the poles, the eternal truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received.¹

¹Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, 3.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Relevancy of the Study

In entering into any discussion it is the natural thing for us to ask and then set forth the "why" of our endeavors. This is true in any inquiry and is especially true in the realm of theological inquiry. We do not seek merely because seeking has its enjoyment, as it surely does, but we seek so that we might grow or that the Church might be furthered. At the ultimate we seek only that God might be glorified. This is the basis of any Christian-oriented inquiry, and it surely must be the prime tenet which motivates our concern. The question then must be answered: How does our particular question have a bearing on the function of the Church, how is it relevant to the Christian situation? Why must it be an object of theological concern? This we must first of all set out to answer. First we glance briefly at what the object of theological concern and responsibility should be. We turn to Paul Tillich for a precise as well as concise articulation of the theological concern and responsibility as he defines the demands a theological system must fulfill.

A Theological system is supposed to satisfy two basic needs: the statement of the truth of the Christian message and the interpretation of this truth for every new generation. Theology moves back and forth between two poles, the eternal truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received.¹

¹Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, 3.

Though Christianity professes to be "not of this world" in its essence, it nevertheless finds itself in a dynamic activity whose outreach confronts "the world," the cultural situation. This means that as the Christian examines the eternal fact of his redemption, he must always examine the situation in which those eternal truths are to be acted out. It is not merely that he stands redeemed, or that the Church exists with the Truth, but also that it defines this truth in relation to the contemporary age. The eternal Truth must be made relevant to the existing situation. This requires a study of what that existing situation is, an analysis of the content and form of concurrent thought, knowledge and opinion. What is required is an intellectually aware, but yet confessional, "Here We Stand" in relationship to the respective thought currents of the day. It is, finally, one part of the Church defining itself in relationship to and from "the world."

There is, in the first place, a necessity to know that situation, to analyze it not for just what it claims to be but for what it is. Without doubt modern psychology is one part, a very important part, of the modern scene. It is no longer an art limited to Viennese physicians or the plaything of the esoteric few in select academic situations. It has become one of the foremost disciplines on the educational scene. Allport draws an accurate picture when he states:

No one who attempts to depict the spirit of the age in which we live can possibly overlook the importance of psychological science in the culture of today. It is gradually assuming a commanding influence upon the thought forms of Western man.

Whether we approve the trend or not we see the evidence on all sides. The common man now talks in the language of Freud and reads an ever mounting output of books and periodicals in popular psychology. If he can afford to do so he may have his private psychiatrist; if not, he may be a client of some mental hygiene clinic, of some guidance center, or of a social agency where a psychiatric point of view prevails. In the

modern guises of "human relations" or "group dynamics" psychology is penetrating into industry, community organization, and making its appearance even in the field of international relations. Educational practices show its effect, with teachers and administrators conversing in the idiom of Dewey, Thorndike, Rogers, or psychoanalysis. Mass media, and even the arts of biography, fiction, and drama and literary criticism borrow themes and techniques from psychology. Adjacent disciplines--especially anthropology, sociology, and political science--often seek their causal laws in the underlying "basic" science of human nature. Even philosophy, the parent of all disciplines, and theology, the "queen science," are to some extent re-writing their principles to accord with the psychological pattern of the time.²

This view of the twentieth century world which Allport draws for us points up the very evident fact that we are reaching out with the Gospel to an age which is greatly influenced by the comparatively young discipline. It also highlights the fact that the Church is existing in an environment where the presuppositions of psychology will of necessity confront and even enter into its life and work. The conclusions of psychology are being swallowed every day by individuals throughout our nation, individuals who are participants in the Church. The question then must be raised: What is it that is coming into our way of thinking? Dare we allow it to intermingle with the practice of Christianity? Where does the Church stand in relationship to psychology? These are relevant questions, first of all, simply because the Church exists in a psychological era.

But there is also another very important reason why the Church must take cognizance of this discipline and analyze its Truth in relationship to it. Psychology and Theology both deal with the unseen, the intangible,

²Gordon W. Allport, Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 1.

about man. Though their efforts may not necessarily conflict, yet because of a certain superficial similarity there is always the possibility of trespassing on each other's front lawns. That this is not merely an imagined situation is evident when one scans related literature. The tendency to fuse the two is definitely there as Seward Hiltner enunciates:

Because of its very nature, being existential as well as scientific, psychotherapeutic work should beget a theory which has philosophical, and perhaps even theological, implications. To be adequately rooted in the whole fabric of human knowledge, it needs to explore a wider context than has usually been done. As it is we are only now beginning to have work done on psychotherapeutic theory which is also well versed in the thinking of modern philosophy and philosophical aspects of the sciences in general. Such work is just as important, and ultimately as valuable in a practical sense, as is detailed scientific investigation of limited areas.³

The noted psycholanalyst, G. G. Jung, calls attention to the fact that though the two may not tread the same path they do walk on the same ground:

Among all my patients in the second half of life--that is to say, over thirty-five--there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.⁴

And this is not the isolated opinion of a few. The amount of literature available on the relationship between the two sciences of theology and psychology points up the fact that people either expect to find or want to know what there is that the two fields have in common.⁵

³As quoted in Albert C. Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 52.

⁴C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1933), p. 229.

⁵Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1950), p. 2.

Without doubt the similarity is recognized; therefore, it is important for theology to define itself in relationship to psychology. Where does it differ in premise, goal and intent? Can there be any type of marriage between the two? In general, do the respective disciplines have something to say to each other? This is, in brief, the theological concern in embarking upon this endeavor.

Obviously there are also personal reasons involved in setting out to deal with the proposed problem. That this problem holds great personal interest goes without saying. But personal reasons in this particular case lie deeper than mere interest. The author has a particular goal in mind as a result of study in the two respective fields. This goal is to work toward an effective and acceptable integration of the two disciplines. This project is undertaken, then, with a very utilitarian purpose in mind. It is hoped that the research and conclusions will be a beginning of future study. For this reason ultimate answers are not expected. The concern is to build at least a temporary framework about which future inquiry can be structured. For this reason certain cursory examinations and possible oversimplifications and generalizations are deemed justified. The purpose of this paper is not to answer specific questions but rather to probe widely and, to as great a degree as possible, effectively into the field in order to raise certain questions and determine the point of thrust of future research.

Therefore, this dissertation is begun with an awareness of the limitations in trying to cover such an extensive topic in a research paper such as this. The reader is no doubt cognizant of the implications of such a proposed study. Books after books have dealt with the problem;

answers upon answers have been offered in solution to it. Without doubt it would be folly for us even to suppose that we could reach a conclusion of lasting significance. Especially is this true when one observes those who have dealt with the respective disciplines for years forced to ask the question as to the possibility of ever achieving an integration or respectable marriage between psychology and theology.⁶ But this, in our opinion, does not invalidate our efforts. In light of the previously stated concerns we feel that we are justified in following the pattern of research we have proposed.

The Approach to the Problem

The first task that our proposed study lays upon us is to examine current psychological literature and cull out the trends of thought dominant in the discipline's initial presuppositions, methodology and theory. The results of this undertaking will be presented in the second chapter under the title, "An Examination of What Psychology Proposes to Know and to Do." Our next concern will be to analyze "psychology" as presented in chapter two in the light of Lutheran theology. This analysis will be presented in chapter three under the title, "Psychology in Relationship to Theology." Chapter four will contain only concluding remarks and summary evaluation of the findings of the research.

With this introduction we begin our discussion!

⁶Paul E. Johnson, Personality and Religion (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 5.

CHAPTER II

AN EXAMINATION OF WHAT PSYCHOLOGY PROPOSES TO KNOW AND TO DO

Introduction

It is obvious that the first step to the solution of the problem that we have posed is to present for analysis the proposals which psychology has structured for itself. We must define the discipline under study and isolate the elements which are inherent in its activity. Admittedly this is no easy task. As in every discipline, there is no complete agreement as to its function, purpose, and goal. As one of the younger disciplines, psychology exhibits this problem in a very special way. However, there is extant a certain unanimity, and this unanimity, along with important variants, we present for analysis.

