

Puritan Resources for Biblical Pastoral Care

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【Abstract】

Pastoral care has the old and rich historical resources. Although there are some societal and cultural differences, it will be useful research work for today to search for the content and tools of pastoral care until now in the Christian history. The resolution reached in the study will be the necessary resources for the pastoral care and counseling of our time. To find the historical resources, first, this paper focuses on the pastoral care in Puritan times after summing up the precedent study on Christian care in history. Its work mainly chronicles the historical shift in pastoral care from a focus on Christian approaches to a focus on psychological approaches. And we find the fact that biblical counseling has passed on traditional pastoral care and some Christian counseling has looked for Christian care resources from the history. The Puritans' care has a unique feature that help people with concrete ways of applying the word of God emphasizing on Christian care resources. Second, this paper gives a general overview of the Puritans' theological position and the critical issues in pastoral care. The public application of the Bible was accomplished through preaching and its private application was done through counseling. They also had interests in various field for spiritual and mental healing such as sin, repent, hope, imagination and meditation.

Key words: pastoral care, Puritan, preaching, hope, meditation

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I. Introduction

There have been lots of care approaches exploring human nature and how to treat its problems and promote its well-being since the founding of psychology in mid-1800s. However, it is also true that there was a tremendous amount of approaches to care during previous centuries. The form of this older care was different in many respects from the empirically oriented modern scientific theories and practices. As, in particular, care is native to Christianity and a fundamental dimension of pastoral practice, Christian church has a long history of thinking and practicing soul care for centuries.

Present pastoral care may gain lots of benefits informed by reliable pastoral practices from the church history. A clearer estimate may be made of the historical significance of pastoral care, and of its relevance for our times. Pastoral care in the past has basically relied on the theological reflections of pastors and theologians. The Church Fathers, Reformers and the Puritans did just that. They developed a biblical psychology which can be defined as a biblical way of understanding people (Creation), problems (Fall), and solutions (Redemption).

In this vein, first, this paper chronicles the history of care in the English-speaking world. This analysis is not a detailed discussion of theological reflection over the centuries, but will trace the major aspects of soul care that eventually led to the present pastoral care. The seventeenth century is of significance because it saw the decay of the medieval age and the emergence of modern ways of thinking. I believe that the theology and practice of the Puritans in this period can help our pastoral care avoid recurrence of similar mistake and be more faithful to God's Word. Second, then, this paper will examine some

critical elements in the classic pastoral care that give much weight to the Puritan approach to care.

II. Body

1. Tracing Historical Resources

Just as there is a history to our personal life, so the pastoral care has a history. We, Christians, must take its history seriously. We can take the inspiration and the warning from the past, and see how contemporary positions were formed by inheritance from and reaction to the past. For a analysis of how pastoral care has been changed in history, we can see some works. In 1953, John T. McNeil authored a book about soul care, titled *A History of the Cure of Souls*. This book is not only a helpful resource for historical understanding of soul care, but also promotes the awareness of the ministry of sustaining, healing, reconciling, and guiding stood in a tradition.

McNeil suggests that soul care in Christianity was made concrete from the practices of the wise men of Israel. Along with the priests and the prophets, the wise men were one of the classes of leaders, and were closely associated with the care of the soul. He portrayed them as “practical counselors of souls, proclaiming reverence for God and justice to men, and making plain the path of right conduct.”¹⁾

In the history of the care of souls, Jesus Christ occupies a unique place. As presented in the synoptic Gospels, Jesus Christ presents us

1) John T. McNeill, *The History of the Cure of Souls* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 9.

with two gifts that are the objects of our deepest strivings: spiritual renewal and spiritual repose.²⁾ Spiritual renewal comes in the new birth and new life through faith in Christ. Jesus proclaimed the message of redemption and new and abundant life through his words and his life. He strove to lead people toward repentance and a conversion that would flow out of the heart into every sphere of life.

