



FIVE MODELS  
FOR COUNSELING  
FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

DR. CHRISTOPHER CONE

**Life Is Made Of Choices:**

**Remove Your Shoes**



**— OR —**

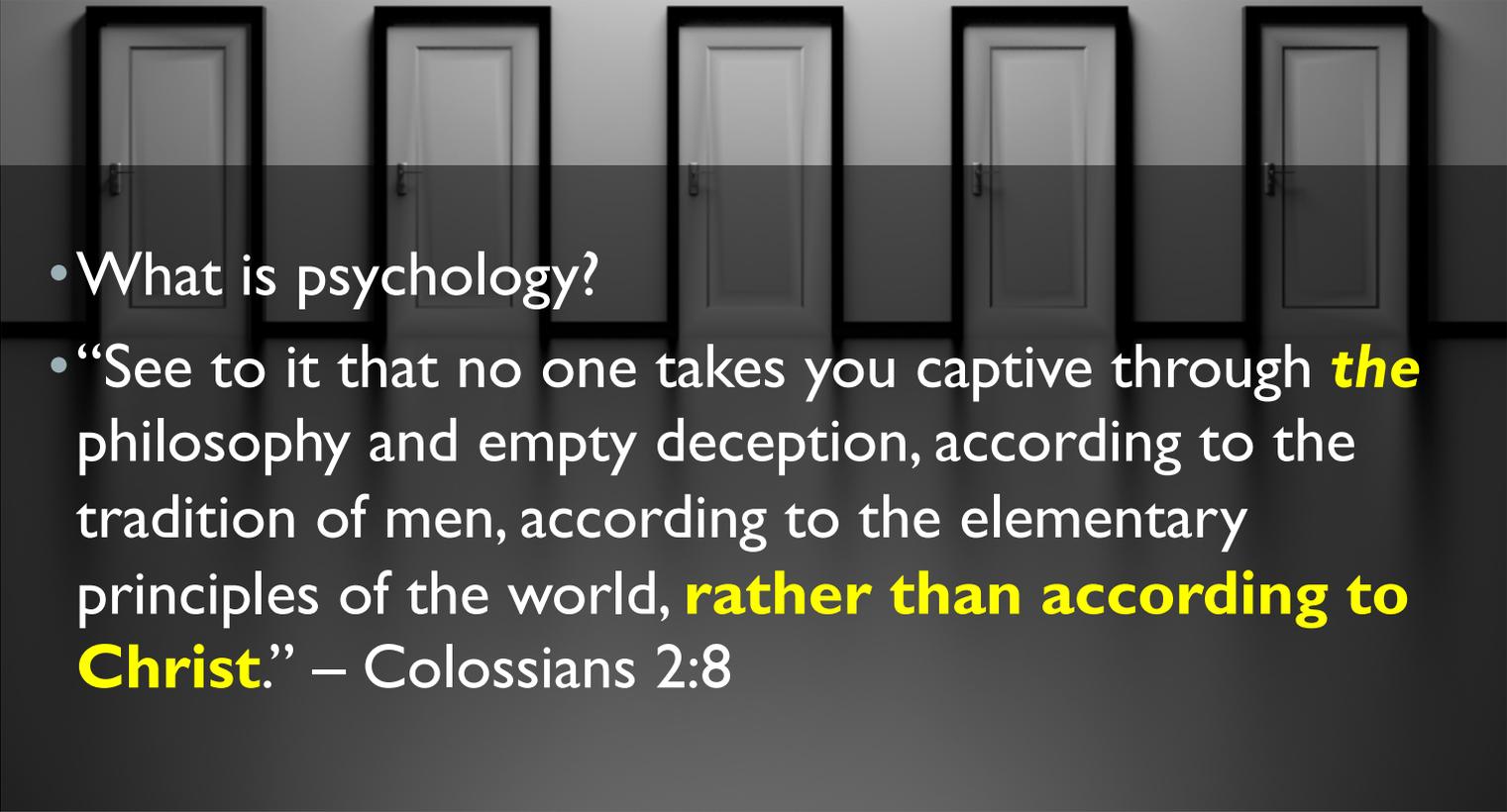


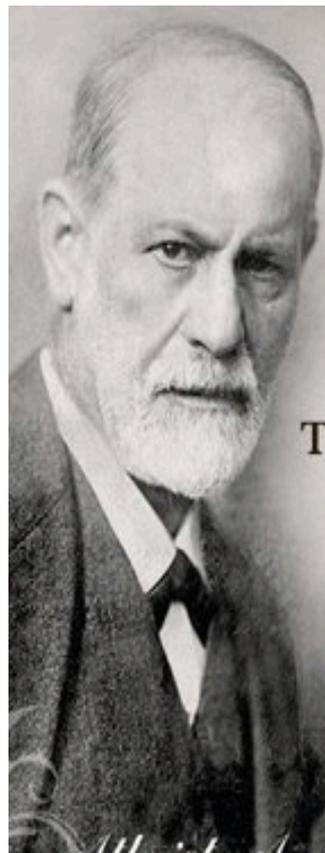
**Scrub The Floor**



ONE

MAINSTREAM  
PSYCHOLOGY

- 
- What is psychology?
  - “See to it that no one takes you captive through **the** philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, **rather than according to Christ.**” – Colossians 2:8



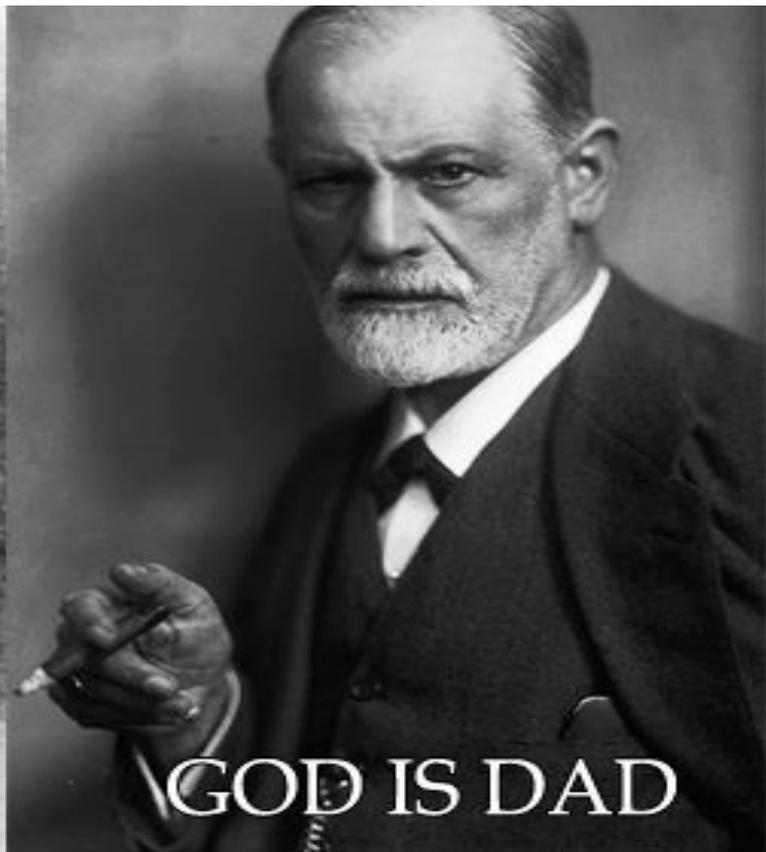
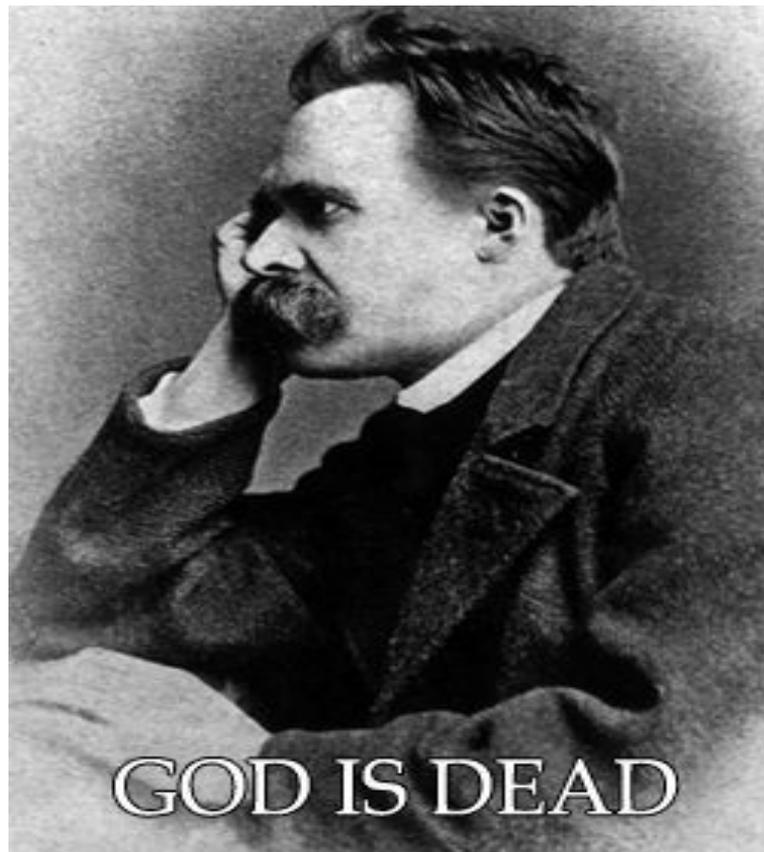
**“RELIGION IS COMPARABLE  
TO A CHILDHOOD  
NEUROSIS.**

