

History and Future of Korean Pastoral¹ Counseling²

Young Gweon You, Ph.D.³

Abstract The history of Korean pastoral counseling is organized in three historical periods: (1) Era of Birth: Introduction and Translation Period (1950-1975), (2) Era of Growth: Specialization Period, (1980-1999), and (3) Era of Identity: Competition and Autonomy Period (2000-Today). The author analyzes the background of growth in Korean pastoral counseling development, the research trends, and counseling centers and suggests that the Korean pastoral counseling needs to deal with the following issues: co-operation among all professional associations, internationalization, increasing sensitivity to the counseling and professional ethics, church based counseling centers, supervision, focused research, development of the spiritual assessment and diagnostic tools, specialization of counseling practice, uprooting the creative counseling tools from the Korean tradition, networking with secular counseling associations, increasing job opportunity after graduation, and developing the standards for license and curriculum.

Key words: Korean Christian Counseling, Korean Pastoral Counseling, Historical development

Introduction

The Korean pastoral counseling movement attained tremendous achievements in the 1990s. Pastoral counseling appeared to be the most competitive academic field based on the increasing number of student enrollment in major universities. For example, there are almost 253 graduates

¹ In this paper I use “pastoral” counseling as an inclusive term for both pastoral counseling and Christian counseling. I am mindful that this inclusive use of the term, pastoral, is not without problems. It is probably correct that, in Korea, Christian counseling movement is born out of pastoral counseling movement.

² An earlier draft of this article was published at You, Y.G. (2010). “The history and future of Christian (pastoral) counseling.” *Theological Forum*, 60, 93-111.

³ Young Gweon You received a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University and is Professor of Pastoral Counseling at Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea.

(1976-2009) and 33 currently registered students(2010-2011) in the area of pastoral care and counseling at United Graduate School of Theology, Yonsei University. During the past twenty years, over 20 counseling associations have been founded with many counseling institutes or centers, delivering very quality counseling to people in Korea. Another sign of the emergence of pastoral counseling movement in Korea is the increased interest in local churches on the topic of counseling and healing related programs. Special lectures about Christian counseling are being given in churches. The number of laypersons into pastoral counseling field has been rapidly increasing. At this point in its development, it would be helpful to review the current status of the pastoral counseling field in Korea. In doing so, I will consider future direction for the movement. I will delineate three distinct eras of pastoral counseling movement and provide the corresponding social contexts. Then I will suggest the future tasks in Korean pastoral counseling movement.

Three eras of Korean Christian counseling

Era of Birth: Introduction and Translation (1950-1979)

If we delineate the periods of pastoral counseling in Korea, there are three eras. The first era was characterized as the *'introduction and translation'*, in which the foreign materials about pastoral counseling were introduced through translation. The courses on pastoral counseling were taught and translations from textbooks were written in English and translated into the Korean language. In 1951, Dr. Hwanshin Lee taught a pastoral counseling course (in Korean *Munehihak*) at The College of Theology, at Yonsei University. In 1968, Seward Hiltner's *Preface to Pastoral Theology* was translated into Korean. Wayne Oates' (1974) *Christian Pastor*, and Seward Hiltner's (1976) *Pastoral Counseling* were translated. In this period, two

books, *Principles of Pastoral Counseling* by Euyoung Hwang (1970), and *Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* by Peter Van Lierop (1978) who was professor of Yonsei University were written with the attention to the Korean context. Peter van Lierop founded the student counseling center at Yonsei University with a goal to provide a clinical setting in which to put theoretical knowledge into practice knowledge.

Symbolically, it was important to have a clinical setting in the teaching environment. In 1974, Peter van Lierop offered the first Clinical Pastoral Education program at Severance Hospital of Yonsei University. Through this CPE program, he opened up the practical space in which the students were able to deliver pastoral care. More English and German books on pastoral counseling were translated giving greater opportunities to build the students' theoretical foundations. The ability of Koreans to integrate pastoral counseling theory and practice was solidly established.

Era of Growth: Specialization of Pastoral Counseling (1980-1999)

Traditionally, the pastoral counseling area had been under the big umbrella of pastoral theology. This period is noted for the effort to turn Pastoral Counseling into a specialization, apart from pastoral theology. This was the era of the founding of many counseling associations.