Psychology has been and is an oft-used term applied in various ways to the psychic and/or psycho-physical activity of both man and beast. Here we are interested in psychology only as a scientific, secular discipline dedicated to the understanding and subsequent help of man as a psychic as well as a physical being. The questions to be raised in this chapter, then, are: What are the purposes and goals of this specialized discipline? How does it define itself in relationship to other fields of study? What does it propose to do? And how does it presume to meet its goals?

The Subject Matter of Psychology

To answer the questions posed above it is necessary to consider exactly what psychology purports to study. For a general introduction to the "subject matter of psychology" we turn first to Edward L. Thorndike.

The world is made up of physical and mental facts. On the one hand there are solids, liquids and gases, plants, trees and the bodies of animals, the stars and planets and their movements, the winds and clouds, and so through the list of physical things and their movement. On the other hand are the thoughts and feelings of men and of other animals; ideas, opinions, memories, hopes, fears, pleasures, pains, smells, tastes, and so on through the list of states of mind. Physics, chemistry, astronomy, botany, zoology, geology, and the other physical sciences deal with the former group of facts. Psychology, the science of mental facts or of mind, deals with the latter. Human psychology deals with the thoughts and feelings of human beings and seeks to explain the facts of intellect, character, and personal life. How do you remember where you were a year ago? Why do we attend to certain sights and sounds and neglect others? What is the difference between an intelligent pupil and an idiot? What decides how large one shall judge an object to be? What happens when a student reasons out a problem in geometry? Such are the questions which the science of psychology tries to answer.¹

Thorndike's definition of the discipline emphasizes especially its pure or academic side. In so doing it perhaps tends to pass over or at least leave implicit the ultimate goal of such study. Dashiell touches on this point.

The study of humankind as an objective thing does not challenge any of the goods of life: it helps us to secure them. And we can properly invert the problem raised by a recent thinker, "The place of values in a world of facts," and inquire rather as to "The place of facts in a world of values." Natural scientific values are instrumental: by knowing more we can provide and maintain those objects and situations in which we have enjoyment of beauty or perpetuation of friendship or addition of comfort. Modern psychology looks to scientific methods to establish the facts of human behavior, but it recognizes the happiness of men as an ultimate ideal.²

¹Edward L. Thorndike, The Elements of Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 1.

²John F. Dashiell, Fundamentals of General Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 7.

Garrett broadens the perspective a bit and emphasizes the human relations aspect involved in psychological inquiry.

Whenever a person is reacting to or interacting with people and things in the world around him, his behavior falls within the province of psychology whether it be described as "mental" or "physical."³

This in a general way articulates the unified consensus of opinion in psychological circles as to the proper subject matter of the discipline. However, it is evident that further defining is necessary. Thus, the questions must be asked: How does psychology differentiate itself from other sciences? What is peculiar to it and gives it a uniqueness? Gordon W. Allport has given a concise answer to these queries which, though it would perhaps not be unanimously accepted, expresses at least the principles or guidelines in defining the discipline under study.

Not every brand--indeed no single brand--of modern psychology is wholly adequate to the problem of man's individuality and growth. Yet it is to psychology, and to psychology alone, that the assignment falls--the assignment of accounting for the organization and growth of the individual person with all his outreachings, downward, upward, inward, outward. If present-day psychology is not fully equal to the task then we should improve the science until it is.

Other sciences have different concerns. For example, sociology by contrast views the person as a part of his family, his group, his nation; the anthropologist views him as part of a culture. The theologian focuses attention on his spiritual aspects and relates them to a presumed divine scheme. In a similar way political science, economics, and other so-called "behavior sciences" ablate an aspect of personal conduct from the integral nexus of personality, and relate this aspect to some outer frame of reference. They provide us with a picture of the political system or of the economic man in relation to the economic system, but not of the whole man in relation to his own individual system. The biologist, physiologist and biochemist retreat still

³Henry E. Garrett, Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 3.

further, deliberately avoiding the phenomena both of total organization and of consciousness, and thus reduce the person to something less than a complete system for study. To the psychologist alone falls the problem of the complete psychophysical organization. In principle he cannot be satisfied with segments of persons related to outer coordinates. He must consider the system as a whole, and show how part systems are related to one another.⁴

Though it is perhaps a little too obvious that Allport is speaking from a pulpit instead of a laboratory, nevertheless he has stated quite adequately the concern of psychology. And, it might be added, the evangelizing over-tone of his remarks which sometimes seem to infer that psychology is the ultimate panacea is not without parallel among the ranks of psychologists today.

This in a general way expresses the subject matter and distinct concern of psychology. One would find little disagreement on the basic points set forth in the foregoing quotations. However, when one proceeds to define further, variation is the rule and in no way the exception. What we have stated are broad outlines which can be read as the framework of almost any psychological school. However, this does not mean to say that every school in psychology or every psychologist will interpret the discipline in the same way. As Allport points out,

Some definitions of psychology put the stress on experience, some on behavior, others on psychophysical relations, some on conscious mental processes, some on the unconscious, others on human nature, a few on the "totality of man's psychic experience."⁵

⁴Gordon W. Allport, Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 5-6.

⁵Ibid., p. 5.

Simply stated, we are dealing with a discipline which presumes to study and subsequently help man. Such a presumption naturally would breed variety in approach, emphasis and methodology. This is inherent in psychology's choice of such a complex subject matter as man. Because of just such variety one is often discouraged from defining psychology further. However, the science cannot be understood apart from its approaches, emphases and methodologies. Therefore, we must, at least in a cursory way, examine these in order to suitably define just what psychology as a secular science is. And, as we shall point out in the next section, there is a certain basic unanimity which is discernible beneath all this variety.

Initial Philosophy and Methodology

Psychology is a discipline which has impressed upon itself the credo that it is a science. Therefore, one finds, as Allport⁶ points out, that there is a general commitment to the scientific method, though in all frankness it must be stated that there is no unanimous agreement as to the legitimate outer boundaries of this method. As one author has pointed out, in perhaps a slightly hyperbolic way, "Psychology, especially in the United States, has risked everything on being science."⁷ This does not necessarily mean that current psychology presumes to put all psychic and/or psychophysical functions of man into laboratory experiments before it will make any conclusions which it considers valid. Nor can it be

⁶Ibid.

⁷Edna Heidbreder, Seven Psychologies (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933), p. 3.

taken to mean that in all instances only the actuarial has merit, only the empirically observable is worthy of study, only the organismic demands studied attention. On the contrary, there is great divergence of thought here as we will discuss in detail later. What it means most generally is perhaps best stated in the words of Allport as he articulates the conviction of psychology's adherents.

It is the scientific temper . . . that has brought mankind by successive stages from the Stone Age of husbandry to the modern age of electronics and nuclear fission. Why should not the same temper of mind, applied to man's own nature, lead us out of the Stone Age of human relationships in which we are still enmeshed?⁸

The basic underlying assumption is that man is capable by observation, theorizing and subsequent verification and the use of all technological and methodological techniques currently available to understand man "psychologically." It is an assumption which holds that ultimately the character of man can be adequately coped with either by empirical observation or pragmatic verification. But we must be careful to point out here that this does in no respect mean that the psychologist is in the first instance or even as a part of his activity gazing into the future for an ideal world. Ideal worlds are for philosophers. He is only assuming an infinite number of steps upward in the fuller understanding of man. He only believes that he has the tools whereby through careful process he will be able to understand more and more about man and human phenomena. That this will reach some sort of ultimate is really a philosopher's conclusion and not the immediate concern of the psychologist

⁸Allport, op. cit., p. 3.

as a scientist. The possibility of progress in understanding through empirical observation plus pragmatic verification is his one big assumption.