Twenty years later E. Brooks Holifield gave us his useful work, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization*. Holifield traces the history of pastoral care from the seventeenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. His work chronicles the historical shift in pastoral care, as the subtitle suggests, from a focus on Christ, sin, and salvation, to a focus on self, self-actualization, and secular psychology. In addition, his work follows a history of the private and public ministry of the Word.

Pastoral care in America commences with the Puritans and their focus on sin, idols of the heart, suffering, conscience, comfort, and consolation. Naturally, the majority of pastors have had a biblical psychology with an understanding of human beings, problems, and solutions based on theology.³⁾ Over time, secular psychological approaches seemed to outdo biblical psychology for many pastors. The pastors adopted some theories of pastoral counseling that are bereft of biblical and historical substance. Holifield makes the keen point that “for almost twenty centuries the Christian clergy have spent more time listening to people than preaching to them.”⁴⁾

2) McNeill, *The History of the Cure of Souls*, 77.

3) Robert W. Kelleman, *Soul Physicians: A Theology of Soul Care and Spiritual Direction* (Taneytown, MD.: RPM Books, 2002), 142.

4) E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville, TN.: Abingdon, 1983), 15.

In 1987, Thomas Oden authored *Classical Pastoral Care: Pastoral Counsel*, volume three. In his book on learning about pastoral care from the classical tradition, he warns pastors involved in soul care about three stumbling blocks. “Having an anti-historical view of pastoral theology; An anti-pastoral approach to historical theology; and An anti-theological style of pastoral care.”⁵⁾

In evangelical circles, David Powlison chronicles the historical development of the biblical counseling movement that began in the 1960s. His analysis of the movement extends through the 1980s.⁶⁾ According to Powlison, currently a biblical counseling movement has emerged defining people’s problems away from the mental health professional and towards the pastor and theologian as the primary counselor. This movement views the counseling task as theological, scriptural, and rightly under the authority of the church. Biblical counseling encourages and assists churches to consistently proclaim a faith in God that is Christ-centered, scripture-centered, and cross-centered.

Powlison was followed by Heath B. Lambert, who evaluated the thinking behind the movement. According to Lambert, biblical reflection about the task of interpersonal care came to an end when the Puritan writers passed from the scene. It would be a century before writings like this would again appear.

The point advanced here is not that Christians were not involved at all in the task of thinking about interpersonal ministry. The point is rather that this involvement was not as

5) Thomas C. Oden, *Care of Souls in the Classical Tradition* (Minneapolis, MN.: Fortress Press, 1984), 13.

6) David Powlison, *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context* (Greensboro, NC.: New Growth Press, 2010), 1-6.

Careful and uniquely Christian as it had been. Before this, Christians were thinking inside their community and using their resources to think through counseling issues (though they would not have called it counseling). After this, Christians were taking their lead from secular thinkers and bringing in biblical principles almost as an afterthought.”⁷⁾

On the other hand, there are some investigations that combine the truth of historical theology with application for life and care ministry today. In an examination of the Puritans’ practice of soul care, Tim Keller notes that they had “sophisticated diagnostic casebooks containing scores and even hundreds of different personal problems and spiritual conditions.”⁸⁾ Keller cites John Owen’s insistence that “every pastors must understand all the various cases of depression, fear, discouragement, and conflict that are found in the souls of men.”⁹⁾ Keller argued that the works of the Puritans are a rich resource for biblical counseling for the following six reasons:

- ① The Puritans were committed to the functional authority of the Scripture. For them it was the comprehensive manual for dealing with all problems of the heart.
- ② The Puritans developed a sophisticated and sensitive system of diagnosis for personal problems, distinguishing a variety of physical, spiritual, temperamental and demonic causes.
- ③ The Puritans developed a remarkable balance in their treatment because they were not invested in any one ‘personality theory’ other than biblical teaching about the heart.

7) Heath B. Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement after Adams* (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 2012), 9.

8) Tim Keller, “Puritan Practices for Biblical Counseling,” *The Journal of Pastoral Practice* 9, no. 3 (1988): 13.