In 1982, *The Korean Association of Pastoral Counselors* (KAPC) was organized and provided a foundation for Korean pastoral counseling. Initially, the activities of KAPC were not vital, since it functioned as a community of pastoral counselors and theologians in which scholars and participants shared their idea and concerns. But it became more active after hosting of Asia Pacific Congress on Pastoral Care and Counseling in 1997. I recall watching participants from many parts of the world dancing to the rhythm of Korean *Arirang* on the last day of the conference. It exposed Korean pastoral counseling to the world. This conference was also an

opportunity through which Korean pastoral counselors were acknowledging each other's professionalism.

In 1997, *The Korean Society for Pastoral Care and Counseling* was organized and began publishing *Ministry and Counseling*. In 1999, the *Korean Association of Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* was organized. This association included Christian social workers, psychiatrists, and scholars. *The Journal of Korean Christian Counseling & Psychotherapy* was launched for discussion for pastoral counseling scholars in 2000. In 2001, *The Korean Association of Clinical Pastoral Education* was organized for pastoral care givers in hospitals and special institutes. Through this organization, Severance Hospital at Yonsei University, Korean University Hospital, and Chungnam University Hospital were officially certified as CPE centers. Initially, Catholic members joined, but later founded their own CPE organization. During this period, we cannot deny that there were some conflicts and chaos. Many associations were very competitive, made their own licensing policy and do not acknowledge the other association's license. Despite the conflicts and struggles between organization, this competition was lead into the proliferation of these associations. It is my evaluation that the rising up of many associations has greatly contributed to the attempt to find professional identity and the developing of the pastoral counseling field as a special area.

Era of Identity: Competition and Autonomy (2000 - Today)

In this period, many counseling centers (academy based systems, independent programs, church related programs) were founded and many courses related with pastoral counseling were actively taught in many theological schools. Many theological schools created their own counseling centers through which students placed themselves into clinical experiences. While the various organizations were busy in introducing pastoral counseling in the second era,

organizations began to make an effort to find their unique identity within Korean pastoral counseling in this third era. After the period of initiating their activities, the associations began to invest their energies in more specifically *Korean* pastoral counseling. They sought to rediscover their Korean roots, and blend them with the field of pastoral counseling. In another direction, the Korean associations put much effort in delineating the specific characteristics of pastoral counseling, differentiating it from secular counseling. This enabled a greater sense of the autonomy of pastoral counseling. In 2009, *The Korean Association of Christian Counselors and Psychotherapy* hosted an international conference through which the fully developed status of Korean pastoral counseling was introduced to the world.

The conspicuous phenomenon of this period was that every theological school valued the importance of pastoral care and counseling as a major academic field in a theological curriculum. The Graduate School of Theology at Yonsei University began accepting 6 credit hours from a CPE program as pastoral care and counseling credits. Many other theological schools showed a big interest in the area of pastoral care, Christian counseling, and pastoral counseling. Pastoral counseling became the most competitive academic major for students to enter at the graduate school. Also, it became a trend to combine clinical experience with teaching and research. Therefore, many theological schools created their own counseling centers so that their students could be exposed to the counseling practicum. This functioned to minimize the gap between theoretical understanding and practice. However, there was criticism that pastoral counseling had become so popularized with under-qualified counseling services.

Contextual factors for Korean pastoral counseling development

The growth of pastoral counseling in Korea is related with the history of economic

growth in Korea. Korean people are in need of safe places in which they can share their problems and expose themselves vulnerable. Looking back over recent decades, Koreans have had a tendency to feel it was too dangerous to expose their weakness to others; the atmosphere everywhere was so highly competitive. Such was the impression that high-speed economic growth made upon people. Korea was gradually transformed into a market economy, which involved embracing not only values associated with capitalism, but also the importing of Western values. I do think it was merely economic growth, but the acceptance of Western values associated with capitalism. The emphasis on economic efficiency have influenced in the way of making human relationship and have created very competitive atmosphere. This atmosphere made people more exclusive to each other. Where there is a problem, they tend to be less reliance on family and local community to address relational problems. They have lost the therapeutic community in which they can get comforts and consultations. The traditional family system, which had functioned as a ventilation space of one's feelings and emotions when family members were in crisis, had collapsed. But the counseling center was there to replace it. A particular need for counseling to treat people's emotional, psychological, and spiritual emptiness came about during the economic crisis in 1997.