We alluded to the fact before that there is present in current psychological thinking a distinct variation as to the application of the scientific method. Now we must enter into a discussion of this in more detail. Variant opinions in this line can be placed into two divergent schools of thought. Just for purposes of simplification we might refer to the one as the "Universalists" and the other as the "Individualists." Let it be understood that these are by no means technical terms and are used here only as an aid in communication. We will first consider the peculiar presuppositional and methodological variations to be found among the "Universalists." Then we will follow with a presentation of the parallel contrasting viewpoints of the "Individualists."

At its inception as a separate scientific discipline psychology defined for itself the task of analyzing consciousness in the normal, adult human being. It assumed consciousness to be made up of structural elements closely related with processes in the sense organs. Visual sensations of color, for example, were correlated with photochemical changes in the retina of the eye, and tones with events taking place in the inner ear. Complex experiences were supposed to have resulted from the joining together of a number of elementary sensations, images, and feelings. The specific task of psychology, then, was to discover the basic elements of consciousness and to determine how they formed compounds. As a result, psychology was commonly referred to as mental chemistry. There were, of course, many reactions to such an approach and for a variety of

reasons. However, the whole laboratory method inherent in this approach is alive yet today. More important is that this approach and its subsequent developments tended to connect psychological methodology with contemporary methodology in the biological sciences. This created a concept of the scientific method as applied to the study of man which is very prominent today. This method is characterized by its very distinct emphasis on finding laws applicable to human behavior. Allport has characterized the approach thus:

The individual is regarded only as an instance or example of a universal principle; the search is always for broader and more inclusive formulations Scientia non est individuorum.⁹

When approaching the infinitely complex subject matter known as man, the "Universalists" have glanced at the biological sciences, taken over their presuppositions and proceeded in parallel fashion as much as possible.¹⁰ Allport's characterization of the procedure of the scientist exemplifies the guidelines the "Universalists" have attempted to follow in their research.

There is a typical procedure the scientist feels compelled by conviction to follow First, he makes a critical discrimination of his subject matter, isolating from the individual who confronts him a chosen segment of behavior. This procedure is termed abstraction. He then observes the recurrent of this segment and its conditions in many members of a hypothetical class. Finding uniformity in the event and its attendant conditions, he makes a generalization or a law, and then, if he is a thorough investigator, he will submit his law to repeated tests and so establish it securely by empirical verification.¹¹

⁹Gordon W. Allport, Personality: A Psychological Interpretation (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 5.

¹¹Ibid., p. 4.

Though without doubt one would be guilty of a gross oversimplification if he were to tie the "Universalists" to one distinct "school" of psychology, it is fairly evident that adherents to this view predominate in the behaviorist school of thought as becomes evident when one considers the approach of Pavlov, Bekhterev, Watson and the contemporary exemplar, Edwin R. Guthrie.¹²

The "Individualists," on the other hand, rebel against this putting of man into a methodological straight-jacket. Their contention is that an emphasis on finding universal laws in the study of human behavior in effect vitiates any possibility of successful outcome. Their initial presupposition is that man "is a unique creation of the forces of nature."¹³ Therefore, you must deal with him in a special and unique way. If you confine your study to that which is measurable and can ultimately be expressed in universal laws, you are reducing psychology to mere statistical manipulation, of relatively unimportant facts about human behavior. You cannot express man accurately in terms of the universal, for in so doing you deny the very essence of man, his uniqueness--that uniqueness being the characteristic that man is never man but always individual men, women, and children.

The "Individualist" point of view dominates among the so-called "personality theorists," a school of thought which Johnson concludes "is coming to central importance among all others."¹⁴

¹²Ernest R. Hilgard, Theories of Learning (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956), pp. 48ff.

¹³Allport, Personality: A Psychological Interpretation, p. 3.

¹⁴Paul E. Johnson, Personality and Religion (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 5.

The personality theorists are in the first instance a product of clinical observation. As such they follow in the tradition begun by Charcot and Janet and later including such important figures as Freud, Jung, and McDougall. The latter three men have been especially influential in formulating the initial presuppositions and general methodology peculiar to personality theorists.¹⁵ A second path of influence stems from the Gestalt tradition and William Stern. These theorists were tremendously impressed with the unity of behavior and consequently were convinced that the segmental or fragmental study of small elements of behavior could never prove enlightening.¹⁶ A third factor influential in the development of this approach is the beginning and subsequent popularity of the psychometric tradition with its focus upon the measurement and study of individual differences.¹⁷ These factors among others have been responsible for the unique approach found with personality theorists.

Whereas the experimentalist in the "Universalist" tradition might know a lot about motor skills, audition, perception and/or vision, he perhaps knows relatively little about the particular way in which these special functions are related to one another. The personality psychologist, on the other hand, makes it his first concern to reconstruct or integrate rather than to analyze segments of behavior.¹⁸ For this reason it has been concluded that probably the most distinctive feature of personality

¹⁵Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, Theories of Personality (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1957), p. 2.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 7.

theory is its function as an integrative theory.¹⁹ As a result it is only natural that the personality theorist sees in motivation with its underlying impellents the crucial theoretical problem; whereas experimentalists tend to see this rather as just one of many problems and deal with it by means of a small number of concepts closely linked to physiological processes.²⁰

Consequently, we find the personality theorist to be more speculative and less tied to experimental or measuremental operations. "The stiffening brush of positivism has spread much more lightly over the personality psychologist than over the experimental psychologist."²¹ Obviously it is from these ranks that much of psychological theorizing arises, and to this important aspect of the methodology we now give special emphasis.

Psychological Theorizing

Theorizing is not something that is unique to psychology. It is an important part of the methodology of all the sciences. Likewise theory is an important part of the methodology of both the "Universalists" and the "Individualists." In our presentation, however, we will confine ourselves chiefly to the theorizing of the "Individualists" due to the fact that theorizing is more prominent in these circles and also, at times, borders on the metaphysical and therefore merits our special attention under the stated purposes of this dissertation.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 6.

²⁰Ibid., p. 7.

²¹Ibid.

As we approach this facet of our subject, it is important to point out that just because it is "theory" in no way justifies our discarding it as being unworthy of our analysis. For theory in psychology, as in all sciences, points to the direction in which the research activity is going. Admittedly, it has no absolute value but serves only to give an indication, howbeit unsure, as to where the particular science is heading, what direction we can expect it to take, what point of contacts we can expect it to make, what problems are its concern and will be the focus of subsequent study. Therefore it has definite merit that we concern ourselves at least briefly with this phase of psychology.

Within this theorizing there usually are found constructs as to where man is going in relationship to his existence. There is inherent in these constructs an analysis of what man is. This is but natural. The psychologist must make some assumption about man based on preliminary observation which will serve as a guideline for shaping his methodology. We then focus our attention on a few of the pertinent theories which highlight the movements in psychology. These, of course, do not present the whole picture but do bring out points of thrust in their study.

Theorizing which assumes man to be no more than the "prince" of the animal world is very prevalent in psychology. In fact one might generalize a bit and state that few would disagree with this dictum though many would want to add a qualifying phrase or two. The behaviorists are good examples of this type of theorizing. Their chief concern has been learning theory. In seeking to gain the answers to their questions they have used the methodology of the biological sciences. Since man, however, can rarely be brought under every phase of laboratory methodology, they have

used animals as the basis for study and inferred their results to be adequate in the explanation of human behavior.²²

The behaviorists and those who follow their assumptions have always been closely allied with the biological sciences. Therefore, their approach and their subsequent theory that human learning (which is subsequently responsible for behavior) can be summed up in a multitudinous and multivariied series of stimulus and response situations. Retention of the stimulus-response situation is explained in various ways by the respective sub-schools. In other words, man, even in his "higher" functions, is merely an organism--a construct of organismic activity.^{23, 24}

Other theorists would be quick to disagree with this point of view. Though they do not bother to argue over whether man is animal in essence or not, they are quick to point out what they feel is an error in methodology. To assume that the respective species have no special uniqueness leaves room for error. To be really sure of your results, you must study the species about which you want answers rather than merely make inference from similar organisms. For, they are quick to point out, all indications are that there is something definitely unique about man which behaviorist

²²One must be careful to point out that the use of animals for experimentation in psychology is not unique to the behaviorists or theorists of any one class. Gestalt psychology, which is at odds with behaviorism and out of which the individual approach to psychology with its emphasis on the uniqueness of man developed, received great impetus from Wolfgang Köhler's well-known experiments with apes.