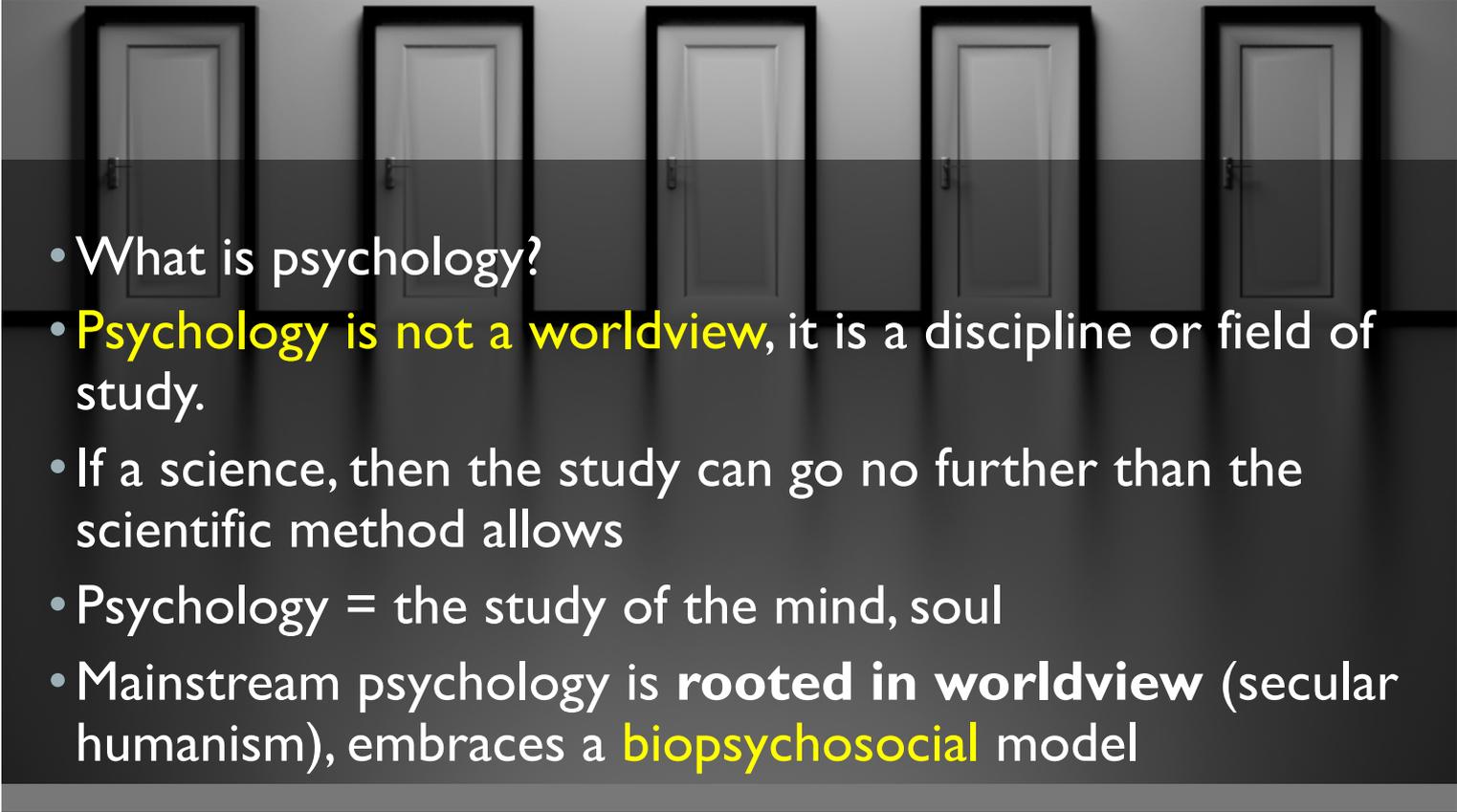
**THE WHOLE THING IS SO PATENTLY INFANTILE,  
SO FOREIGN TO REALITY,**

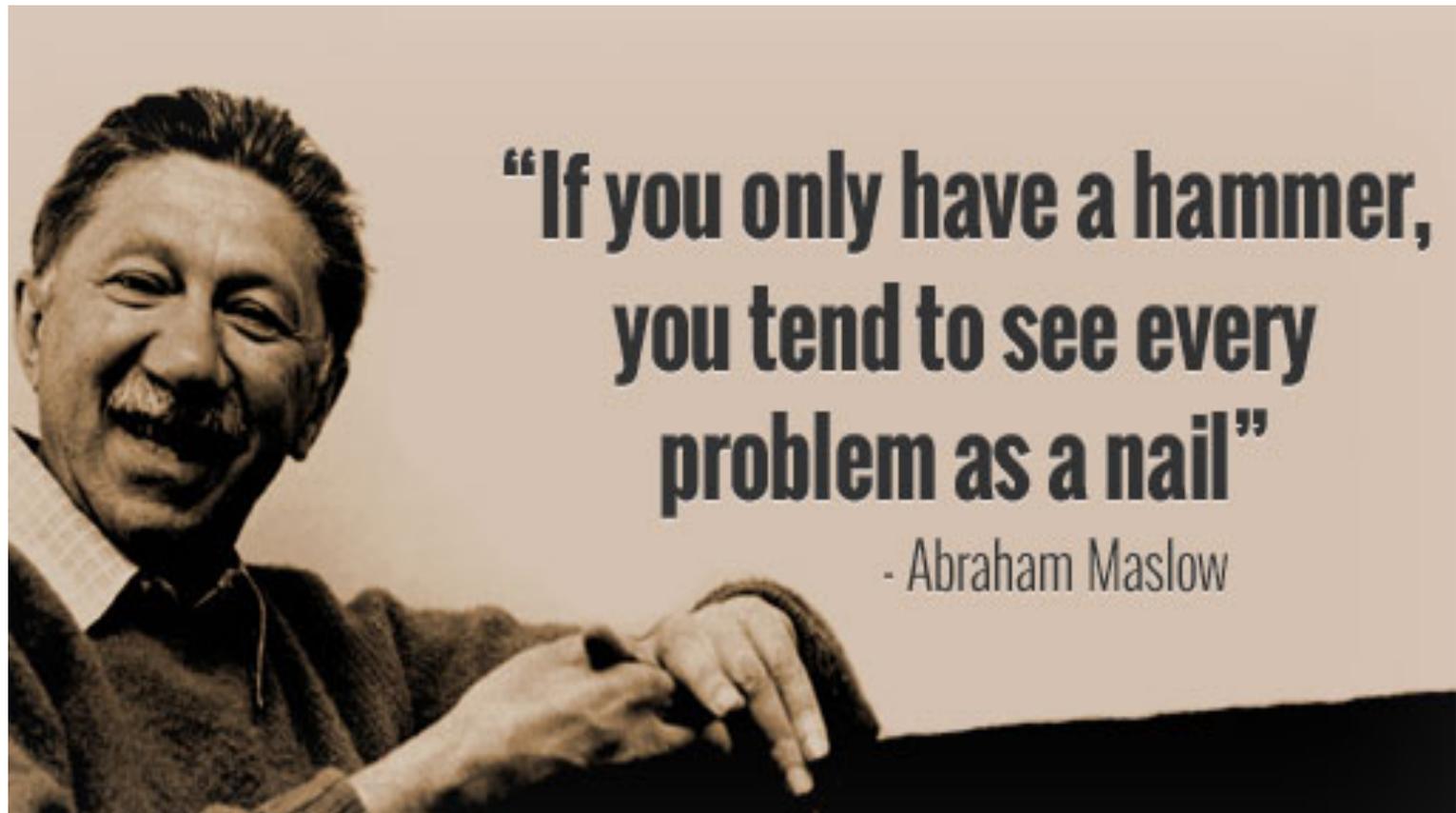
**that to anyone with a friendly attitude to humanity it is  
painful to think that the great majority of mortals  
will never be able to rise above this view of life.”**

*-SIGMUND FREUD*

*PHYSICIAN & PIONEER PSYCHOANALYST*



- 
- What is psychology?
  - **Psychology is not a worldview**, it is a discipline or field of study.
  - If a science, then the study can go no further than the scientific method allows
  - Psychology = the study of the mind, soul
  - Mainstream psychology is **rooted in worldview** (secular humanism), embraces a **biopsychosocial** model



**“If you only have a hammer,  
you tend to see every  
problem as a nail”**

- Abraham Maslow

## **Self-actualization**

desire to become the most that one can be

## **Esteem**

respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

## **Love and belonging**

friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

## **Safety needs**

personal security, employment, resources, health, property

## **Physiological needs**

air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction



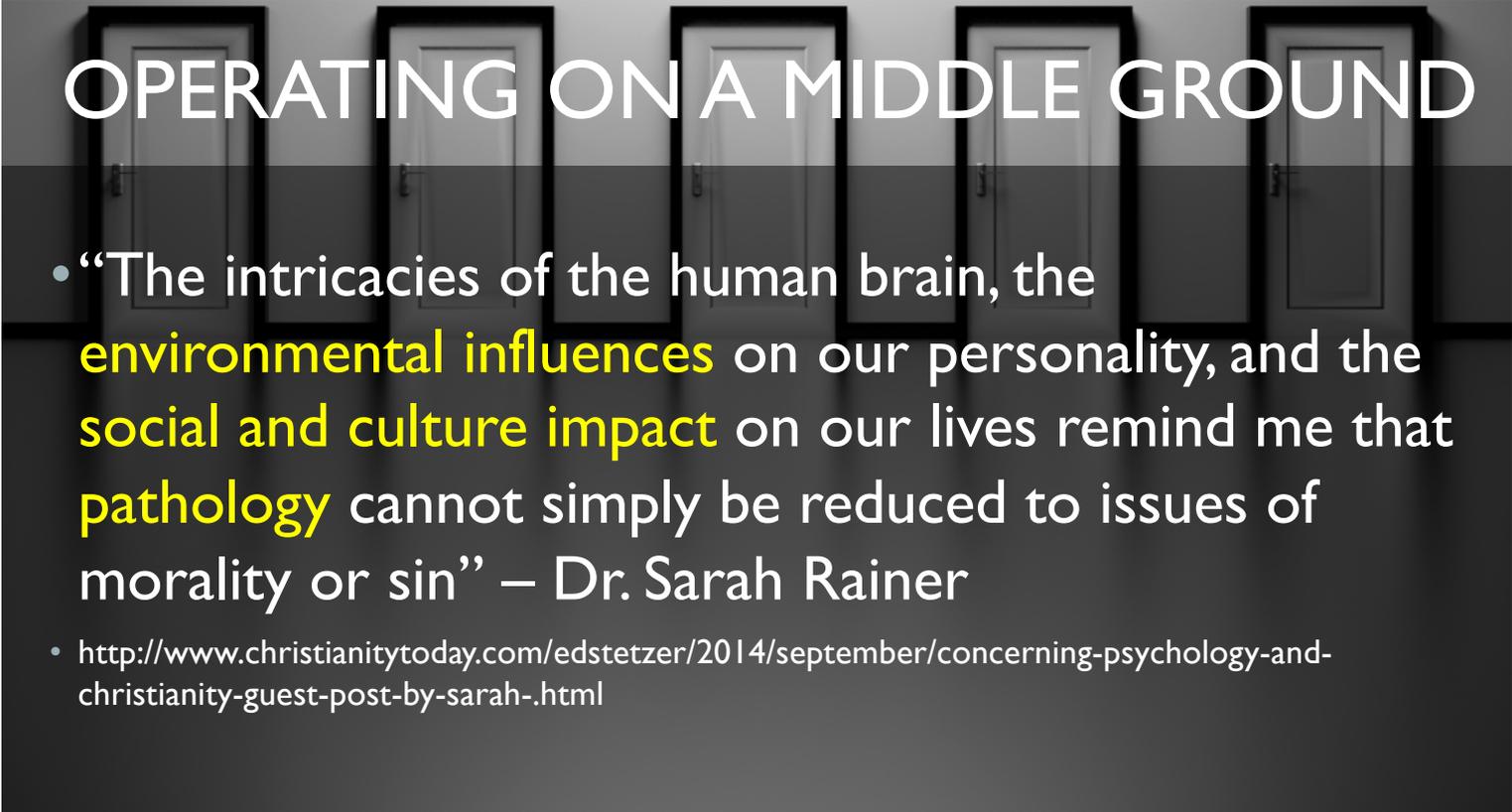
# PROS AND CONS OF MAINSTREAM PSYCHOLOGY

- Attempts consistency in applying worldview to a discipline
- Transparent in its denial of God, spiritual things.
- Fits the Levels of Explanation Model (keeps disciplines separate)
- Gambles everything on the naturalistic premise and the resulting biopsychosocial model
- If a science, then limited only to the repeatable
- Prescriptions are rooted in materialistic descriptions