Another growth factor was the Korean church. It expanded in numbers of congregational members and in the sizes of the church buildings with the sacrifice of their qualitative growth. When the number of Korean church congregation memberships settled down to a status quo, churches began to take seriously another dimension of growth i.e. care giving. For the qualitative growth, churches adopted counseling tools, such as couple seminars, father school, mother school, parenting school, etc. By doing so, the church provided the congregation members time to re-evaluate their relationship patterns. Also, the growth of the church financially contributed

to management of the counseling centers.

Another factor for the growth for pastoral counseling has been the level of personal conflict in the Korean society. The traditional Korean "self" feels comfortable in community relationships. However, the influx of industrialization brought economic challenges. The "traditional self" which is actually a "communal self", was challenged by an "individual and autonomous self" from Western culture. I call this as a cultural schizophrenia. The indigenous healing for Koreans had been in the community (family, community of faith, village community). However, the Christian culture de-constructed this healing system, so that Korean Christians have lost the former therapeutic framework. This has led them into the culturally schizophrenic state. Korean pastoral counseling has provided a holding environment for these Korean Christians who are experiencing a chaotic identity crisis.

Research trends in Korean pastoral counseling

Korean pastoral counseling has focused on theoretical understanding through the *era of birth* to the *era of identity*. Through translation of foreign works, there has been an emphasis on new theoretical approaches. However, it is to be regretted that articles related with Korean clinical settings are few in numbers. Though Korean pastoral counselors have relied heavily on translated works and benefited from them, there have been few attempts to develop research and theoretical approaches that are sensitive and emerge from the Korean context.

The following table will show the result of analysis on the articles in two pastoral counseling journals: 177 articles published in *The Journal of Korean Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* and 68 articles published in *Ministry and Counseling*, a total of 245 articles from 2000 to 2009. I analyzed various articles and categorized into 9 categories according to the

issues that the articles are dealing with. The categories of research were counseling techniques, issues and phenomena, spirituality, theoretical reflection, application, identity, suggestions, program and scales, and Korean identity.

Table 1: Content analysis of the pastoral counseling articles published in Korea from 2000 to 2009.

Categories	Number Published	Percent
Counseling Techniques	21	8.6
Counseling Issues and Phenomenon	27	11.0
Spirituality	14	5.7
Theoretical Reflection	82	33.4
Application	71	29.0
Identity	6	2.4
Suggestions	9	3.7
Program, Scales	8	3.3
Korean Identity	7	2.9
Total	245	100.0

From the above table, we may observe that the articles in the pastoral counseling area have been tilted toward the theme of theoretical observation. It lacks the interest or attention to the Korean Christian context. It is necessary to show more interest in finding out the unique Korean identity in pastoral counseling, and in how the theoretical understanding may be applied to the concrete Korean church context. Even though there are some articles on the issue and phenomena, there needs to be more specific interest in the specific issues, e.g., demonic possession, religion addiction, eating disorders, computer game and sex addiction, etc. More specific issues need to be dealt with for pastoral counseling to develop specific strategies for different issues. Also, there needs to be research on the efficacy of different counseling approaches based on the client's evaluation and on the different needs of Christian clients. Such research will benefit the development of concrete counseling skills and strategies in delivering pastoral counseling for Korean Christians.

Another area of concern is on the published books in the area of pastoral counseling in

Korea. A total of 438 books were reviewed on the topic of pastoral counseling, listed in *Korean studies* (www.koreanstudies.net). The review of the books resulted in the following categorization.

Table 2: Content Analysis of Pastoral Counseling Books Published in Korea from 1962 to 2009.

Categories	Number Published	Percent
Translation	201	45.0
Encyclopedia	35	8.0
Practice and Technique	38	9.0
Research	33	8.0
Theory	61	13.0
Introducing Theory	12	3.0
Application	51	12.0
Etc.	7	2.0
Total	438	100.0

In Table 2, it is noticeable that books are composed of translated books. As in the case of the articles, the number of books on theoretical approach is high. It is desirable to see more books on the concrete counseling process by introducing Korean counseling cases and research through the clinical materials. Research on the specific issues is needed. Also, it is necessary to find pastoral counseling methodology and an efficient way to implement pastoral counseling for Korean Christian clients. It is my suggestion to publish books on ethical issues that pastoral counselors need to know about.