²³Hilgard, passim.

²⁴Hall and Lindzey, op. cit., pp. 420ff.

methodology overlooks, and these are such things as insight, unconscious psychic activity, and the structuring of a composite value system.²⁵

One form which this theorizing takes is to sum up man as a striving individual. Adler exhibits this approach and draws out its implications in the following quotation excerpted from one of his writings.

Individual psychology stands firmly on the ground of evolution and in light of evolution regards all human striving as a struggle for perfection. The craving for life, material and spiritual, is irrevocably bound up with this struggle. So far, therefore, as our knowledge goes, every psychical expressive form presents itself as a movement that leads from a minus to a plus situation. Each individual adopts for himself at the beginning of his life, a law of movement, with comparative freedom to utilize for this his innate capacities and defects, as well as the first impressions of his environment. This law of movement is for each individual different in tempo, rhythm, and direction. The individual, perpetually comparing himself with the unattainable ideal of perfection, is always possessed and spurred on by a feeling of inferiority. We may deduce from this that every human law of movement is faulty when regarded sub specie aeternitatis, and seen from an imagined standpoint of absolute correctness.

Each cultural epoch forms this ideal for itself from its wealth of ideas and emotions. Thus in our day it is always to the past alone that we turn to find in the setting-up of this ideal the transient level of man's mental power, and we have the right to admire most profoundly this power that for countless ages has conceived a reliable ideal of human social life. Surely the commands, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Love thy neighbor," can hardly ever disappear from knowledge and feeling as the supreme court of appeal. These and other norms of human social life, which are undoubtedly the products of evolution and are as native to humanity as breathing and the upright gait, can be embodied in the conception of an ideal human community, regarded

²⁵This is not meant to infer that these are necessarily parallel in importance in this type of theorizing, nor is it agreed whether all are a fitting subject for study.

here as the impulse and goal of evolution. They supply Individual Psychology with the plumb-line, the ~~line~~ by which alone the right and wrong of all the other goals and modes of movement opposed to evolution are to be valued. It is at this point that Individual "psychology of values," just as medical science, the promoter of evolution by its researches and discoveries, is a "science of values."

The sense of inferiority, the struggle to overcome, and social feeling--the foundations upon which the researches of Individual Psychology are based--are therefore essential in considering either the individual or the mass In the right estimate of any personality these facts must be taken into account, and the state of the feeling of inferiority, of the struggle to overcome, and of the social feeling must be ascertained.²⁶

Similarly Allport emphasizes striving, the will to attain, the intention, as being the determinant in behavior. Hall and Lindsey sum up this aspect of his theorizing thus:

It is the contention of this theory that what the individual is trying to do (and by and large it is accepted that he can tell us what he is trying to do) is the most important key to how he will behave in the present.²⁷

One notes a distinct similarity here to Adler and also Carl Jung as Hall and Lindsey point out.²⁸ But also there is present a viewpoint diametrically opposed to other theorists (among whom we may class Freud) who look into the individual's past to understand his present situation.

We must also touch on Freud's approach, not because it is a prevalent viewpoint today but because it has been very influential in shaping much of current psychological theorizing. There is a "striving" inherent in Freud's theory also. However, this "striving" is a very impersonal thing.

²⁶Alfred Adler, Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind, translated by John Linton and Richard Vaughan (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1938), pp. 37-38.

²⁷Hall and Lindsey, op. cit., p. 268.

²⁸Loc. cit.

The id is the striving force which works through man, so that in actuality man is not described as striving, but rather the id strives through man. As a result of this particular viewpoint Freud has been variously described as promoting a nihilist philosophy as far as values are concerned²⁹ and as lapsing into archaic platonic dualism³⁰ by Guntrip. At this point we must pause to point out an essential difference between the concept of "striving" as found in Freud over against especially Allport. For Freud it is true that the id is an ever-present, striving factor in personality makeup. However, what determines behavior is not the supposed goal of that striving, as with Allport, but rather the impediments, encouragements and adjustments that the striving has experienced in the past. So it is that Freud in his methodology locks to the past of an individual in order to understand his present situation.

Any theory that deals with the striving principle ultimately has to come to grips with the problem of ego and egoism. Man striving is man seeking for fulfillment. In the first instance this is egoistic, or shall we say a type of egoism. Theorists who deal with this concept would not be willing to describe it as good or bad in any moral sense. It is described as simply a principle inherent in the nature of man. Jung points out the essential goodness of man's egoism as it is involved in healthy behavior.

If I wish to effect a cure of my patients I am forced to acknowledge the deep significance of their egoism. I should be blind, indeed, if I did not recognize in it the true will of God. I must even help the patient to

²⁹Henry Guntrip, Psychotherapy and Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 55.

³⁰Ibid., p. 56.

prevail in his egoism; if he succeeds in this, he estranges himself from other people. He drives them away, and they come to themselves--as they should, for they were seeking to rob him of his "sacred egoism." This must be left to him, for it is his strongest and healthiest power; it is, as I have said, a true will of God, which sometimes drives him into complete isolation. However wretched this state may be, it also stands him in good stead, for in this way alone can he take his own measure and learn what an invaluable treasure is the love of his fellow-beings.³¹

This principle of egoism in man is described as a protective factor, a very necessary element for the life of man. And this viewpoint is not without credence among other psychologists as well.

In discussing psychological theory so far we have come perilously close to becoming metaphysical, or at least metaphysical implications have existed in many of the concepts held by the theorists presented here for consideration. It is important, then, that we do call attention to the fact that there have been those who have openly espoused the belief that psychology, especially psychotherapy, should commit itself to a definite metaphysics in order to have a suitable background in which it can work effectively. Outler cites the case of James Jackson Putnam, who, after becoming a disciple of Freud in 1909, campaigned for a wider philosophical and ethical orientation as a prerequisite to effective psychotherapy. He proposed that therapists face the questions about the nature of the human self and its freedom, the quality of the human good and its realization, the reality and relevance of high religion and the limits of a naturalistic methodology for the full interpretation of human existence. Of course, as Outler points out, this was rejected by Freud

³¹C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, translated by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933), pp. 237-238.

because of the current empirical and naturalistic current of thought.³² Nevertheless, Putnam serves as an example to what direction and extent psychological theorizing can be carried. In passing, one might mention that a perusal of current psychiatric and/or psychoanalytic professional journals will make it clear that metaphysics is not entirely a dead issue at the present time.

The metaphysical speculation, of course, does not represent the heart and core of psychological theorizing. The respective approaches of Allport³³ and Jung³⁴ which concern themselves in a thoroughly pragmatic way with the outcome of any such metaphysical speculation are perhaps a more acceptable view in psychological circles, though one could not safely say that this would gain adherence from all sides.

Conclusion

We have attempted to draw a picture which would, though quite general, be accurate and fair to psychology within the limits set down for this particular study. It must be emphasized that little of what we have said can be termed characteristic of any one psychologist or groups of psychologists. For, in the words of Allport, "Except for a common loyalty to their profession, psychologists often seem to agree on little else."³⁵

³²Albert G. Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), pp. 56ff.

³³Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and his Religion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), passim.

³⁴Jung, passim.

³⁵Allport, Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality, p. 4.

Also, as Woodworth points out, one makes a definite error in judgment if he thinks that he can define the schools of thought and expect psychologists to fit neatly into one or the other.³⁶ The only thing that one can hope to do is to cull out distinct approaches, trends of thought and general conclusions, which are prevalent in the world of psychology, and to analyze these. This we have attempted to do.

³⁶Robert S. Woodworth, Contemporary Schools of Psychology, as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 1.