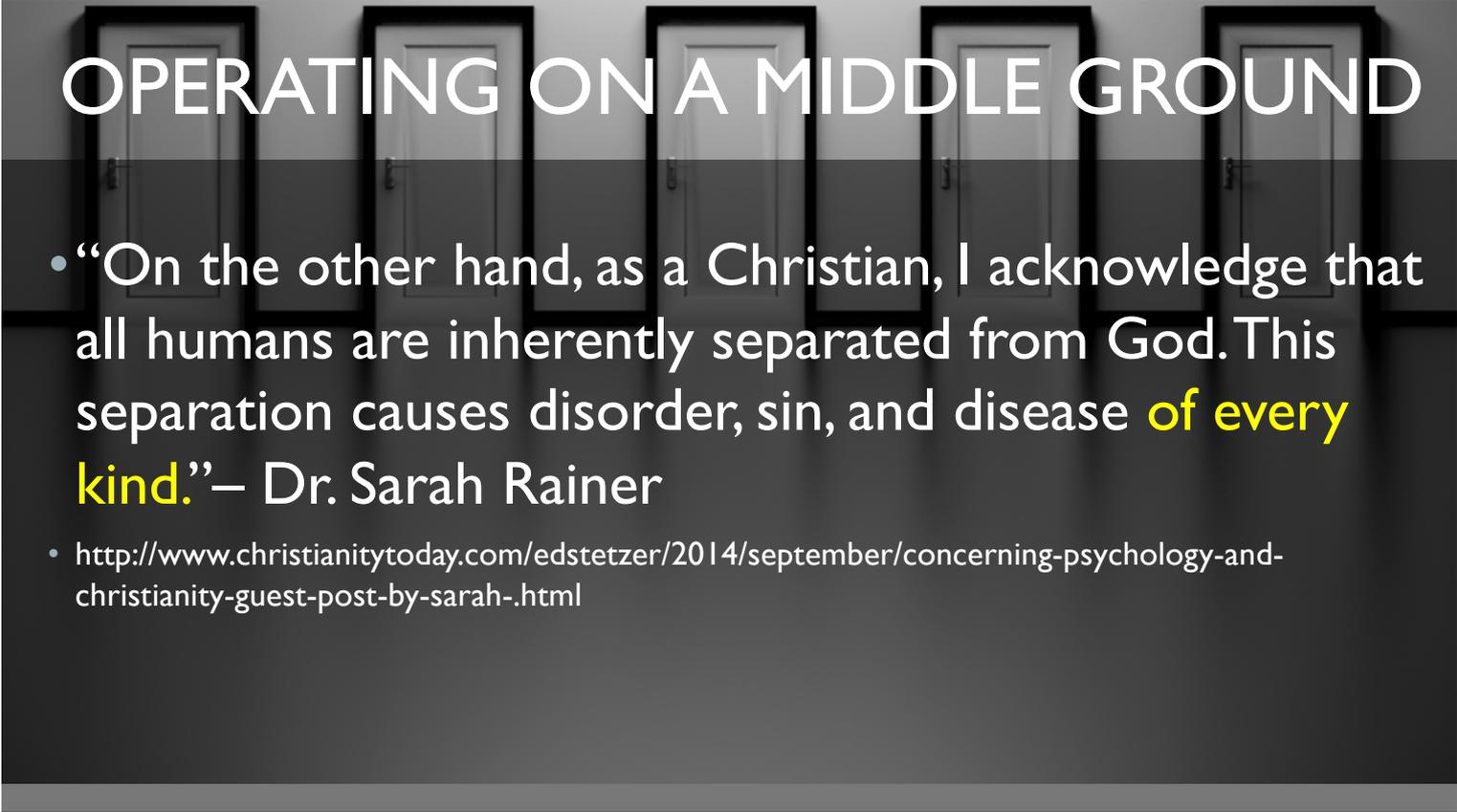
TWO

INTEGRATIONIST



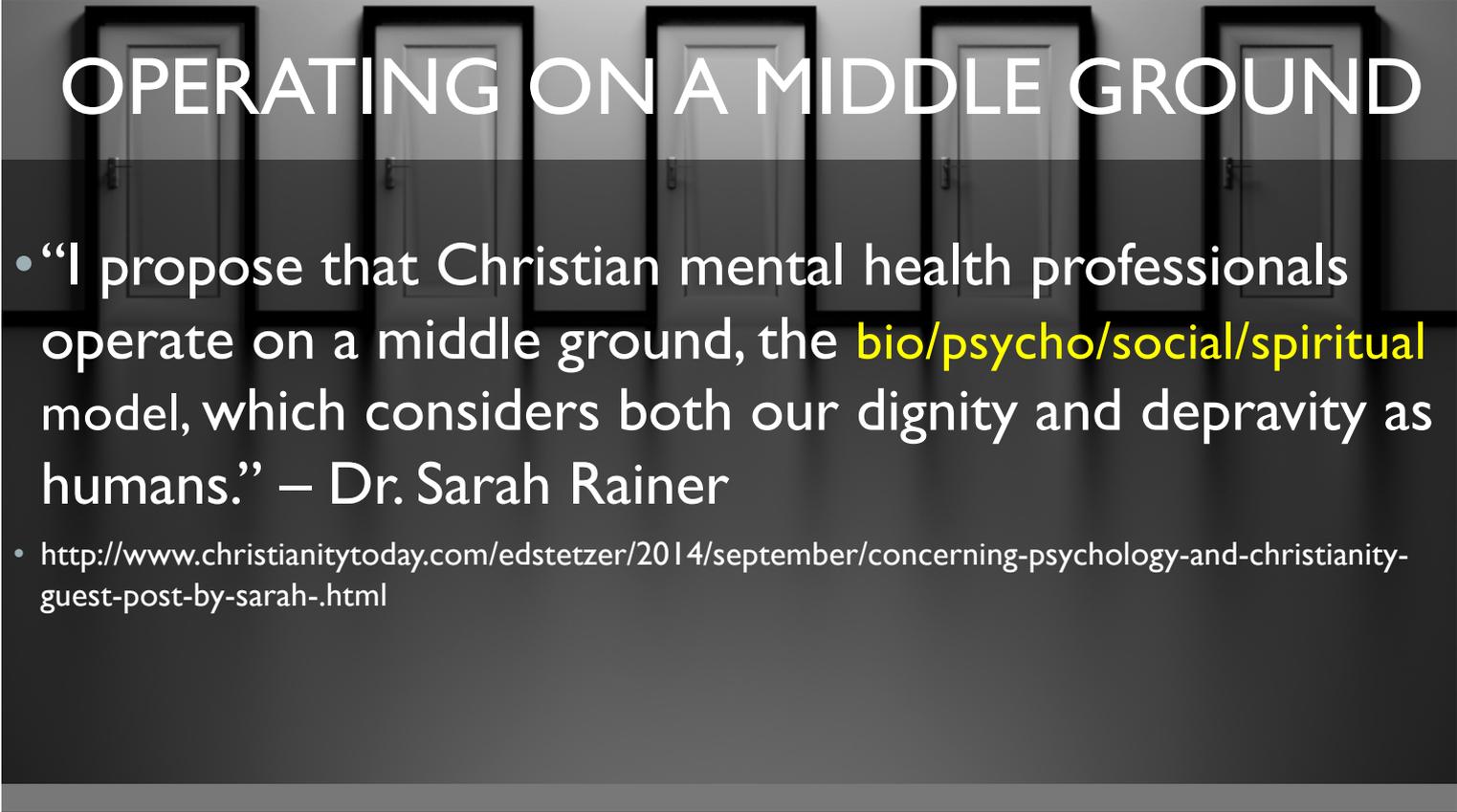
# OPERATING ON A MIDDLE GROUND

- “The intricacies of the human brain, the **environmental influences** on our personality, and the **social and culture impact** on our lives remind me that **pathology** cannot simply be reduced to issues of morality or sin” – Dr. Sarah Rainer
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/september/concerning-psychology-and-christianity-guest-post-by-sarah-.html>



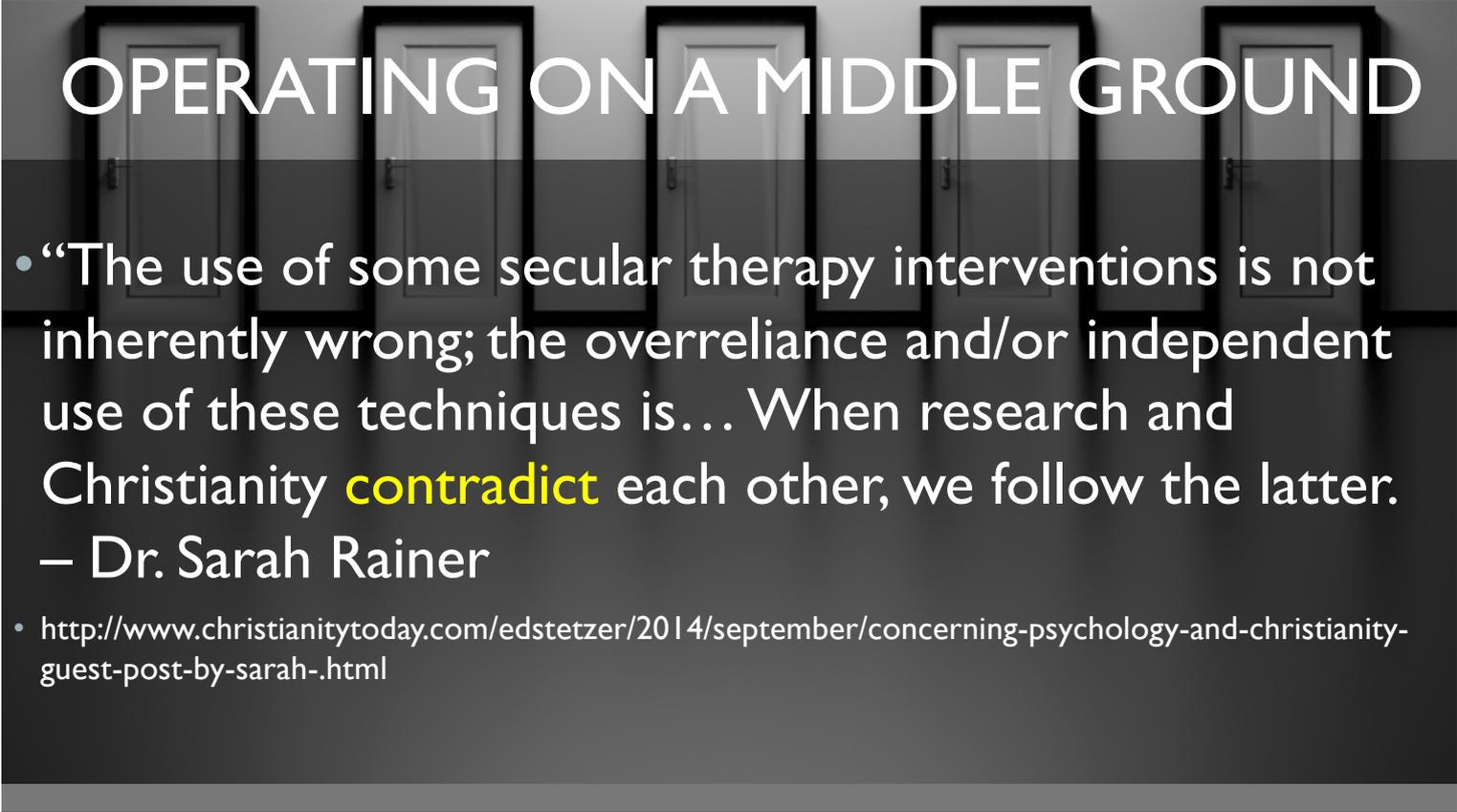
# OPERATING ON A MIDDLE GROUND

- “On the other hand, as a Christian, I acknowledge that all humans are inherently separated from God. This separation causes disorder, sin, and disease **of every kind.**” – Dr. Sarah Rainer
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/september/concerning-psychology-and-christianity-guest-post-by-sarah-.html>



# OPERATING ON A MIDDLE GROUND

- “I propose that Christian mental health professionals operate on a middle ground, the **bio/psycho/social/spiritual** model, which considers both our dignity and depravity as humans.” – Dr. Sarah Rainer
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/september/concerning-psychology-and-christianity-guest-post-by-sarah-.html>



# OPERATING ON A MIDDLE GROUND

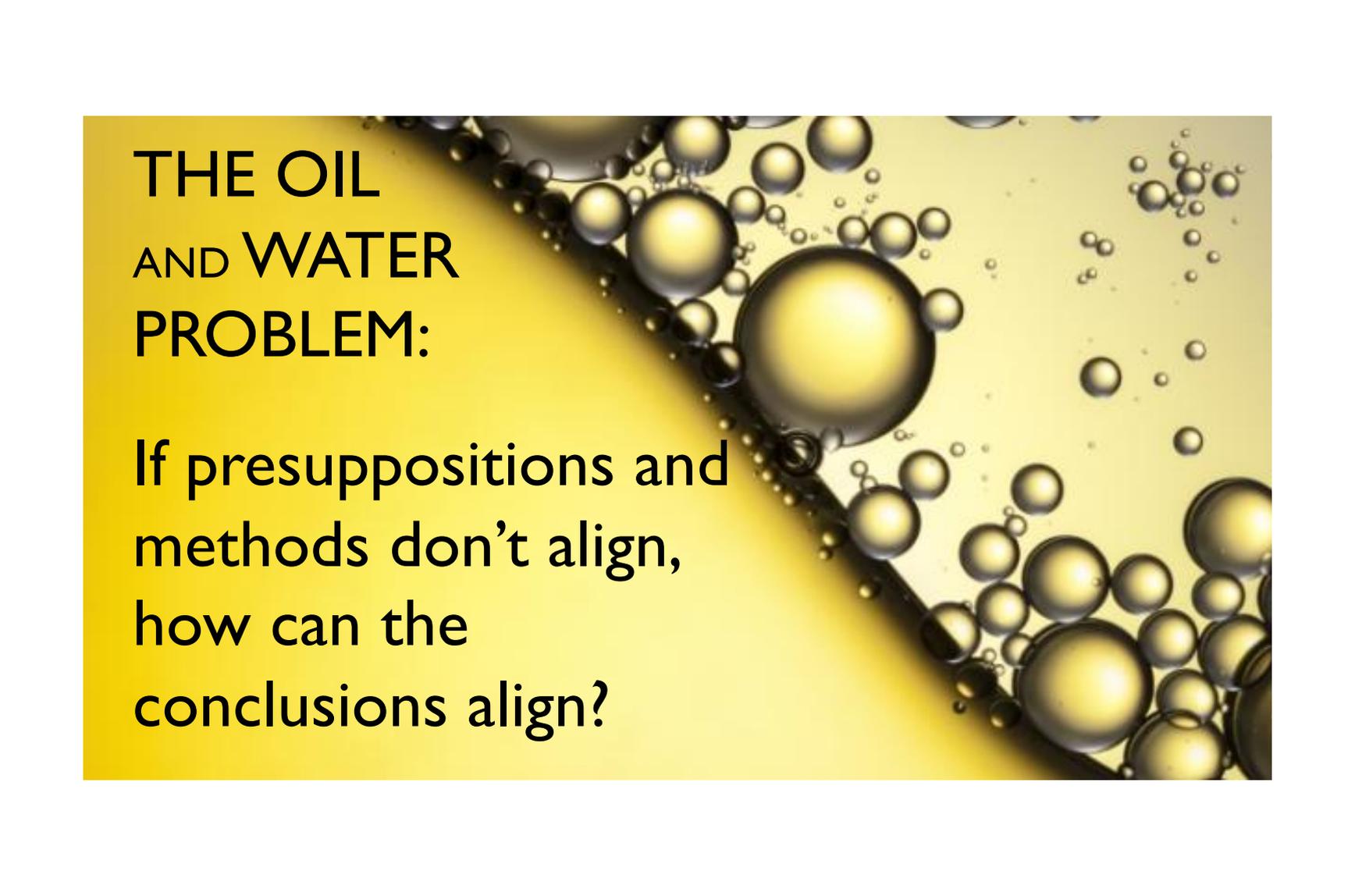
- “The use of some secular therapy interventions is not inherently wrong; the overreliance and/or independent use of these techniques is... When research and Christianity **contradict** each other, we follow the latter.  
– Dr. Sarah Rainer
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/september/concerning-psychology-and-christianity-guest-post-by-sarah-.html>