Trends in the Institutes and Centers of Pastoral Counseling

There are many associations related with pastoral counseling: *Korean Association of Biblical Counseling* (founded in 1995), *Korean Association of Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* (founded in 1999), *Korea Evangelical Theological Society* (founded in 2000), *Korea Association of Spirituality & Psychotherapy* (founded in 2000), etc. These associations have focused on their own identity. However, they are not in co-operation with other

Sacred Spaces: The e-Journal of the American Association of Pastoral Counseling (2011), vol.3

associations. It is necessary for the associations to have dialogue and do co-operative among the associations.

The counseling centers in the pastoral counseling area may be delineated by three categories: 'academy based' centers, 'independent' centers, and 'church-related' centers. First, academy based centers are the *Spirituality and Healing Center* at Methodist Theological University, *Student Counseling Center* at Presbyterian Theological Seminary, *Christian Counseling Center* at Asia United Theological School, *Counseling Center* at Torch Trinity Theological School, and the *Counseling & Coaching Center* at Yonsei University.

Second, the independent centers are *Kim Young Ae Family Therapy Institute, Seoul Object Relation Therapy Institute, Korea Psychotherapy Institute, Arirang Puri Institute, Christian Healing and Counseling Institute, Christian Woman Counseling institute, Christian Group Counseling Center, Happy Family Institute, Korean Counseling Mission Institute, One Love Christian Counseling Center.*

Thirdly, the church related centers are *Youngnak Presbyterian Counseling Center* (founded in 1984), *Yeshim Counseling Center* (Yeshim Presbyterian church), *Daseum Education center* (Hanmail church) , *New Life Counseling Center* (Namseoul Grace Church) *Sarang Church Counseling Center, Onnuri Church Counseling Center, Somang Presbyterian Church Counselig Center, Myungsung Presbyterian Counseling Center, Saejungang Church Counseling Center.* The following table shows the different activities of various counseling centers. The categories are education, counseling, and research.

It is my view that the counseling centers need to have three functions: counseling, education, research. But the current activities of counseling centers in Korea are focused heavily on education. It is necessary to give more focus on the counseling itself and enhance the quality

of the counseling service. As a way of managing the counseling center, it was unavoidable to focus on the education. For the long-term purpose, each counseling center needs to characterize their counseling center with specific clinical issues. Also, it would be desirable to give more energy into the research with the clinical data.

Suggestions for the future of Korean pastoral counseling

Currently, Korean pastoral counseling is experiencing continuous growth, but it is necessary to check on it, and make a few suggestions to keep it growing.

1) Incorporation among pastoral counseling associations: We may notice that the research trend in pastoral counseling is too broad. In order to be more focused, the incorporation among the associations is necessary. It would be better to do their activities under one mother association for the sake conserving their energy.

2) International relationships: It is acknowledged that pastoral counseling in Korea has developed a lot internally, but it is necessary to let the world know the progress that the Korean pastoral counseling movement has made. As we noticed in the analysis of articles and books, it is very rare those which attempt to advertize the Korean pastoral counseling materials. It is quite necessary to advertise the Korean tradition in pastoral counseling to the world, with cooperation among the associations.

3) Sensitivity to the professional and counseling ethics: The third period is characterized by high competition among the counseling centers and associations. The main byproducts of this high competition have been the creation of unqualified counselors. It was a fact that the counseling education was done theoretically. Therefore, the counseling quality itself has not proven to be effective at being engaged in appropriate relationships. It would be desirable to

have a standardized licensing system. To maintain a good quality of the licensed counselors, the continuing education system is needed. The issues of confidentiality, the relationship between counselor and pastor, dual relationship, and professionalism in managing a counseling center need to be carefully considered. Also, it is necessary to undertake specific training for different needs. Once they are licensed, it is common to think that counselors can perform every kind of counseling. But it is necessary for a counselor to have his/her own specialty and characteristics in order to escape from a department-like counseling model.

4) Church based counseling: In the U.S.A., a pastoral counselor license is not acknowledged by states, but is seen as valuable by the churches. As pastoral counseling in Korea has become more specialized, it has shown a tendency to become separated from the churches. It is necessary to check again that pastoral counseling is rooted in the church. The board of trustee members at church counseling centers should in fact be church related members. And the staff of counseling centers needs to be Christians to maintain the proper Christian spirit. If one church is not able to support the counselor center it wishes to have, then it may ask several churches to join in supporting it financially together. This co-operative model would have the advantage of helping to keep confidentiality of congregation members.