CHAPTER III

PSYCHOLOGY IN RELATIONSHIP TO THEOLOGY

Introduction

In chapter two we defined psychology variously as the science which "deals with the thoughts and feelings of human beings and seeks to explain the fact of intellect, character, and personal life,"¹ as the science which "looks to scientific methods to establish the facts of human behavior,"² as that science which considers all human reaction or interaction whether mental or physical, to fall within the scope of its study,³ as the science to which "alone falls the problem of the complete psychophysical organization."⁴ We also alluded to the fact that it is impossible to proceed further in defining the science and yet include all its adherents within the scope of the definition. Simply stated, we are dealing with a science that purports to study, understand and subsequently help man. Although this is so general that it actually tells us very little, yet it is enough to call our attention to the fact that any

¹Edward L. Thorndike, The Elements of Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 1.

²John F. Dashiell, Fundamentals of General Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 7.

³Henry E. Garrett, Psychology as quoted in Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, Readings in General Psychology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1954), p. 3.

⁴Gordon W. Allport, Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 6.

synthesis of psychology and theology must begin with the structuring of a mutually agreeable doctrine of man. It is at this point that the two disciplines converge on one another, and it is here where the tension arises and only at this focal unit where that tension can be alleviated. Therefore, we must set out to determine in some degree the respective doctrines of man in order to discern whether necessity or propriety will allow us to consider a synthesis. It is here that we must find out whether perhaps there is possibly an antithesis.

Our analysis will proceed in the following manner. First we will want to set forth the principles which theology holds as integral to a correct understanding and exposition of the doctrine of man. For our study we are limiting "theology" to the Lutheran Confessions. Next we will want to consider the principles inherent in psychology's doctrine of man. Since we have presented a reasonably thorough analysis of psychology's viewpoints in chapter two, we will take care to avoid being redundant by pointing out only those specific assumptions, presuppositions, etc., which seem to contradict or challenge the Lutheran Confessions' doctrine of man. In short, we will be concerned with pointing out exactly where a tension point can arise in a synthesis of the respective concepts of man. Finally, we will discuss the possibility of working cooperation between theology and psychology. This discussion will concern itself with highlighting the terms of the agreement (if there is to be one) and proposals as to the effecting of that agreement.

The Lutheran Confessions and Man

Man merely as man is not a topic of particular concern in the Lutheran Confessions. The dominant concern is always man in relationship to

God. The whole trend of thought in Article XVIII of the Augsburg Confession (and similarly in the Apology) illustrates this emphasis. Likewise, the Formula of Concord, particularly Article I, enunciates the fact that there is no doctrine of man apart from the doctrine of God. It is obvious that any presentation of the doctrine of man must begin with God if it is to articulate accurately the viewpoints of the Lutheran Confessions. Our first question then is: What is man's relationship with God?

The Lutheran Confessions are very thorough on this point. In relationship to God man is entirely bankrupt, without merit--in fact, at odds with his Creator. In the words of the Confessions:

since the fall of Adam, all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God⁵

which means that "men cannot be justified before God by their own strength merits, or works" ⁶ The Apology emphasizes pointedly this aspect of man also.

ignorance of God, contempt for God and, the being destitute of the fear of God and trust in Him, inability to love God. These are the chief faults of human nature, conflicting especially with the first table of the Decalog.⁷

And from the Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration:

the corrupt nature, of and by itself, has no power for anything good in spiritual, divine things, not even for the least, as good thoughts; and not only this, but that of and by itself it can do nothing in the sight of God but sin⁸

⁵"Augsburg Confession," II, Trislot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921. p. 43.

⁶"Augsburg Confession," IV, op. cit., p. 45.

⁷"Apology," II, op. cit., p. 109.

⁸"Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration," I, op. cit., p. 867.

As it is readily seen, the Confessions are very definite on the character of man in relationship with God. Man cannot in any way live up to his responsibilities before his Creator.

However, although the Confessions thoroughly denounce any supposed spiritual aptitude inherent in man, they are careful to guard against a negativistic attitude toward that which is human because it is human, Our "nature and its essence even since the Fall, is a work and creature of God in us"9 Therefore, to say that man as creature is entirely sin would be making God the author of sin, and "God does not create and make sin in us"10 Furthermore, it cannot be said that humanity because it is humanity is corruption since "God's Son assumed our nature without sin"11 Then too, "Scripture teaches that God cleanses, washes, and sanctifies man from sin Sin, therefore cannot be man himself"12 And finally,

in the article of the Resurrection Scripture teaches that precisely the substance of this our flesh, but without sin, will rise again, and that in eternal life we shall have and retain precisely this soul, but without sin.¹³

Rather, the Confessions are very careful to show how one keeps a very careful balance between the Manichean and Pelagian extremes. Man is not sin though man is a sinner. Human nature is not corruption though it is

⁹"Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration," I, op. cit., p. 869.

¹⁰"Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration," I, op. cit., p. 861.

¹¹"Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration," I, op. cit., p. 873.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

corrupted. It is important to keep this in mind in order to establish the proper balance in the understanding of man.

This fact that man is spiritually bankrupt before God has its very definite implications as far as man's relationship to his fellow man is concerned. Since psychology, especially in its practical application in psychotherapy, can hardly be considered apart from the human relations aspect, as Garrett points out,¹⁴ these implications are of prime importance in our immediate concern. Ultimately we have to say that man is bankrupt also in the sphere of human relations. Since "the natural free will according to its perverted disposition and nature is strong and active only with respect to what is displeasing and contrary to God,"¹⁵ it rightly follows that not only correct relationship to God is an impossibility but also the establishment of a fully correct relationship with men in view of the fact that all the powers of man have been weakened and contaminated by his inherited apartness from God.¹⁶

Since man in the light of Christian doctrine is bankrupt before God and ultimately without hope of achieving true perfection in human relations, some have attempted to equate this Christian view point with a Freudian analysis of the human situation. Perhaps the Lutheran Confessions would go along with Fritze's synthesis at least in part.

Psychoanalysis in no way vitiates the doctrine of man as a sinner but elaborates upon it both horizontally (sin as it manifests itself among men) and circularly (sin as it

¹⁴Garrett, loc. cit.

¹⁵"Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration," II, op. cit., p. 383.

¹⁶Thorough Declaration, I.

manifests itself within the individual) Freud, through psychoanalysis, has added to our knowledge of man and behavior, including sin, through the process of reason and statistics.¹⁷

However, we must state a word of caution here. Freud's concept of man as virtually determined to all evil is not commensurate with the Christian doctrine of original sin (as we have it presented in the Confessions) as it manifests itself in human relations. The Confessions are quick to preserve the freedom of the will and the possibility of certain ethical activity on a prescribed plane. A certain "righteousness" of natural man is a possibility on the plane of human relations (iustitia civilis): This is made very clear in the Apology, where Melancthon writes:

Nor, indeed, do we deny liberty to the human will. The human will has liberty in the choice of works and things which reason comprehends by itself. It can to a certain extent render civil righteousness or the righteousness of works; it can speak of God, offer to God a certain service by an outward work, obey magistrates, parents; in the choice of an outward work it can restrain the hands from murder, from adultery, from theft. Since there is left in human nature reason and judgment concerning objects subjected to the senses, choice between these things, and the liberty and power to render civil righteousness, are also left.¹⁸

And Melancthon emphasizes further that "God requires [*italics mine*] this civil righteousness"¹⁹ and that actually "in a measure, we can afford it."²⁰

The Formula of Concord concurs when it states:

¹⁷Herbert P. Fritze, "Psychoanalysis and the Doctrine of Man," The Lutheran Scholar, 10 (October, 1953), 295.

¹⁸"Apology," XVIII, op. cit., p. 335.

¹⁹"Apology," XVIII, op. cit., p. 337.

²⁰Loc. cit.

as regard natural external things which are subject to reason, man still has to a certain degree understanding, power and ability, although very much weakened²¹

Werner Elert affords us a concise summation of the approach of the Lutheran Confessions on this point.