# PROS AND CONS OF INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGY

- Attempts to utilize all sources of knowledge
- Chooses the Bible when there are clear contradictions
- May not prioritize the Bible when there are not contradictions (e.g., bio/psycho/social/spiritual model?).
- Underemphasizes Biblical training.
- Brain and mind illness are superimposed (definition in pathology, and view of environment, culture as non-moral)

# PROS AND CONS OF INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGY

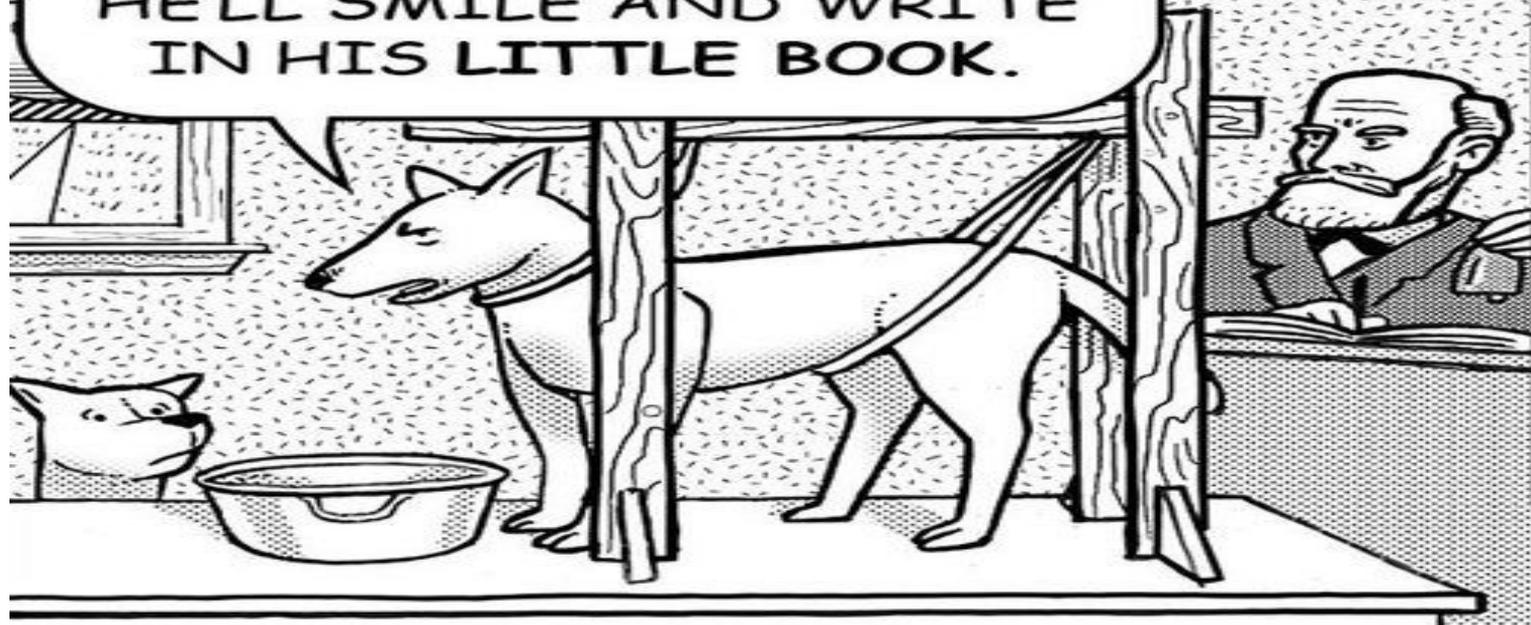
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- Brain and mind illness are superimposed (definition in pathology, and view of environment, culture as non-moral)
- Incongruence of presuppositions, methodology, conclusions

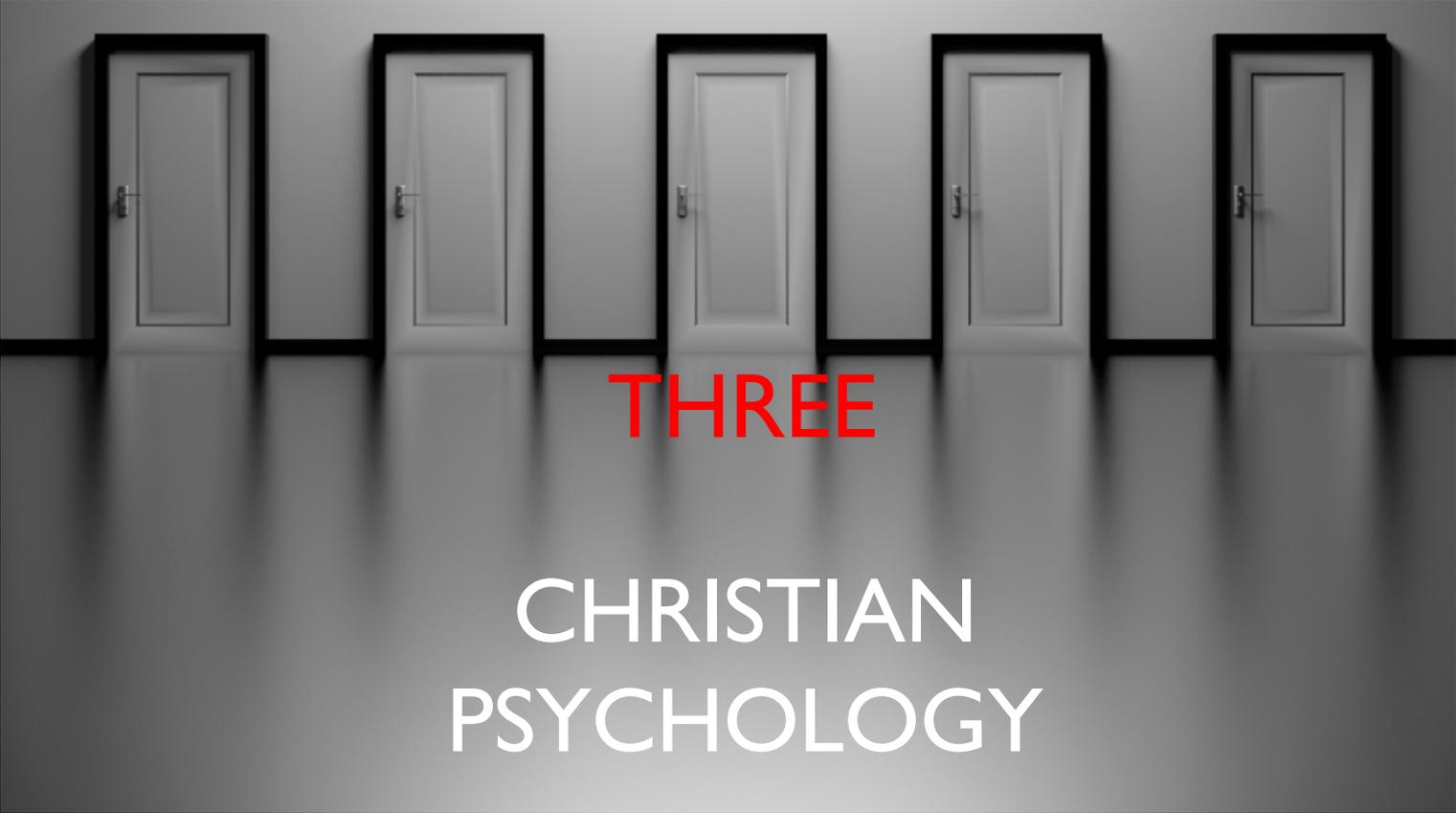
A microscopic view of an oil and water emulsion. The image shows numerous spherical droplets of varying sizes, some appearing as bright yellow spheres and others as darker, more translucent spheres. The droplets are densely packed in some areas and more sparse in others, creating a complex, textured appearance. The background is a light, warm yellow color.

# THE OIL AND WATER PROBLEM:

If presuppositions and  
methods don't align,  
how can the  
conclusions align?

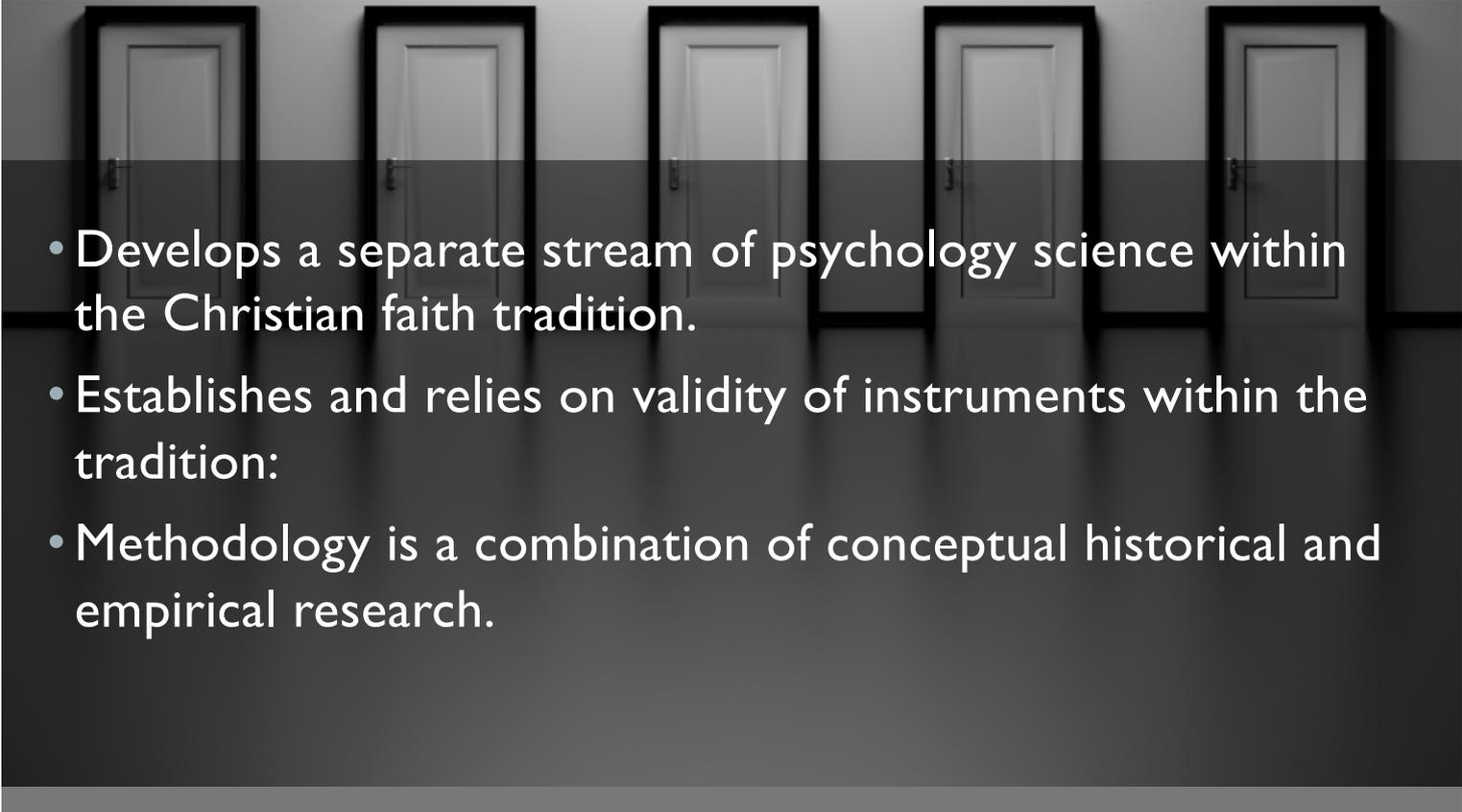
WATCH WHAT I CAN  
MAKE PAVLOV DO.  
AS SOON AS I DROOL,  
HE'LL SMILE AND WRITE  
IN HIS LITTLE BOOK.