5) Opportunities for supervision: Theories have been vigorously introduced in the area of Korean pastoral counseling. But it has been rare to find counseling institutes to also incorporate qualitative clinical training. It is my belief that a counselor is reborn through the experience of supervision. But in Korea, it has been very hard to find opportunities to experience supervision. It takes energy, time and money. Also, the opportunities to learn how to give supervision were not provided. In the curriculum of theological schools, it has been hard to find one course on supervision. It is my suggestion that to be an efficient supervisor, it will require 5 years of self-

training after getting a pastoral counseling license. It is also necessary to engage counseling student within various supervision formats: individual supervision, group supervision, team supervision, live supervision, and internet supervision.

6) Focused research: As we have observed, the research in Korean pastoral counseling is tilted toward the theoretical introduction and translation. It is my hope that future research will be done with the clinical data from the setting and be more focused according to the issues and problems.

7) Developing assessment tools: The Diagnostic statistical manual (DSM-IV-TR) guides many clinicians in the diagnosis of the clients. But it is hard to find a guide book for assessing the spiritual health of clients. It would be very helpful if there is a scale or diagnostic tool through which counselors may assess clients' spiritual health and needs. For example, the "Satisfaction Scale of Christian Married Couples, the Healthy Spirituality Scale, and the Spiritual Maturity Scale, which reflect the characteristics of the Korean Christian population, need to be developed.

8) Focused counseling: It would be more desirable to publish manual, text books and articles which focus of the specific issues and problem. For instance, counseling for the aged, demon possessed, homosexuals, homeless people, etc.

9) Development of Korean Pastoral Counseling: We cannot deny that Korean pastoral counseling has followed the American pastoral counseling pattern. However, it is time to rediscover the Korean tradition and raise its own voice. It is necessary to understand Korean clients' unique characteristics. What are the differences in the process of counseling compared with Western clients, and the factors in making therapeutic alliances for Korean clients? Also, it is necessary to theorize by finding out the counseling factors in the Korean cultural tradition.

10) Network with secular counseling associations: Korean pastoral counseling needs to be rooted in the church. But we need to go out to the secular counseling area and show the excellence of pastoral counseling. If we keep good connections with secular counselors, they will refer with confidence to the pastoral counselors when their clients are experiencing religious and spirituality issues.

11) Job opportunities: After graduating with a master-level degree in pastoral counseling, it is now hard to find a job. For the ordained male ministers, it would not be a problem. But for those females who are not ordained, it is hard to be employed in the secular counseling center, or church related counseling center. If job opportunities are not actively provided for these graduates, the popular movement in pastoral counseling will not last long.

12) Standardization: Every association in Korean pastoral counseling has their own standards and requirements. It is desirable to make standardized criteria for every association and have a standardized curriculum. This standardization process will enhance the general quality of pastoral counselors in Korea.

Conclusion

Through this article, I analyzed the current status of Korean pastoral counseling and suggested some practical ideas. Korean pastoral counseling has achieved tremendous development in a short period. This was done by contributions from scholars and clinicians. To keep this development going, it is necessary to be more specialized and have a standardized training system. It is my hope that this pastoral counseling movement is not just a temporary phenomena, but continues to develop help Koreans with their pain and sorrow. It is my regret that more data needs to be collected and analyzed. More research on the evaluation of the

counseling centers with standard objective criteria, evaluation of the curriculum at theological schools, and observation of theological trends in pastoral counseling in Korea needs to be done for the future.

Table 3: Counseling Centers and Types of Services Provided

Categories	Education			Counseling			Res	Lic
	Pub	Cou	Sup	Tel	Int	Dir		
Christian Woman Counseling Institutes	√	√			√		√	
Christian Group Counseling Center	√	√		√	√	√		√
Christian Counseling Center	√			√	√	√		
Kim Young Ae Family Therapy Institute	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Inner-healing Ministry Institute	√	√			√	√	√	
New life Counseling Center	√	√			√	√		
Korean Christian Counseling Institute	√			√	√	√		
Seoul Object Relation Therapy Institute	√	√	√			√	√	√
Arirang Puri Institute	√	√	√			√	√	
Younsei Counseling & Coaching Center	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Spiritual Psychotherapy Center	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Christian Healing & Counseling Institute	√						√	
Hi Family: Institute of Home and Love	√				√		√	
Korea Family Counseling Center	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Korean Counseling Mission Institute	√	√			√		√	
Korean Laugh Therapy Institute	√	√						
Korean Psychotherapy Institute	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Korea Healing & Counseling Institute	√	√		√	√			
One Love Christian Counseling Center	√			√	√	√		