The Lutheran Confessions are in agreement. Melancthon defends himself in the Apology against the insinuation that he intended to "deprive the human will of its freedom." In fact no one could rightfully suspect the admirer of Aristotle and Cicero of such an aberration. It stands to reason, he points out, that our will is capable of the observance of civil justice, public worship, obedience toward parents and authorities, as well as the avoidance of evil deeds. The same views are held by Augustine and Luther. Man has freedom of choice within the bounds of the natural orders. Luther, it is true, limits the area in which man can freely move about to that which is "below us." That leaves us a very large expanse, including all "things rational," everything that pertains to man's dominion over the created world--a dominion which God never canceled. Luther shares with idealistic philosophers the conviction that a close relationship exists between reason and freedom. When Luther and the Lutheran Confessions nevertheless acknowledge the bondage of the will, they are not motivated by naturalistic determinism.²²

The Confessions, then, have set forth these principles as integral to a Christian doctrine of man. In the first instance anthropology begins with theology. There is no complete or proper understanding of man apart from the knowledge of God. Sinful man viewed in relationship to God is without hope in the spiritual or ultimate sense. Man has lost all ability to communicate effectively with his Creator as far as ultimate spiritual values are concerned. Yet man as a created thing is not to be deplored simply because he is man. For even since the Fall he is yet God's creature and rightly an object of admiration and respect. These two thoughts are always kept parallel in Lutheran theology and though seemingly contradictory are left hanging in paradox.

²²Werner Elert, The Christian Ethos, translated by Carl J. Schindler (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), p. 142.

Furthermore, as a result of the depletion in spiritual aptitude insofar as ultimate values are concerned, man of himself cannot hope for any ultimate perfection in the realm of human relations. Yet on this plane man can and should perform that which is good, that which is ethical, that which makes for good society. And, what is more, he has the promise of achieving a measure of success in this sphere. However, the Confessions caution that a distinction must always be made "between human and spiritual righteousness, between philosophical doctrine and the doctrine of the Holy Ghost" ²³ There is and must always be a distinct difference between the righteousness that restores perfect communion with God and the righteousness which is effective in establishing and maintaining good on the plane of human interaction. But once again even on this plane of human relationships perfection is finally an impossibility. For, as there is an ineptitude with man in relationship to God, so there are limitations set for man in relationship to man. Vertically (man in relationship to God as far as ultimate values are concerned), man is entirely deplete. There is no "both and" here! Horizontally (man as man and in relationship to man), the Lutheran Confessions are careful to avoid two extremes: (1) they do not deplore man in a deterministic fashion in the tradition of such thinkers as Freud; (2) nor do they recognize the possibility of experiencing--even as God's gift--a perfectionism in the human sphere as it is known in this life (contrary to Outler's view). ²⁴

²³"Apology," XVIII, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

²⁴Outler, *op. cit.*, pp. 183ff. We have reference to Outler's contention that though it is entirely God's gift, there is a possibility that a certain social perfection can be achieved in this life, and the goad of Christianity is not so necessarily other wordly as Calvin and Luther would have it.

This in a somewhat general way presents the guidelines, principles and concerns which the Lutheran Confessions hold with regard to the Christian doctrine of man. We must now survey those points in psychology's concept of man which would tend to challenge the views of the Lutheran Confessions.

The Lutheran Confessions and Psychology on Man: Points of Tension

When we look at psychology through theology's eyes we immediately espy a world view which evokes a negative reaction on our part. Psychology, and especially psychotherapy, as Outler points out,²⁵ came into being in a thought world where humanism and reductive naturalism were in vogue. As products of their environment they espoused in one way or another in varying degree the thought patterns of these philosophies. Although throughout the years since their inception both psychology and psychotherapy have experienced a variety of changes and reformations, reactions, etc., it is by and large true today that they have consistently retained many of the cardinal points of their tradition. One looks at present-day psychology, as we did briefly in chapter two, and with only casual scrutiny discerns almost immediately that there is inherent in its presuppositions and assumptions a denial of the first cause. The "world" is considered the source, end and goal of all human society. All that is is conceived of as being comprehended in the natural. Therefore God is easily disposed of by the law of parsimony. There is simply no need for Him. This particular world view which is quite generally accepted by the adherents to the discipline of psychology quite naturally clashes with any Christian formulation and is the first point of tension between the two disciplines of psychology and theology.

²⁵Ibid.

As a result of or at least parallel with this particular world view is the almost unanimous commitment on the part of psychology to the empirical method of discerning truth. Now, the Lutheran Confessions as well as Christian tradition generally would agree that there is actually a necessity for individuals to learn empirically. And surely, they would not take exception to the scientist's procedure within the framework of his particular discipline. However, the empirical method becomes a challenging factor when the assumption is made that only that which is empirically arrived at is truth. This assumption, which is not necessarily integral to the empirical method, per se, but which is often espoused along with it, often places psychology in direct opposition to Christian principles. Outler articulates the issues quite clearly when he states,

The thoughtful Christian has no reasonable ground of anxiety about science in its analysis and description of the events and processes in the world. He has no just complaint against the hypothetical, or controlling, knowledge which science yields for the human mastery and use of nature. But there is real substance to the Christian fear that the scientist who thus succeeds in describing or controlling natural process will thereupon overreach the limitations of his scientific method and claim that "what is not science is not knowledge". The Christian faith can assimilate any scientific claim save one: the claim that the omnipotence of science is scientifically verifiable. For this is equivalent to the claim that human knowledge is self-validating--and to the denial of the necessity and relevance of revelation as the ground from human insight into ultimate truth.²⁶

Such an epistemological assumption which alienates the supernatural from existence is speaking in direct opposition to much that Christianity holds as integral to its proclamation. Therefore, we find that at this point there is a direct clash in respective ideologies.

²⁶Ibid., p. 247.

When this particular world view with its parallel epistemological assumption is applied to man it is but natural that we would find a severe cleavage between the respective doctrines of man in the two disciplines. In the first place when all that is is conceived of as being natural, the logical conclusion follows with regard to man that what he does he does as a product of that nature and as a fruit of the natural environs. He does not, then, act as a willing, auto-determining entity. For psychologists this comes to mean that individual responsibility for behavior is an outmoded concept, especially when this behavior is viewed in any moral way. Man is what he is and does what he does as a product of the forces of nature and his environment. It is impossible to judge this as right and wrong in any supernatural sense. It is therefore amoral. Outler calls attention to Freud's assumptions in reference to this question.

And always, for Freud, the processes of nature were amoral and nonpurposive. Nature is the casually [sic] ordered totality of mass and motion. It is an illusion to imagine that anything in nature corresponds to the human need for love and care; it is delusion to suppose that there is anything "beyond" nature.²⁷

Although Freud at many points is perhaps a bit out-dated yet this particular thesis finds credence in varying degree throughout the thought world of psychology.²⁸ The psychological concept of self in reality amounts to a system of biological energies shaped by social forces; it is almost fully subsumed within the causal order. It should be obvious that psychology and

²⁷Ibid., p. 42-3.

²⁸Ibid., p. 42.

the Lutheran Confessions speak in contradiction at this point. If we stand in the Christian tradition, especially as it is presented in our Confessions, we must immediately question: What about freedom of the will and its concomitant, individual responsibility? Where is there room for absolutely determined moral standards? Is not man more than a product of nature with only natural obligations and commitments? Where is there room for a communication with the supernatural? The psychologist might acknowledge a psychological necessity for our concern but would perhaps smile at our philosophical naiveté. Thus another point of tension between theology and psychology.

When we pursue the question further we see that there are other points at which theology and psychology reach diametrically opposed conclusions. If a psychologist is going to operate as an optimist within the metaphysical and subsequent anthropological framework which he has structured, it follows that progress, betterment, the good, must always flow from man and his activity. It is at this point that we see psychologists showing their humanistic stripe. And this stripe is quite prominent as Outler points out²⁹ and as can be seen from the writings of such men as Adler³⁰ and Allport.^{31, 32, 33} Parallel with such a humanistic assumption we see

²⁹Ibid., p. 18.

³⁰Alfred Adler, Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind, translated by John Linton and Richard Vaughan (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1936), passim.

³¹Allport, Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality, passim.