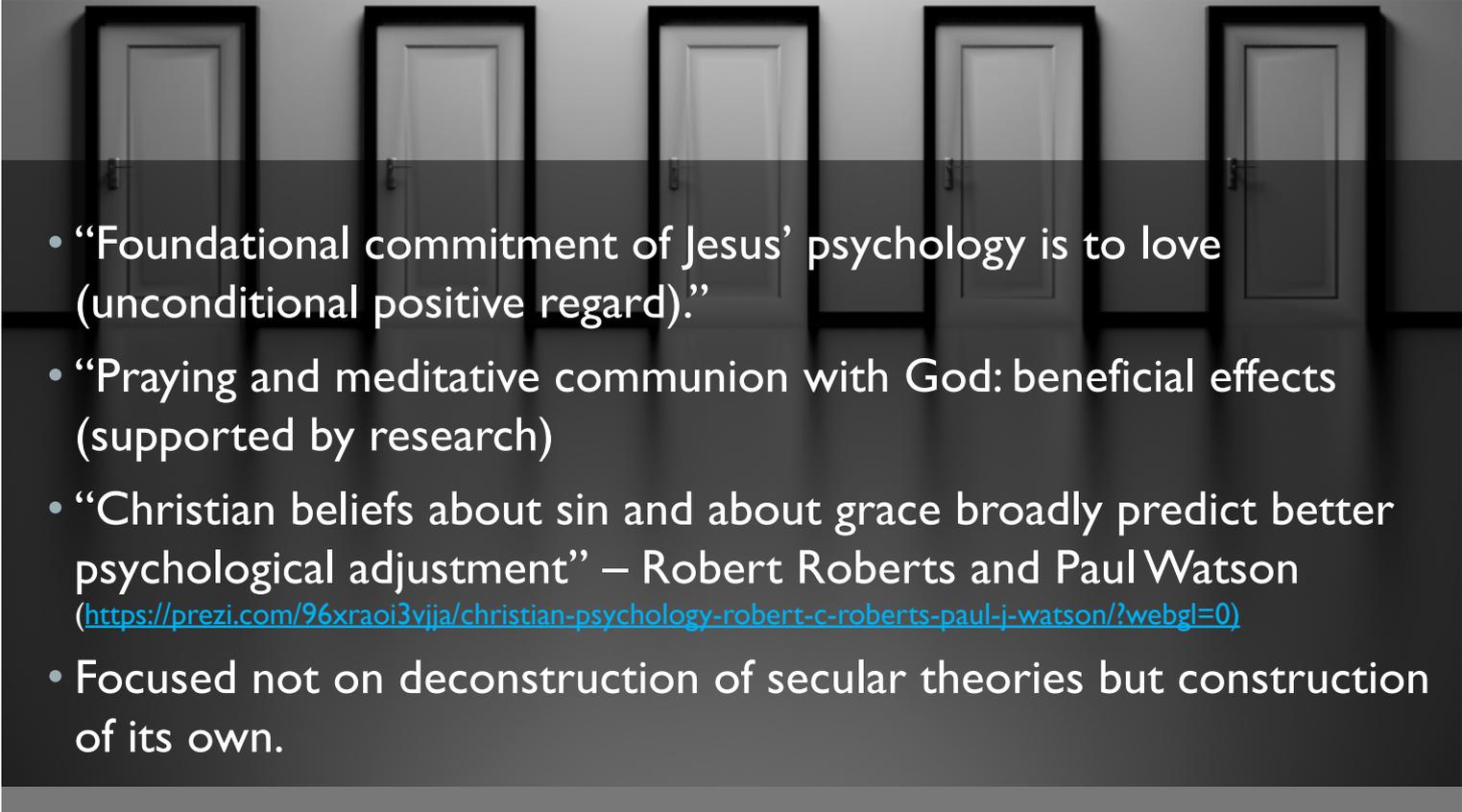




THREE

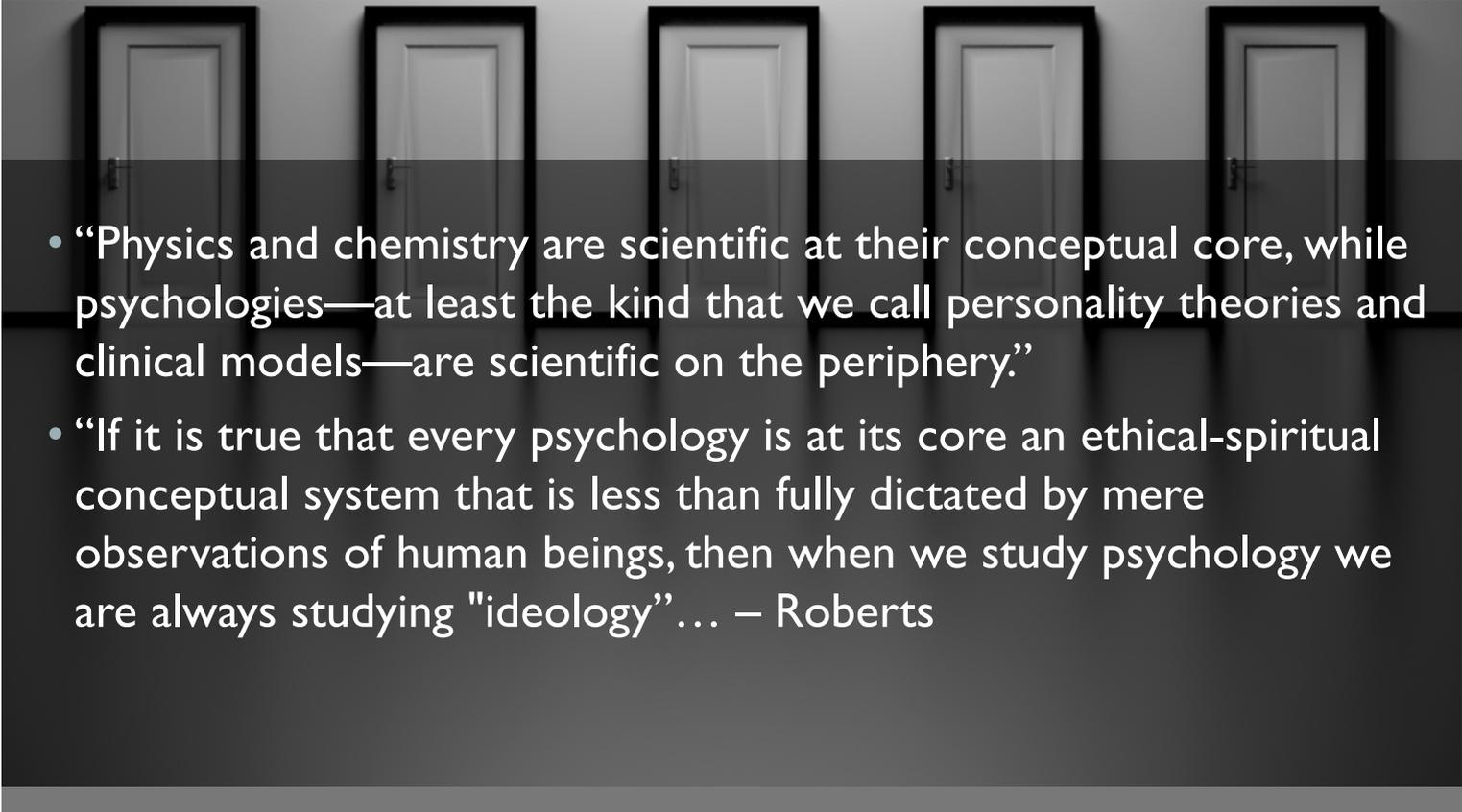
CHRISTIAN  
PSYCHOLOGY

- 
- Develops a separate stream of psychology science within the Christian faith tradition.
  - Establishes and relies on validity of instruments within the tradition:
  - Methodology is a combination of conceptual historical and empirical research.

- 
- “Foundational commitment of Jesus’ psychology is to love (unconditional positive regard).”
  - “Praying and meditative communion with God: beneficial effects (supported by research)
  - “Christian beliefs about sin and about grace broadly predict better psychological adjustment” – Robert Roberts and Paul Watson (<https://prezi.com/96xraoi3vjjja/christian-psychology-robert-c-roberts-paul-j-watson/?webgl=0>)
  - Focused not on deconstruction of secular theories but construction of its own.

- 
- “If a psychology is at heart an ethical system, an ideal of human functioning with corollary ideas about what’s wrong with people and how they can move from dysfunction to better function, then Christianity has always been in the psychology business, and should take its proper place among the various psychologies that are being offered today”
  - “Diversity (of modern psychologies) is odd if the psychologies are scientific at their core...we do not see eight or ten rival chemistries all operating in the same decade so that the student has to study them and choose which one he likes best” – Robert Roberts

[\(https://www.cardus.ca/comment/article/1046/redeeming-psychology-means-recovering-the-christian-psychology-of-the-past/\)](https://www.cardus.ca/comment/article/1046/redeeming-psychology-means-recovering-the-christian-psychology-of-the-past/)

- 
- “Physics and chemistry are scientific at their conceptual core, while psychologies—at least the kind that we call personality theories and clinical models—are scientific on the periphery.”
  - “If it is true that every psychology is at its core an ethical-spiritual conceptual system that is less than fully dictated by mere observations of human beings, then when we study psychology we are always studying “ideology”... – Roberts

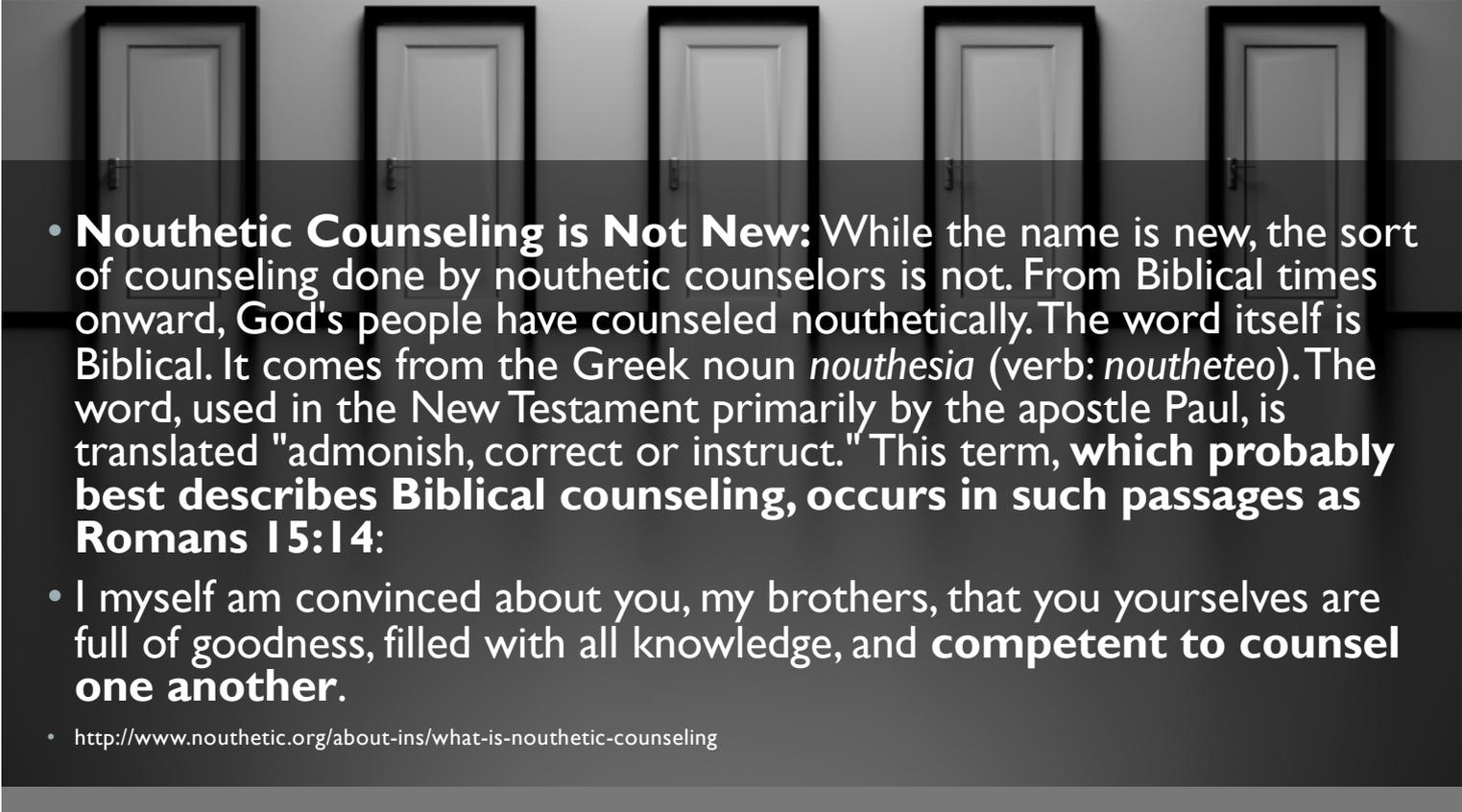
# PROS AND CONS OF CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY

- Recognizes the *peripheral* role of science in psychology.
- Engages in research to positively construct a Christian psychology
- Tradition and historical perspectives (historical theology) are elevated to prescriptive status
- More focused on a “Christian” rather than Biblical psychology and worldview



FOUR

NOUTHETIC



- **Nouthetic Counseling is Not New:** While the name is new, the sort of counseling done by nouthetic counselors is not. From Biblical times onward, God's people have counseled nouthetically. The word itself is Biblical. It comes from the Greek noun *nouthesia* (verb: *noutheteo*). The word, used in the New Testament primarily by the apostle Paul, is translated "admonish, correct or instruct." This term, **which probably best describes Biblical counseling, occurs in such passages as Romans 15:14:**

- I myself am convinced about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and **competent to counsel one another.**

- <http://www.nouthetic.org/about-ins/what-is-nouthetic-counseling>

- 
- The three ideas found in the word *nouthesia* are **confrontation**, **concern**, and **change**. To put it simply, *nouthetic counseling consists of lovingly confronting people out of deep concern in order to help them make those changes that God requires.*

- <http://www.nouthetic.org/about-ins/what-is-nouthetic-counseling>

- 
- By **confrontation** we mean that one Christian personally gives counsel to another from the Scriptures. He does not confront him with his own ideas or the ideas of others. **He limits his counsel strictly to that which may be found in the Bible, believing that**
  - *All Scripture is breathed out by God and useful for teaching, for conviction, for correction and for disciplined training in righteousness in order to fit and fully equip the man from God for every good task. (2 Timothy 3:16,17)*
  - The nouthetic counselor believes that **all that is needed to help another person love God and his neighbor as he should, as the verse above indicates, may be found in the Bible.**

- <http://www.nouthetic.org/about-ins/what-is-nouthetic-counseling>

- 
- By **concern** we mean that counseling is always done for the benefit of the counselee. His welfare is always in view in Biblical counseling. The apostle Paul put it this way: "**I am not writing these things to shame you, but to counsel you as my dear children.**" (1 Corinthians 4:14)
  - Plainly, the familial nature of the word *noutheteo* appears in this verse. There is always a warm, family note to biblical counseling which is done among the saints of God who seek to help one another become more like Christ.
  - Christians consider their counseling to be a part of the sanctification process whereby one Christian **helps another get through some difficulty that is hindering him from moving forward in his spiritual growth.**

- 
- By **change** we mean that counseling is done because there is something in another Christian's life **that fails to meet the biblical requirements** and that, therefore, keeps him from honoring God.
  - All counseling—Biblical or otherwise—attempts change.
  - **Only Biblical counselors know what a counselee should become** as the result of counseling: he should look more like Christ. He is the Standard. Biblical counseling is done by Christians who are convinced that God is able to make the changes that are necessary as His Word is ministered in the power of the Spirit.

- <http://www.nouthetic.org/about-ins/what-is-nouthetic-counseling>

# PROS AND CONS OF NOUTHETIC

- Attempts to exalt the sufficiency of Scripture
- Rejects **mainstream, integrated, and Christian psychology**
- Imbalanced
  - Admonishment = all counseling
- Counseling = Behavioristic/Sin Focused
- Abandons **psychology**
- Rooted in Reformed Theology

**PROBLEM #1:**  
**ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING**

- 11 Instances of  
νουθετέω/νουθεσία
- 5 are descriptive
  - Ac 20:31-32 (admonish and commend)
  - Rom 15:14
  - 1 Cor 4:14
  - 1 Cor 10:11
  - 2 Thes 3:15
- 6 are prescriptive
  - Eph 6:4
  - Col 1:28
  - Col 3:16
  - 1 Thes 5:12
  - 1 Thes 5:14
  - Tt 3:10

## PROBLEM #1:

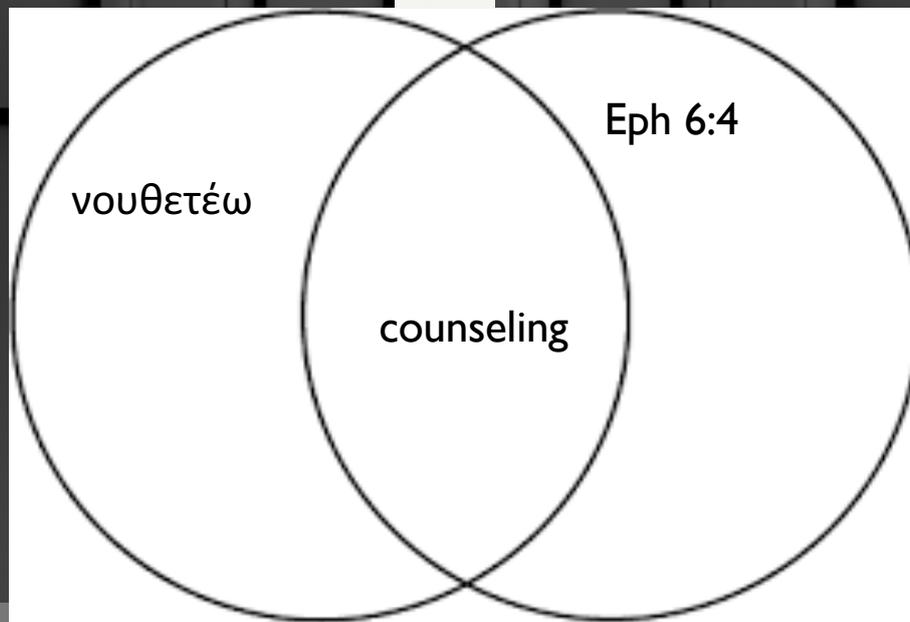
ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

νουθετέω

counseling

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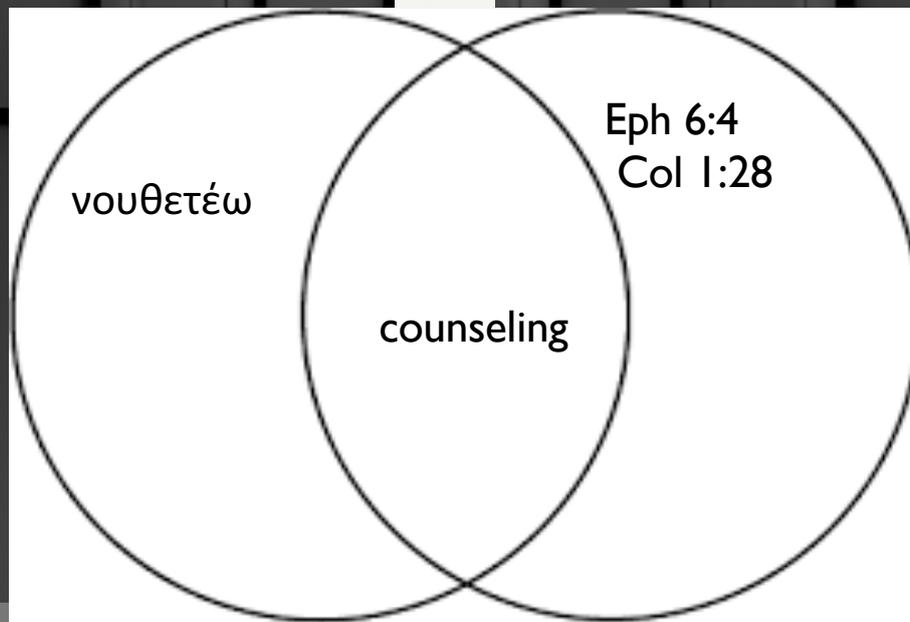
## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline **and** instruction of the Lord. – Ephesians 6:4

## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING



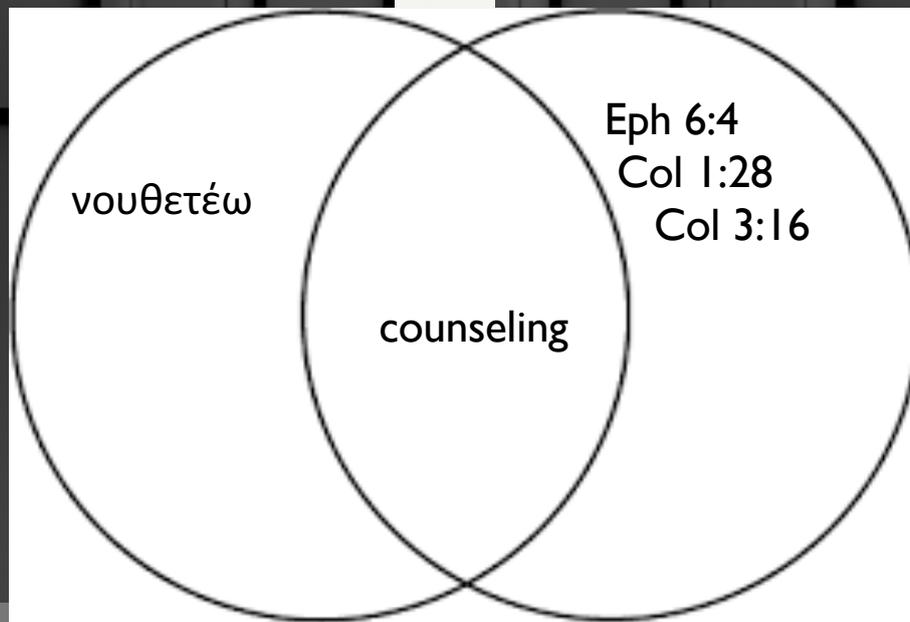
## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- We proclaim Him, admonishing every man **and** teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.  
– Colossians 1:28

## PROBLEM #1:

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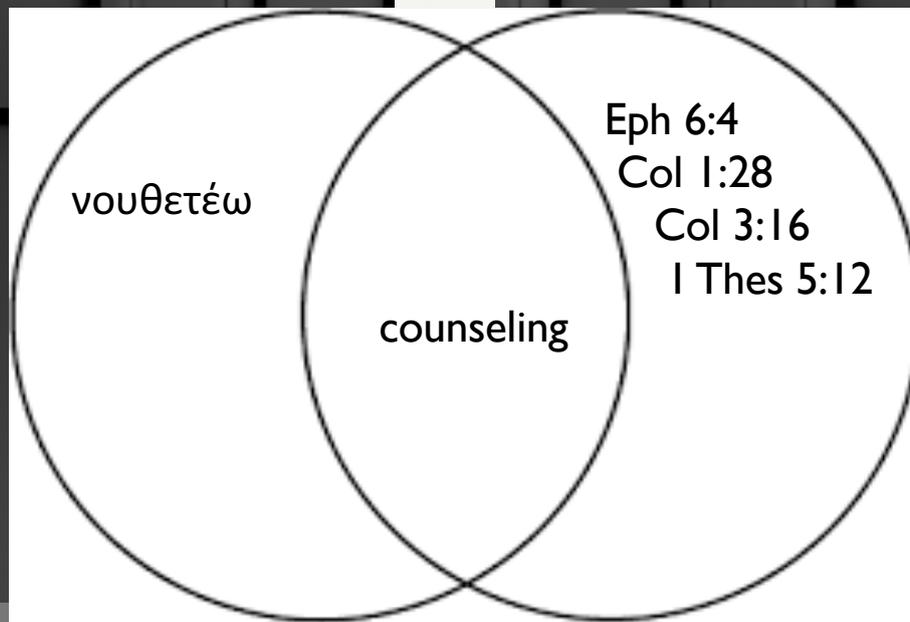
## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching **and** admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. – Colossians 3:16

## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING



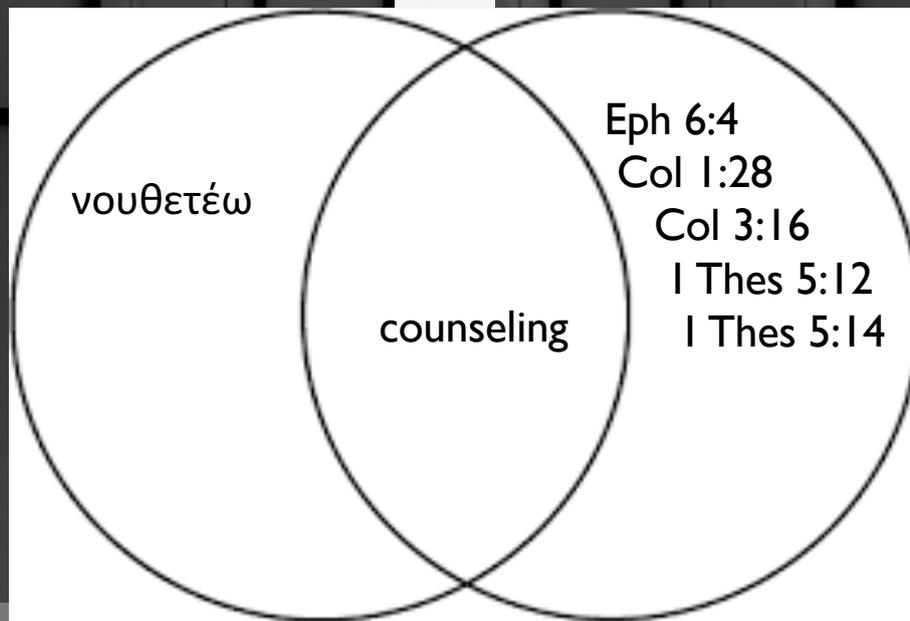
## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, **and** have charge over you in the Lord **and** give you instruction, – 1 Thessalonians 5:12

## PROBLEM #1:

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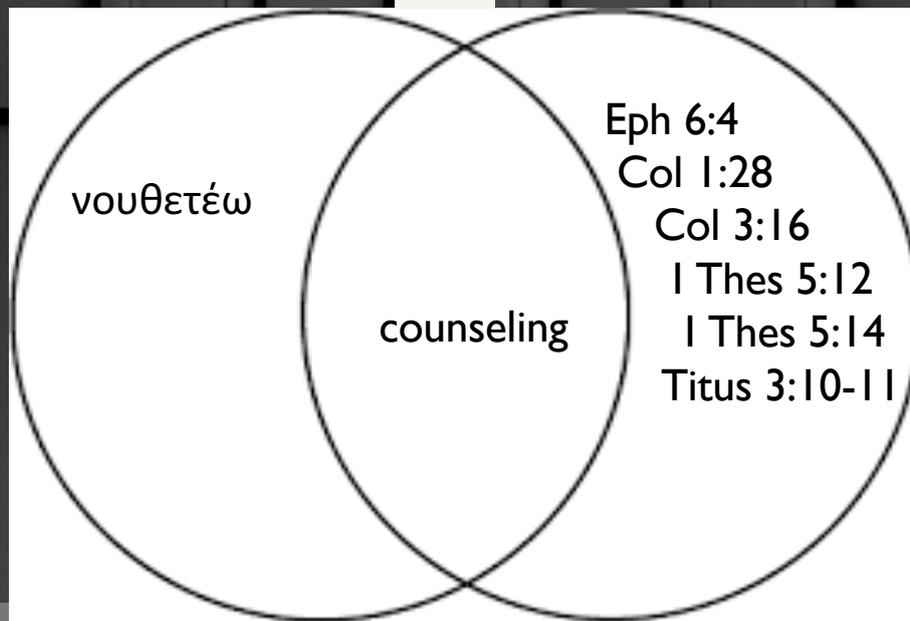
## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- We urge you, brethren, **admonish** the unruly, **encourage** the fainthearted, **help** the weak, **be patient** with everyone...— 1 Thessalonians 5:14

## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING



## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING

- Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is **perverted** and is **sinning**, being **self-condemned**.— Titus 3:10-11

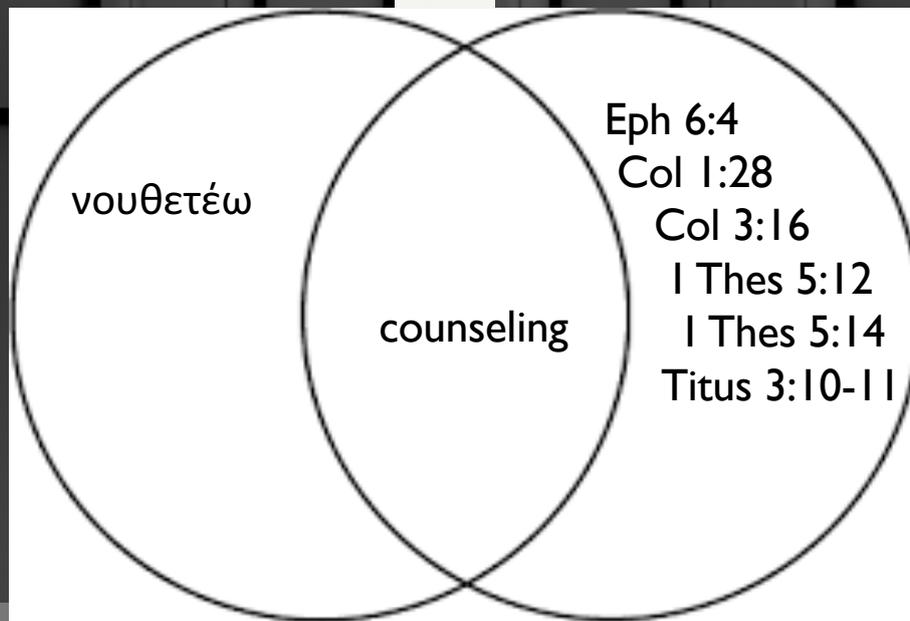
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- Reject a factious man after a first and second **warning**, knowing that such a man is **perverted** and is **sinning**, being **self-condemned**.— Titus 3:10-11
- A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise **counsel**, — Proverbs 1:5

## PROBLEM #1:

ADMONISHMENT  $\neq$  ALL COUNSELING



**PROBLEM #2:**  
**THE BEHAVIORISTIC/SIN FOCUS**

- “By **change** we mean that counseling is done because there is **something** in another Christian's life **that fails to meet the biblical requirements** and that, therefore, keeps him from honoring God.”
- (Yet, Job was not guilty of sin, but ignorance (Job 1:22, 2:10, 40:3-5, 42:1-6))

**PROBLEM #2:**  
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## PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?

- What is psychology?
- “See to it that no one takes you captive through **the** philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, **rather than according to Christ.**” – Colossians 2:8

Don't Throw  
**The Baby**  
Out With The  
Bathwater



## **PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?**

- Psychology is not a worldview, it is a discipline or field of study.
- Psychology = the study of the mind, soul
- All perspectives on psychology are grounded in worldview

## **PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?**

- Who knows the mind and soul better than the Creator?
- The Bible is the **authoritative source** for knowledge of the mind and soul, thus the primary textbook for proper psychology (Biblical psychology).

## **PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?**

- There are truths outside of the Bible in many disciplines that we find useful (logic, math, physics, propositional truths, descriptions, etc.)
- These are extra-biblical, **subject to Scripture**, and still useful.
- Not to be equated (integrated) with, but to be interpreted by the authority of Scripture

## PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?

- “In my understanding, **attempted integration** of the Scriptures with worldly counseling beliefs, methods, and/or techniques **inevitably means** that in order to make them agree, **the Scriptures are bent to fit** the non-scriptural material that the counselor attempts to integrate with it. I believe **the task is impossible without ending in a non-scriptural method.**”

• Jay Adams – <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/competent-counsel-interview-jay-adams/>

## **PROBLEM #3: ABANDONS PSYCHOLOGY?**

- The consequence of throwing the baby out with the bathwater is that **Christians have abandoned the study of the mind and the soul to those who deny the Creator.**
- Christians have doomed an entire field of study to be populated by falsehood.

## PROBLEM #4:

### BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM

- **Error 1:** The methodology of Reformed/Covenant theology: begin with theology, exegete in light of that (the RCC hermeneutic)
- “Your theological system should tell you how to exegete” – Kevin DeYoung  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/your-theological-system-should-tell-you-how-to-exegete/>

## PROBLEM #4:

### BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM

- “If a matter has been settled by the church, it is wrong to stir up the thinking of the general population of Christians about any change in such **long-settled theology** unless it is clearly an exegetically-supported change that can be demonstrated to be a genuine advance **in thought that improves upon accepted Reformation doctrine.**” – Jay Adams

<http://www.nouthetic.org/blog/?p=5169>

## PROBLEM #4: BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM

- **Error 2:** Adam's limited atonement makes it impossible to counsel an unbeliever that Jesus died for them.  
(<http://www.drcone.com/2017/08/07/culinary-calvinism-considering-jay-adams-tulipburger/>)
- *“As a reformed Christian, the writer believes that counselors must not tell any unsaved counselee that Christ died for him, for **they cannot say that**. No man knows except Christ himself who are his elect for whom he died.” – Jay Adams (Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling, “Evangelism and Counseling”)*

## **PROBLEM #4:**

### **BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM**

- **Error #3:** mixed messages on sanctification (godliness comes through self-discipline, sanctification by works)

## PROBLEM #4: BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM

- **"Discipline** is the secret of godliness... "You must learn to discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness... discipline means **work**; it means **sustained daily** effort....An athlete becomes an expert only by years of hard practice" "[Taking up the cross] means putting to death the old life patterns of the old man....This is what it means to discipline oneself for godliness. It means **to continue to say** 'no' to self and to say 'yes' to Christ every day until one by one all of the **old habitual ways are replaced by new ones**. It means that by **daily endeavor** to follow God's Son, one finds at length that doing so is more 'natural' than not doing so" "If you **practice** what God tells you to do, the obedient life will become a part of you. There is no simple, quick, easy way to instant godliness." – Jay Adams (Godliness Through Discipline, p.2-3, 5-6).