Sunshine Youth Faith Counseling center	√		√	√
Happy Family Institute	√	√	√	√

Notes: Pub=Public, Cou=Counselor, Sup=Supervisor, Tel=Telephone, Int=Internet, Dir=Direct, Res=Research, and Lic=License

References

- Ahn, S, et. al. (2009). Preface to pastoral counseling. Seoul: Hakjisa.
- Chun, Y. (1999). Theory and practice of Christian counseling. Seoul: Midwest Publishing.
- Dieterich, M. (2010). Psychology and pastoral counseling. trans. by Jongkwan Hong, Seoul: Hakjisa.
- Hiltner, S. (1968). Preface to pastoral theology. trans. by Kyungbae Min, Seoul: Deahan Kidokseohoe.
- Hiltner, S. (1970). Pastoral counseling. trans. by Kyungil Mah Seoul: Deahan Kidokseohoe, 1976.
- Hwang, E. (1970). Preface to pastoral counseling. Seoul: Saengmyungmalsum.
- Kang, K. (2010) . Model for modern pastoral counseling. Seoul: Kumran Publishing.
- Korean Academy Institute (www.koreanstudies.net)
- Editorial Committee. (1997). Pastoral counseling for Korean church. Seoul: Deahan Kidokseohoe.
- Kwon, Y. (2008). Individuation and Christian counseling. Seoul: Yeyoung Communication.
- Lee, S. (2009). Preface to pastoral counseling practicum. Seoul: Hakjisa.
- McHolland, J, ed. (1993). The future of pastoral counseling: Whom, how and for what do we train? Fairfax, VA: American Association of Pastoral Counseling.
- Miller, W. R., & Jackson, K. A. (2009). Counseling psychology for pastor. trans. by Sukbong Je, Seoul: Hakjisa.
- Oates, W. (1974). Christin muneuihak. trans. By Deukyong Kim Seoul: Saengmyungmalsum.
- Park. K. (1997). Historical sketch of Korean pastoral counseling: With focus of Korean Association of Pastoral Counselors. *Shinhak Sasang*. 97, 28-35.

Van Lierop, P. (1978). *Introduction to pastoral counseling*. Seoul: Deahan Kidokseohoe.

Wise, C. A. (1984). *Ministry: Meaning of pastoral care*. trans. by Kichoon Lee, Seoul: Deahan Kidokseohoe.

You, Y. (2008). *Christian (Pastoral) counseling: Issue and strategeis*. Seoul: Hakjisa.

Pastoral Counseling: Religious ministry offered by a person who is accountable to and representative of a religious community. 
Pastoral Theology: For Catholics and some Protestants refers to the whole sweep of pastoral practice including education, worship, polity, and homiletics, as well as care. For other Protestants refers to more specifically to the theological knowledge arising from and informing ministries of care led by ordained pastors and representatives of a congregation. Pastoral counselors and theologians from the United States should look to the South Korean Christian churches and other Asian churches for conversation partners about the nature of care and healing in today's world. In this book, the authors explore important ideas--such as han, jeong, and salim--from Korean history and culture that can inform the healing ministries of the churches. Synopsis: "Korean Resources for Pastoral Theology makes a significant contribution to the field of pastoral care and pastoral theology in the United States . . . The authors introduce Koreans who are acti
The best counseling uses Scripture as God intended: as a living perspective of a dynamic world that holds authority over our own. It is not one-dimensional, but three-dimensional, able to address the many factors of lifeâ"from relational dynamics to self-perception to circumstantial difficulties. The Bible delights us even as it instructs us; it challenges the core commitments of our hearts even as it lifts our perspective above our sorrows. In sum, counseling helps connect the dots between various aspects of a personâs experience. It helps them understand themselves better in light of what Scripture says. Using the Bible three-dimensionally allows counselors to show Christâs loving authority over every dimension of human life.