³²Gordon W. Allport, Personality: A Psychological Interpretation (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p. 4.

³³Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), passim.

psychology describe man's egoism as good³⁴ and the self as source for healing.³⁵ Now, it must be pointed out that the Lutheran Confessions are very careful to allow the reasoned bettering of man and man up to a point, as we indicated earlier. Also, society is not determined to all evil, but rather within certain limits is open to ethical progress. Nevertheless, the humanistic emphasis of psychology does not exactly fit like a glove on the hand of Lutheran theology. Any attempt at synthesis would require a clarification on the approach of psychology in the bettering of man with the concomitant approval of human egoism and focus on the self as source for healing. For, within its own frame of reference theology does not voice unqualified approval of what it terms egoism, nor is its kerygmatic emphasis on social or mental adjustment oriented in the self but rather in the "other than self." Be it understood that we are not saying that tensions which obviously could arise at this point cannot be resolved. We are merely pointing out that here clarification in at least terminology must take place. Here integration of the respective disciplines requires a bit of bending on the part of both.

We have attempted to present certain points at which the respective concepts, ideologies, assumptions, etc., concerning man from psychology and theology (with special reference to the Lutheran Confessions) speak in opposition. Admittedly, we have not outlined all the "tension points," nor have we spoken in completeness on the "tension points" presented. We have attempted to outline in general the basic problems that must be met if any type of synthesis between psychology and theology is to be effected.

³⁴C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, translated by W. S. Deall and Cary F. Baynes (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933), pp. 237-8.

³⁵Paul E. Johnson, Personality and Religion (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 205.

Next we will consider approaches to the alleviating of these manifest points of tension.

Approach to a Synthesis

It is not only natural but also necessary that we speak to the problem of synthesis with regard to the two disciplines of psychology and theology. From our previous discussion it is quite evident that though the two may operate to a certain extent in separate spheres, they do converge very decisively at one given point. Both are concerned about man. Both have something to say about man. Both are committed to helping man. As Pruyser points out both are more than basic disciplines. There is pastoral theology and applied psychology which are irrevocably tied to a distinct similarity in concern and activity.³⁶ The fact that there is just this sort of relationship makes it necessary, in the first place, to ask whether any type of synthesis is necessary. Secondly, the fact stands that syntheses are being effected in various quarters of the Church. This makes it necessary to analyze accurately the propriety of such activity. Can the Church, i.e., Christians, honestly allow a synthesis or are the two fields of study mutually exclusive? Does it mean a surrendering of Christian principles to marry Christianity to psychology? These are pertinent questions simply because the Church is in a situation in which it is operating with such syntheses. Finally, psychologists have been making overtures to theology. Many have invited theology to participate in a synthesis. Christians have an obligation to sit down and discern whether they can accept such an invitation. There is no escaping at least the asking of the question: Is there a possibility of a synthesis between the two fields of psychology and theology?

³⁶Paul W. Pruyser, "Toward a Doctrine of Man in Psychiatry and Theology," Pastoral Psychology, Vol. 9, No. 82 (March, 1958), 9-13.

The next question which strikes at the heart of the issue is: Can such a synthesis take place in view of the diametrically opposed ideologies of the respective disciplines? Can the "points of tension" discussed above be resolved without sacrificing either discipline? We do not feel qualified to give an answer to this basic question. Furthermore, it would be beyond the scope of our dissertation to attempt a synthesis or irrevocably prove the necessity of maintaining the two disciplines in unresolved antithesis. We shall, however, describe basic approaches to the problem, pointing up the merits and demerits of each.

A Negative Approach

Within the Church there are always those who would prefer the two to remain distinctly removed from one another. To them the tension which any attempt at synthesis would make renders it inadvisable to attempt cooperation between the two disciplines. There is explicit concern to preserve theology at the expense of denying the values of psychology. The most articulate example of this viewpoint has perhaps grown out of the "Theology of Crisis."

The approach which has grown out of the "Theology of Crisis" considers the Word of God speaking through the Bible as its sole criterion, and places this criterion in direct opposition to all merely human ways of thinking.³⁷ It is utterly repulsed by the assumption that man can and need find nothing better than himself and his own cultural aims to worship. This approach assumes that the only hope for culture and society is found in a recovering of a Christian faith which can resist political and cultural pressures by

³⁷David E. Roberts, Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 149.

refusing to identify human aims (which always reflect sinfulness) with the will of God. As Roberts points out, this approach has tended to shut off instead of facilitate collaboration between theology and science.³⁸ Though it does not deny the validity of science and philosophy it does set up an absolute distinction (almost an absolute opposition) between divine revelation and all human thinking, aspiration, or piety. It, in effect, creates a distinct dualism, two different spheres in which man must operate. The one being the ultimate and alone having any absolute validity. The other being quite relative and by inference, somewhat unimportant. It is denied that there can be any worthwhile communication between the two.

There are divergent attitudes within this approach. The extreme is represented by Karl Barth. For Barth,

There is head-on collision between the Word of God and the whole pattern of life in this world, and the only honest course for the theologian is to promote the full impact of that collision.³⁹

Bruner takes a less strident approach yet beneath a certain desire to mediate between Christian faith and secular culture there is always present a strongly polemical note, a warning against the wisdom of this age.⁴⁰ However, the general import of the whole approach is one that tends to have a distinctly negative attitude toward the possibility of any synthesis. The "Theology of Crisis" which arose in opposition to a situation in which the dominating thought was that man by his powers can effect the ideal society remains today as a theology which tends to shun secular science, or at least refuses to make any commitment to it.

³⁸Ibid., p. 151.

³⁹Loc. cit.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 151-2.

Objections to This Approach

Obviously the foregoing approach leaves many questions unanswered. There are bound to be many objections raised to such a negativistic attitude over against psychology. Pruyser points out how it is not realistic to keep the two disciplines in their respective vacuums. By their very nature and chosen concern they automatically converge. Both psychology and theology are more than basic disciplines. They always erupt in practical applications, practical applications which have their focus on a common subject, man.⁴¹

Outler, too, rebels against the fact that psychology has nothing to teach theology. He points out that it is quite obvious that there is much in psychological theory which is extremely useful to theology, especially in its practical applications. He calls attention to nine fundamental motifs of thought and practice which can be observed in all the schools of psychological therapy which are particularly relevant to the Christian "care of souls" and crucial for a valide Christian view of man.⁴²

Fritze concurs and states quite explicitly that specifically psychiatry and psychoanalysis have not only much to offer theology in its practical dealings, but actually elaborate on and point up with greater clarity the Christian doctrine of man.^{43, 44}

⁴¹Pruyser, op. cit., p. 10.

⁴²Outler, op. cit., pp. 21ff.

⁴³Herbert P. Fritze, "Brief Studies: A Chaplain Looks at Psychiatry," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (May, 1955), 379.

⁴⁴Fritze, "Psychoanalysis and the Doctrine of Man," op. cit., p. 295.

Roberts, too, pointedly questions the validity of any attitude of theology which presents itself opposed to psychology and psychotherapy when he states:

It is not enough to declare that each should be left free in its own sphere, and should be reminded of its limits when it encroaches illegitimately upon other spheres. In the end nothing of human concern can be excluded from the purview of either.⁴⁵

Therefore, because of these rather obvious objections to the admission of psychology in any manner or form into the esoteric realm of theology, many have pushed for an adequate synthesis of the respective disciplines. We must now turn to a consideration of proposals as to how this synthesis might be effected.

Proposals for a Synthesis

Outler, in his book, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message, has worked toward just such a synthesis. He sets the groundwork for his approach when he states,

The Gospel is not . . . a wisdom about the world. It is neither a physics nor a metaphysics; it is neither a biology nor psychology. It judges all such wisdoms insofar as they reach out toward life's final issues, but it cannot, and ought not even to try, to direct the empirical sciences within their own proper spheres of inquiry and method.⁴⁶

And further,

the Gospel is not the whole story of man's life upon the earth, nor does it properly pretend to be. It concerns itself with ultimates, with what matters most to man if they are to find the meaning and the goodness and the fulfillment of their existence.⁴⁷

Therefore, Christianity has room for, in fact needs, the practical wisdom with regard to human relations which psychology can give it. When Outler

⁴⁵Roberts, op. cit., p. ix.