9) Keller, “Puritan Practices for Biblical Counseling,” 13.

- ④ The Puritans were realistic about difficulties of the Christian life, especially conflicts with remaining, indwelling sin.
- ⑤ The Puritans looked not just at behavior but at underlying root motives and desires. Man is a worshipper; all problems grow out of ‘sinful imagination’ or idol manufacturing.
- ⑥ The Puritans considered the essential spiritual remedy to be belief in the gospel, used in both repentance and the development of proper self-understanding.¹⁰⁾

Mark Deckard’s book, *Helpful Truth in Past Places: The Puritan Practice of Biblical Counseling*, also deals with same theme that the Puritans offer us helpful truth in past places. In the introduction, Deckard describes Puritans’ ability to combine being student of the Word with being student of people. “The Puritans were masters at understanding the nature of human beings and applying Scripture in practical ways to help people with their struggles and problems. In the truest sense of the word they were psychologists, students of the inner person, before there ever was a field of secular psychology.”¹¹⁾

Deckard takes seven questions that people struggle with, and uses a classic Puritan work to help us answer it “with the specific question of biblical counseling in mind.”¹²⁾ Why is this happening to me? (John Flavel, *The Mystery of Providence*), Why am I so anxious and dissatisfied? (Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*), What does sin have to do with my problem? (John Owen, *On the Mortification of Sin in Believers*), Why doesn’t anyone understand my problems? (John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress*), Don’t I

10) Keller, “Puritan Resources for Biblical Counseling,” 11-44.

11) Mark Deckard, *Helpful Truth in Past Places: The Puritan Practice of Biblical Counseling* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2010), 9.

12) Deckard, *Helpful Truth in Past Places*, 15.

need just to stop feeling? (Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections*), How can I find joy again? (William Bridge, *A Lifting Up for the Downcast*) The devil made me do it?(Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*). Aside from those questions, in his conclusion, Deckard lists nearly three dozen application of Puritan truths to counseling problems face today.

2. Critical Elements in the Puritan Pastoral Care

One of the primary purpose of theology has been the formation of God's people into further Christ-likeness. This conception of theology is that of the Puritans who tried to formulate and expound the biblical doctrine and saw it as integral to forming the believer's life. The Puritans were heirs to the Calvinist tradition and anxious to have the Church in England further purified, in the light of Scripture. Their sole aim was to restore the church to its original purity.

Hugh Martin attempts to describe the essence of Puritanism by reference to three dominant characteristics of the movement. First, a belief in the reality and audibility of God's voice in the Bible and in the contemporaneous-work of the Holy Spirit. Second, a conviction of the need to worship God in the beauty of holiness. Third, A keen sense of responsibility to God for oneself and for other men.¹³⁾ A group of components have always been central to pastoral care in the Puritans.

1) Preaching

The heart of Puritan was its focus on the Word of God. They had submitted sincerely to the voice of God speaking in Scripture. They

13) Hugh Martin, *Puritanism and Richard Baxter* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1954), 76.

believed that God had revealed the most significant truths about human beings in the Bible. The Puritans made a earnest attempt to establish their lives on the basis of the Bible. The Bible determined the Puritans' sense of right and wrong. Their dearest wish was to live their lives in absolute obedience to his will.

Not surprisingly, their pastoral ministry devoted to the endeavor of applying the Word of God to individuals, as well as to the gathered congregation. The public ministry of the Word was accomplished through preaching. The private application of the Word to individuals, or couples, or families was done through counseling.

The practice of pastoral care in Puritan depended for its effectiveness on the preaching. They exalted preaching as the supreme work of a pastor. For the Puritans preaching was their chief work because it was the chief work of Christ and his apostles.¹⁴⁾

Puritan preaching were scriptural in content, method, and illustration.¹⁵⁾ First of all, then, the heart of their sermons was its Christ-centered nature. "Puritan preaching revolved around 'Christ, and him crucified'—for this is the hub of the Bible. The preachers' commission is to declare the whole counsel of God; but the cross is the center of that counsel."¹⁶⁾

In addition, through the preaching, God's Word of judgment and forgiveness was uttered for all to hear. Each individual was expected to search with in himself to determine whether he was properly

14) Horton Davies, *The Worship of the English Puritans* (London: Dacre Press, 1948), 183.