## **PROBLEM #4:**

### **BUILT ON REFORMED/COVENANT PLATFORM**

- This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit are you being perfected by the flesh? – Galatians 3:2-3
- But now that faith has come we are no longer under a tutor – 3:25
- It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery – 5:1
- You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? – 5:7
- But I say walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh... But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. – 5:16,18



BIBLICAL

FIVE



# white power accessories



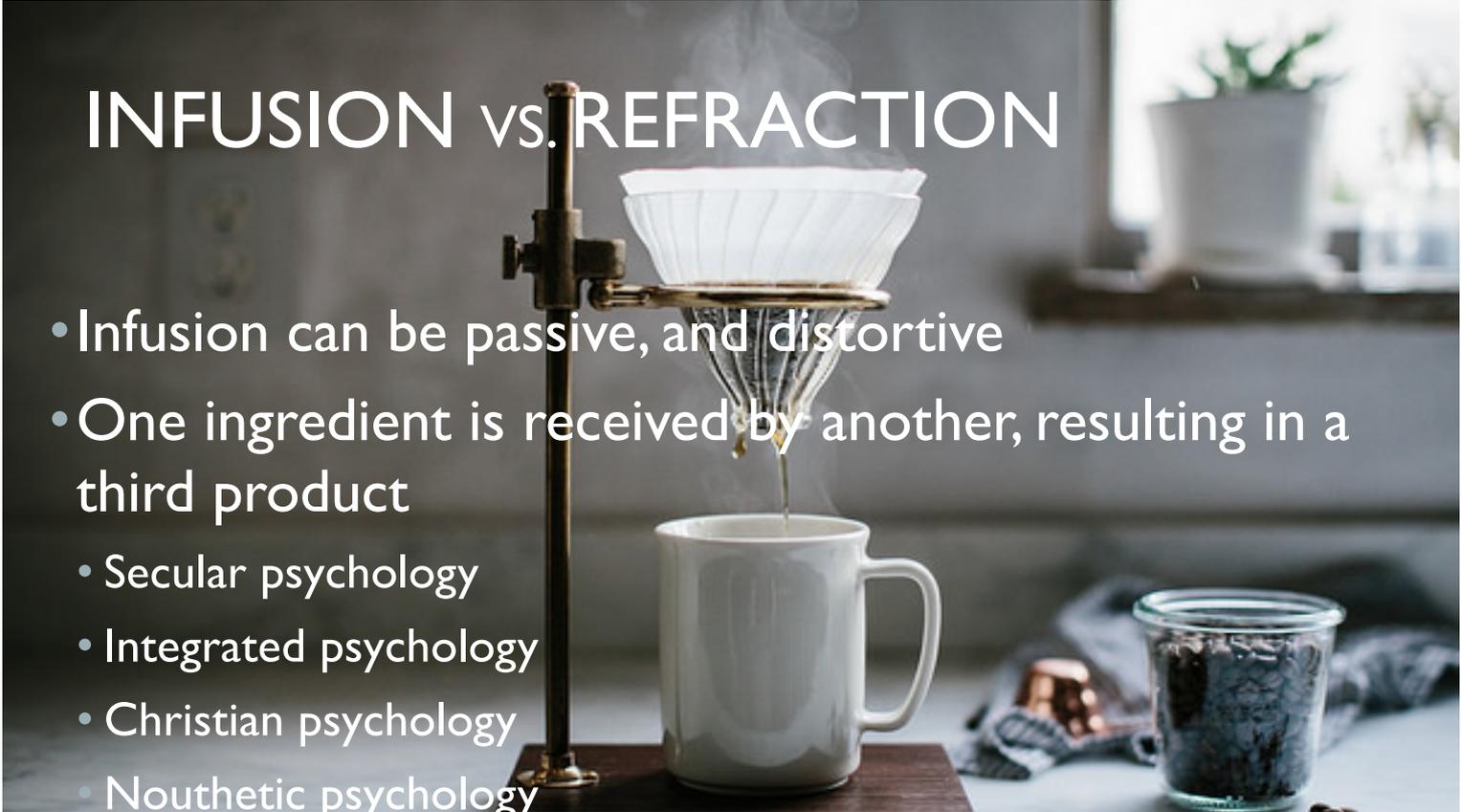


# REINTERPRETATION vs. INTEGRATION

- “Perhaps, instead, we could say there is a need for **reinterpretation** as Christians consider the claims made by mainstream psychologists. And these two processes are different. “**Integration**” assumes a *continuity* between secular and biblical worldview presuppositions that cannot be assumed to exist. “**Reinterpretation**” assumes a *discontinuity* between the two worldviews that requires a different way of understanding concepts or theories in relationship to what the Bible teaches.  
– Dr. Jeff Forrey

- <http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2014/10/27/a-response-to-the-integration-of-christianity-and-psychology-a-guest-post-by-sarah-rainer/>

# INFUSION vs. REFRACTION



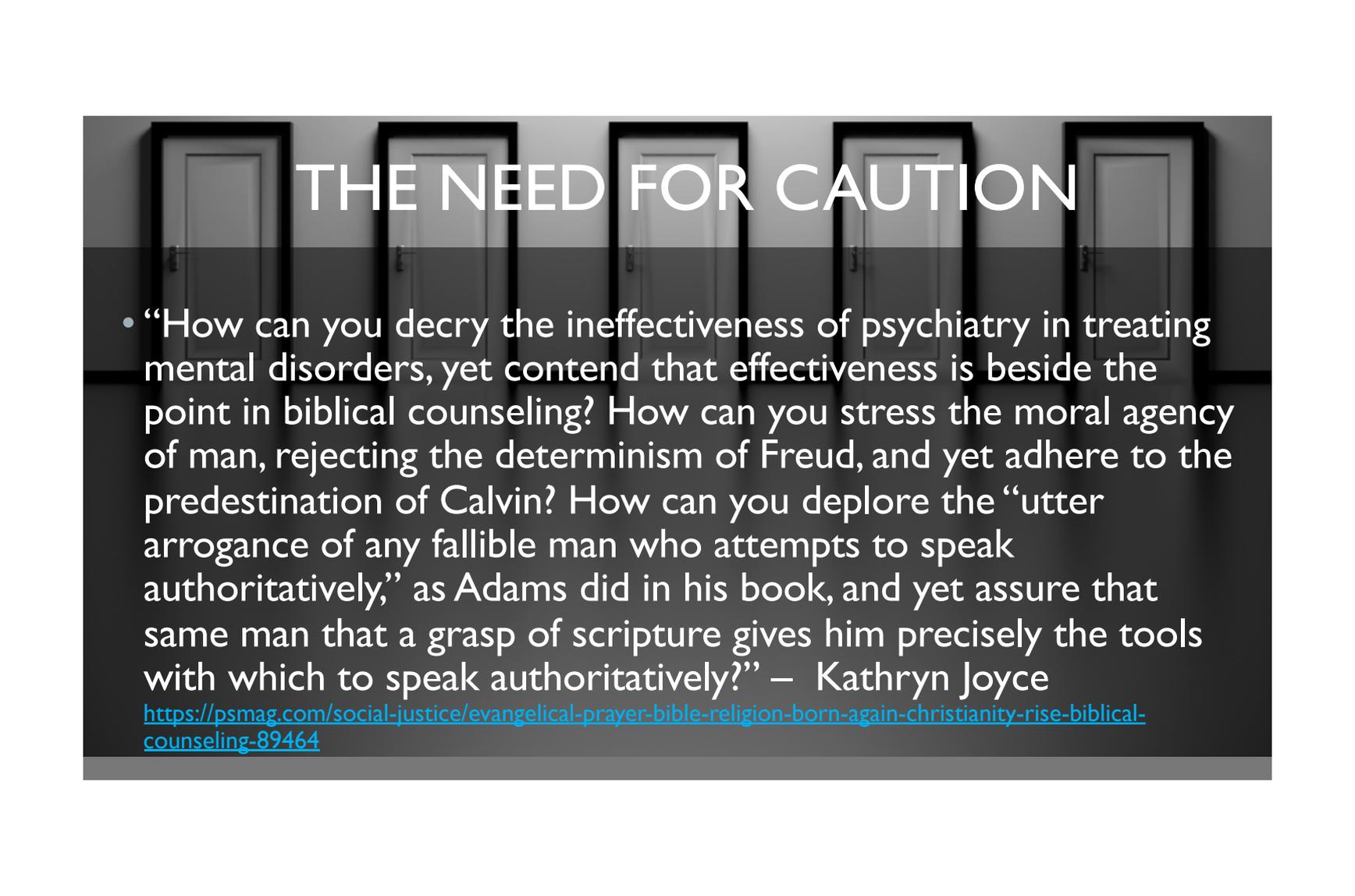
- Infusion can be passive, and distortive
- One ingredient is received by another, resulting in a third product
  - Secular psychology
  - Integrated psychology
  - Christian psychology
  - Nouthetic psychology

- Refraction can be active and corrective
- Allows the observer to observe accurately

## INFUSION vs. REFRACTION



- The Bible is the refractive lens through which to interpret/reinterpret knowledge of the mind/soul.



# THE NEED FOR CAUTION

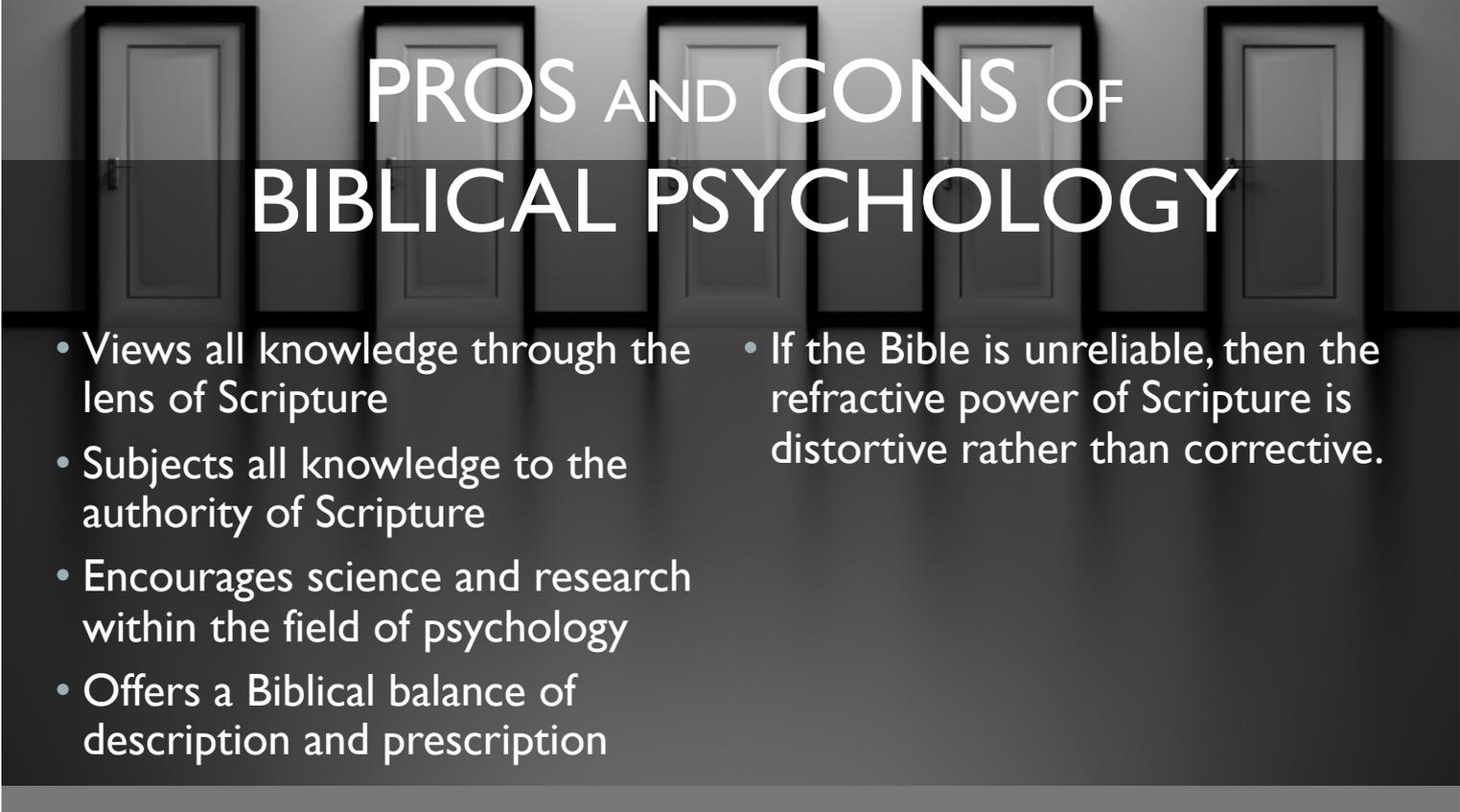
- “How can you decry the ineffectiveness of psychiatry in treating mental disorders, yet contend that effectiveness is beside the point in biblical counseling? How can you stress the moral agency of man, rejecting the determinism of Freud, and yet adhere to the predestination of Calvin? How can you deplore the “utter arrogance of any fallible man who attempts to speak authoritatively,” as Adams did in his book, and yet assure that same man that a grasp of scripture gives him precisely the tools with which to speak authoritatively?” – Kathryn Joyce

<https://psmag.com/social-justice/evangelical-prayer-bible-religion-born-again-christianity-rise-biblical-counseling-89464>



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- “And this may be the great irony: that...[they] gave birth to the very sort of person they were rebelling against, the “fallible man who attempts to speak authoritatively.” That man has always been with us, as both comforter and misleader, ever struggling to fit his rules around the oldest of mysteries..” – Kathryn Joyce <https://psmag.com/social-justice/evangelical-prayer-bible-religion-born-again-christianity-rise-biblical-counseling-89464>



# PROS AND CONS OF BIBLICAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Views all knowledge through the lens of Scripture
- Subjects all knowledge to the authority of Scripture
- Encourages science and research within the field of psychology
- Offers a Biblical balance of description and prescription
- If the Bible is unreliable, then the refractive power of Scripture is distortive rather than corrective.



BIBLICAL

FIVE

**Recognizing and Applying  
Biblical Authority  
and Biblical Sufficiency**