⁴⁶Outler, op. cit., p. 47.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 46.

makes such a proposal, he is fully aware of certain re-evaluations that must take place in order to preserve the integral presuppositions, assumptions, and beliefs which are inherent in the Christian kerygma. He points out that

The fruitful collaboration of psychotherapy and the Christian enterprise will involve important re-evaluations in the "traditional" patterns of exposition and self-understanding. A psychotherapy which intends to ally itself with the Christian care of souls must "make room" for such concepts as those of a discrete and responsible self-hood, of human sin more tragic than error, of grace more effectual than nature or fortune. It must, in short, make place for God--and for a wisdom about life which draws a circle wider than description and draws its truth from a deeper well than science. It must acknowledge the propriety of revelation and faith as modes of valid wisdom--not heuristic substitutes for scientific inquiry but as the vital founts from which come the clues and commitments which launch and guide our reasonings.⁴⁸

Yet, there are terms on which an alliance can be effected:

Psychotherapy's practical wisdom is its very own, empirically founded. The naturalistic world view it generally exhibits is borrowed. Christianity's practical wisdom is largely borrowed; its theistic world view is its very own, the bone and marrow of its Gospel. A psychotherapy which freely admitted the Christian doctrines of God and man as the referential "frame" of its empirical work could be well consorted with a Christian care of souls which fully acknowledge the direction and counsel of scientific psychotherapy.⁴⁹

Roberts agrees that a synthesis is not only necessary, but also is a very imminent possibility. He points out how the basic concepts of psychotherapy are correlative with the human side of events which Christian doctrine interprets. To him, the therapist's description of bondage to inner conflict should be incorporated in the doctrine of sin; and his description of healing should be incorporated in the doctrine of grace. He further contends that

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 257-8.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 245.

ultimately psychiatry cannot understand its own task aright except within the framework of a Christian view of man and God.⁵⁰ To make just such a synthesis as he proposes is not only desirable but in his view a task which is necessarily a part of the theologian's burden. For, as he states, theology is assigned the task of interpreting Man afresh in each generation; and what one attempts to say from a Christian perspective on this point can hardly be related effectively to the thoughts of this generation if it ignores or fails to comprehend the recent contributions of psychology and psychotherapeutic science.⁵¹ Psychology and theology simply must get together. In so doing it must be kept in mind first of all, that the task of understanding and administering to the world's needs is not served wisely by setting up some exclusively theological source of information and then using it rigidly as a principle of selection in determining what one will welcome or what one will repudiate among the findings of recent psychology.⁵²

On the other side, psychiatrists must enter into the realm of theology at least to the extent of asking whether religious beliefs are illusory; and the theologian can hardly incorporate psychiatric views within his own doctrine of man if the two are radically incompatible with each other.⁵³

Both Outler and Roberts are quite representative of those who would effect a synthesis. Their systematic approach, which we have presented in brief, gives a somewhat adequate picture of the facts, principles,

⁵⁰Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-4.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁵²*Loc. cit.*

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 146.

considerations, etc., which must be taken into consideration if psychology is to enter into a compatible marriage with theology. However, they are not alone in their plea for a synthesis. In passing, we might call attention to a representative few who fall into that category. Guntrip points out how the two have so many similar or at least parallel concepts that they cannot afford to ignore one another.⁵⁴ Speaking from psychology's side, Allport likewise, pleads for a synthesis, since a religious orientation, in his opinion, is a necessary background to adequate psychological adjustment.⁵⁵ Johnson sees a meeting ground of religion and psychology in such related concepts as security, faith, love and "belongingness."⁵⁶ Pruyser sees a point of contact between the two disciplines in that they both "look at Man with a peculiar mixture of optimism and pessimism"; and though he recognizes certain obstacles which a synthesis would have to overcome, yet his considered opinion is that the differences are not always found at the most important levels.⁵⁷

Of course there are valid criticisms of such approaches to synthesis. Many fear that Christianity will slip into mere humanism if it so much as dares to converse with psychology. And indeed, the history of the Church does show such a fear to be well founded. Furthermore, any synthesis would require a certain bending on the part of theology. It is feared

⁵⁴Henry Guntrip, Psychotherapy and Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 198ff.

⁵⁵Allport, The Individual and His Religion, passim.

⁵⁶Johnson, op. cit., passim.

⁵⁷Pruyser, op. cit., pp. 11ff.

that fundamental and cardinal principles would also be involved in the bending process. Indeed there is room for concern here also, and it must not be minimized.

Conclusion

The question which Christian pastors and laymen raise in the Church is, "Just what do we do with psychology?" In psychology we have a discipline which appears to help mankind. As a secular discipline the Church is not required to officially denounce or confine it. But is it a discipline which shares in the concerns of the Church: the promoting of sound lives among men? Can then, Christian pastors incorporate psychology into their cura animarum? Can theology look to psychology as an aid in its understanding of even some of the fundamental concepts of man? Should a distinctly Christian psychotherapy be developed? Can psychologists consider themselves as working side by side? These are some of the questions the Church asks its theologians. And though often there is a distinct "yes" to these questions, yet the subsequent "how" is often quite nebulous. It is this "how" that must be further defined, clarified, and enunciated.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has concerned itself with what is generally considered to be a very complex subject. The very nature of the topic presented demanded a particular caution in attempting to speak definitively. Literature available tends rather to raise questions than to establish answers. However, the fact remains that it is a topic which the Church must consider and a subject to which the author feels particularly committed. Therefore, a measure of satisfaction has been experienced by the author in the feeling that the subject "Psychology in Relationship to Theology" has been opened up for future, more definitive study.

In chapter one the necessity on the part of the Church to investigate its relationship to psychology was pointed out. The conclusion reached was that there is simply no alternative. The Church, principally through its theologians, is required to analyze the world in which the Gospel is to be preached in order to freshly interpret that Gospel to the existing era. And, interpretation of the twentieth century necessarily includes an analysis of psychology, since it is perhaps not far wrong to term it the "psychological age." Therefore, this dissertation has dealt with a most relevant topic. It has worked with subject matter which automatically and of necessity comes under the purview of theology, a topic which the theologian cannot overlook.

However crucial this topic might be, this discussion afforded no definitive answers. The topic is simply too complex, too involved, to even justify an attempt to do much in a dissertation such as this. As pointed

out throughout this paper, the dominant concern was to open up the field to future inquiry. As a result, chapter two, which attempted to give an analysis of the thought trends of the psychological disciplines, was perhaps open to the accusation of over-simplification. But the purpose of chapter two was primarily to open up certain critical points to which theology is obligated to pay particular attention. In chapter three these critical points were the focus of attention. Attention was called to the basic metaphysical and cosmological differences with their subsequent implications found in the two respective disciplines. No attempt was made to resolve these differences, since the author felt capable of only attempting a defining of the issues and the suggesting of approaches to the stated problems. The topic is simply too complex to be dealt with conclusively within the scope of the thesis and at the present time there is no one to whom we can go for answers.¹ "Psychology in Relationship to Theology" is and remains just three words to which a large question mark must be suffixed.

Yet such an inquiry as presented here is not for naught for it has shown, in the first place, the direction which future queries must take. Furthermore, it should have made very clear the fact that a marriage between psychology and theology is not quite as simple a matter as perhaps some would have it be. And last, but by no means least, an outline has

¹In passing, attention should be called to the fact that the School for Graduate Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will release a publication in June 1958, which should present a more definitive approach than currently available. The title is to be, What, Then, is Man? This publication is a symposium on the subject which we have discussed in the thesis. Dr. Paul E. Meehl of the University of Minnesota acted as chairman of the symposium committee.

been structured for the author's own future task of relating psychology to theology. Therefore, a beginning has been established, and satisfied with this, we conclude!

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