15) James I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 1990), 277-290. Packer summarized seven marks which were scriptural, Christ-centered, logical, memorable, transforming, experimental, and clear.

16) Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 286.

repentant and sincere in his profession of faith. Ken L. Sarles added,

Since the Word of God consisted in the very words of God, its authority was comprehensive, extending to every area of faith and practice, including everything necessary to life and godliness. As Richard Sibbes declared: ‘There is not anything or any condition that befalls a Christian in this life but there is a general rule in the Scriptures for it, and this rule is quickened by example.’ In other words, the Puritans had a holistic theological perspective rooted in Scripture, leading William Ames to conclude: ‘There is no precept of universal truth relevant to living well in domestic economy, morality, political life, or lawmaking which does not rightly pertain to theology.’ As far as the Puritans were concerned, every conceivable psychological need could be met and every imaginable psychological problem could be solved through a direct application of biblical truth. . . . Application of the Scriptures was done most consistently through expository preaching. As Ames explained, ‘The duty of an ordinary preacher is to set forth the will of God out of the Word for edification of the hearers.’ The sermon served as a means of corporate counseling, edifying the body of believers gathered together.¹⁷⁾

Puritan preaching constituted a form of preventative counseling, as the truths of Scripture were applied to the conscience. To achieve this purpose, they developed a particular structure of preaching called ‘the triple schema’ which consists of doctrine, proofs, and uses. The result was preaching that was both deeply theological and intensely practical.¹⁸⁾

17) Ken L. Sarles, “The English Puritans: A Historical Paradigm of Biblical Counseling,” in *Introduction to Biblical Counseling: A Basic Guide to the Principles and Practice of Counseling*, eds. John A. MacArthur & Wayne A. Mack (Dallas, TX.: Word, 1994), 25.

18) Sarles, “The English Puritans,” 26.

Perkins who made concreted this method in *The Art of Prophesying*, summarized it:

- ① Reading the text clearly from the canonical Scriptures.
- ② Explaining the meaning of it, once it has been read, in the light of the Scriptures themselves.
- ③ Gather a few profitable points of doctrine from the natural sense of the passage.
- ④ If the preacher is suitably gifted, applying the doctrines thus explained to the life and practice of the congregation in straightforward, plain speech.¹⁹⁾

They believed that the proper way to approach the will and affections was through the mind. For them, the order was clear. First, one deals with the mind, convincing the person of the truth. Once convinced of the truth, he is ready to respond to that truth. Truth for the Puritans was never abstract. It was comprehended by the intellect, but it issued in the will.

So, the Puritans believed a sermon should be memorable. The triple schema(doctrine, proofs, and uses) gave congregation handles by which to carry the sermon home. The congregation was expected to review the sermons at home.

Doctrine, the unfolding of the meaning of Scripture, is defined as “the science of living blessedly for ever”²⁰⁾ and “a condensed form of

19) William Perkins, *The Art of Prophesying with The Calling of the Ministry* (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1996), 79.

20) William Perkins, *A Golden Chaine: or, The Description of Theologie, Containing the Order the Order of the Casuses of Salvation and Damnation, according to Gods Word, in The Works of William Perkins* (London: John Legatt, 1613), 1:11: quoted in Joel R. Beeke & Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 691.

Christian wisdom, rooted in the Scriptures and accumulated over the centuries.²¹⁾ The role of doctrine related to pastoral care is to give God's people direction in how to live fittingly with the God's order.

The Puritans believed that their people must know doctrine in order to live well. Doctrine was not simply a description of truth; it partook of the reality. Sinclair Ferguson writes of the Puritans: "To them, systematic theology was to the pastor what a knowledge of anatomy is to the physician. Only in the light of the whole body of divinity (as they liked to call it) could a minister provide a diagnosis of, prescribe for, and ultimately cure spiritual disease in those who were plagued by the body of sin and death."²²⁾ This combination of theology and practice resulted in the godliness and wholistic health.

Another distinguishing marks of Puritan preaching directly related to pastoral care are transforming and experimental characteristics. The sermon was to be transforming. The practice of truth was one of the distinctive characteristics of Puritan piety. The Puritans believed that pastor has not preached until he had applied the word. William Haller wrote of their approach to the sermon:

Their function was to probe the conscience of the down-hearted sinner, to name and cure the malady of this soul, and then to send him out strengthened and emboldened for the continuance of this lifelong battle with the world and the devil.²³⁾

21) Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 448.

22) Sinclair B. Ferguson, "Evangelical Ministry: The Puritan Contribution," in *The Compromised Church: The Present Evangelical Crisis*, ed. John H. Armstrong (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 1998), 266.

23) William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (Philadelphia, PA.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 27.

As careful physicians of the soul, they carefully thought through what they were doing the application.²⁴⁾ They meditated the various kinds of application and at least suggested six types of application: instruction (information), confutation of false doctrines, exhortation, dehortation (admonition), comfort, and notes of trial.²⁵⁾

Lastly, their preaching was experiential or experimental.²⁶⁾ Puritan preaching focused on inner experience in contrast to external appearances. They were not describing faith as an affective experience but rather as an interior experience. It means that, first, pastor should preach known and felt truth. Preaching comes from the heart and experience of pastor to the heart and experience of congregation. Second, experiential or experimental preaching addresses the vital matter of how a Christian experiences the truth of biblical Christian doctrine in his life.

A working definition of experimental preaching might be: Experimental preaching seeks to explain in terms of biblical truth how matters ought to go, how they do go, and what the goal is of the Christian life. It aims to apply divine truth to the whole range of the believer's personal experience, including his relationships with family, the church, and the world around

24) Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., "Puritan Preaching," in *The Practical Calvinist: An Introduction to the Presbyterian and Reformed Heritage*, ed. Peter A. Lillback (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2002), 171.

25) Pipa, "Puritan Preaching," 172.

26) Joel R. Beeke, "The Lasting Power of Reformed Experiential Preaching," *Free Reformed Student Journal* (winter 2000): 519. Beeke explained, "The term experimental comes from the Latin *experimentum*, meaning trial. It is derived from the verb *experior*, meaning to try, prove, or put to the test. That same verb can also mean to find or know by experience, thus leading to the word *experientia*, meaning knowledge gained by experiment. John Calvin used experiential and experimental interchangeably, since both words in biblical preaching indicate the need for measuring experienced knowledge against the touchstone of Scripture."

him. The heart of the theology of John Calvin is experiential theology.²⁷⁾

In public settings, like the Puritans, the minister speaks in broad generalities, trusting the Spirit to make application to particular lives. Preaching as the public ministry of the Word can so penetrate the hearts of people and reveal such deep need to them. However, when addressing specific individuals and situations, there is greater need to tailor ministry to the particulars of the person in need. Paul described his teaching ministry as taking place “in public and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). As Powlison notes,

In the Bible itself, ‘ministry of the Word’ and ‘proclamation of the gospel’ are not exclusively (or even primarily) portrayed as what we think of as a sermon from the pulpit on Sunday morning. Sometimes the Bible portrays Word and gospel coming via one-way communication. But often it portrays two-way conversations. Grace and truth are ministered in the spontaneous give-and-take of talking, doing, and relating with one another.²⁸⁾

2) Counseling

Individual counselling also took an important place in Puritan pastoral care.²⁹⁾ The Puritans were great soul physicians developing counseling, shepherding, and pastoring-focused theological and practical manual. It is impractical to survey all the applicable Puritan

27) Beeke, “The Lasting Power of Reformed Experiential Preaching,” 520.

28) David Powlison, “What Is Ministry of the Word?” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 21, no. 2 (2003): 2.

29) Lambert, “The Theological Development of the Biblical Counseling Movement from 1988,” 7.

sources. We will see a group of Puritans and their applications for pastoral care.

(1) Soul Physicians

Perhaps one of the most insightful soul physicians in the history of the church was Puritan pastor Richard Sibbes who said that God's children are bruised reeds (a reference to Isa. 42:1-3). "The bruised reed is a man that for the most part is in some misery, as those were that came to Christ for help, and by misery he is brought to see sin as the cause of it, for, whatever pretenses sin makes, they come to an end when we are bruised and broken."³⁰⁾

Sibbes, like the Reformers, sees discouraged individuals as spiritually disoriented from God due to sin. Pastors as instruments of the Spirit have to reorient the person's heart back to God. Reorientation brings true happiness to the people and glory to God. Sibbes puts it this way:

A heavenly soul is never satisfied, until it be as near God as is attainable. And the nearer the creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of itself, and all self-aims. Our happiness is more in him, than in ourselves.³¹⁾

Sibbes uses a three-step approach for care discouraged people. He believes that those battling discouragement should ① make their hearts give an account for their states; ② search out counsel from trusted friends or teachers; and ③ look to God.

30) Richard Sibbes, *The Bruised Reed* (Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998), 3-4.

31) Richard Sibbes, *The Soul's Conflict* (Lexington, KY.: A Puritan at Heart Press, 2012), 323.

Richard Baxter also was a pastor who helped people deal with their problems in life. Baxter's counseling is characterized by a Christ-like compassion and an optimism based upon God's therapeutic grace. Baxter placed a high premium on family and individual visitation for conversion of the soul and teaching in the principles or essentials of the Christian faith.

His counseling system was based upon the application of the biblical doctrine of sanctification for curing our root motivated drives: replacing sinful motivation (through repentance) with a love for holy living (through faith).³²⁾ In the process of counseling first, Baxter sought to diagnose the problems and barriers to godly living. Baxter believed that a right diagnosis of the root cause of a problem was essential to an effective care. As a result, he was deeply interested in human motivation. Baxter finds four major causalities underlying human problems: ① motivations of the heart, ② physiological, ③ temperamental, and ④ the demonic.

For the type of problems addressed in his *Directory*, Baxter often found the root cause to lie in original sin's corruption of a person's fundamental drives.³³⁾ The following table 1 shows a practical model of his approaches to counseling.³⁴⁾

32) Kenneth L. Roth, "The Psychology and Counseling of Richard Baxter," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 17, no. 4 (1998): 321.

33) Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory* (Philadelphia, PA.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1997). Richard Baxter's *Directory* was written in order to supply the continuing need for help in the solution of cases. It was a resource offering pastoral guidance for an immense number of problems and situations. It provided extensive lists of diagnostic criteria to aid in the proper diagnosis. In this sense one could consider the *Directory* as *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of the seventeenth century. Specific help is offered by means of 'directions.' Directions are the Puritan counselor's how-to's, specifying practical steps for the counselee to take to effect a cure for the problem at hand.

34) Roth, "The Psychology and Counseling of Richard Baxter," 325.

<Table 1> A Model of Baxter's Approach to Counseling

Diagnosis: *Identifies* personal problems and spiritual conditions based upon signs and symptoms.

Symptoms such as *lack of faith or trust, worry, depression, fear, nightmares, sadness, troubled thinking, conflict, and pride.*

Etiology: *Discerns* four root causes of problems.

1. Motivations of the heart (e.g., unbelief, hardness of heart, hypocrisy, manpleasing, pride, covetousness, sensuality; etc.)
2. Physiological
3. Temperamental
4. Demonic

note: Baxter does not necessarily limit etiology to any single factor but allows for the possibility of a combination of the four root causes to exist.

Cure: *Prescribes and Applies* the proper medicine and remedies to heal, both preventative and therapeutic.

1. Scripture and theology: *repentance, faith, sanctification, eschatology, Christology, hamartiology, pneumatology, etc.*
2. Loving support, correct thinking, reading comforting books, a good counselor, ministering to others, etc.
3. Exercise, correct diet, test, physic (medicine), consultation with a medical professional.

William Ames was one of great pastor developing systematic theology of pastoral care. His object was to give a systematic statement of the whole range of spiritual and moral concern and to indicate how the proper answer to every trouble some question may be obtained by a correct application of logic, using Scripture as the

ultimate source of all direction.

In form of expression, Scripture does not explain the will of God by universal and scientific rules, but rather by stories, examples, precepts, exhortations, admonitions, and promises. This style best fits the common usage of all sorts of men and also greatly affects the will by stirring up pious motives, which is the chief end of theology.³⁵⁾

William Perkins seems also to have had a preeminent place.³⁶⁾ His book *The Whole Treatise of Cases of Conscience*, arose from a lifetime in which many hours were spent in the treatment of spiritual ills.³⁷⁾ The duty of the pastor in dealing with individual cases, according to Perkins, was to discern the wounds of the spirit in the person, and through the right use of the Word of God to correct and calm down the conscience of the weak. Not the pastor but Christ was the true healer. The former was merely a guide to Christ. Perkins thought of the pastor as a spiritual physician rather than as a priest.

Besides, William Bridge wrote about the work of a true physician of souls.³⁸⁾ Bridge dealt with believers suffering from spiritual depression. Through his pastoral work, he gained some insight into the causes of the person's discouragements such as sins, weak grace, failure in duties, temptation, desertion, affliction, and a need for assurance. Not only did Bridge make a correct diagnosis regarding the

35) William Ames, *The Narrow of Theology*, trans. John D. Eusden (Durham, NC.: Labyrinth Press, 1983), 187-188.

36) McNeill, *The History of the Cure of Souls*, 263.

37) William Perkins, *The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience*, ed. T. Pickering (Ann Arbor, MI.: EEBO, 2011).

38) William Bridge, *A Lifting Up for the Downcast* (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), 262-263.

causes of the person's discouragement, but he also gave directions for applying the remedy.

(2) Core Issues

Pastoral counseling for the Puritans meant counseling believers from the Scriptures, assisting them in a life of sanctification, of mortifying the flesh, of purifying it from indwelling sin. Since the puritans aimed to live a godly, it is natural that Puritan counseling focused on the sin problem. The Puritans taught that believers mourned not only actual sins but also their sinful heart and nature, not just actions but also motives, even behind so-called good actions and religious duties. The solution Puritan pastors offered to the problems caused by sinful nature was the principle of mortification.

Mortification is putting to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13). Ferguson summarizes John Owen's view on mortification as follows:

Mortification involves the habitual weakening of sin, and constant fighting against it with a measure of success. The battle needs to be perpetual because each manifestation on sin contains the seeds of sin's evil dominion, end inclines to the same end. There is a necessary universal crucifying of the flesh by which sin is weakened.³⁹⁾

John Owen and the other Puritans emphasized the need to rise against the first acting of our sin. Having uncovered not only the particular sins of thought, word, and action, but especially the nature of sin, the pastors then must proceed to direct the congregation to the cross. According to Keller, "at the base of man's nature is not some fundamental 'need' for relationship or happiness or significance, but

39) Sinclair Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life* (Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 149.

rather a necessity for worship. He must worship. At the root sin is self-worship.”⁴⁰⁾

Another interesting element to overcome remaining indwelling sin and the desire to worship idols is imagination. Sibbes described imagination as a power of the soul which is “bordering between our senses (on the one side) and our understanding (on the other). The office of imagination is to minister matter to our understanding to work upon.” Our imagination “conjures up pictures. Then, from the imagination come thoughts, which illuminate the mind, stir the emotions and move the will to choose.”⁴¹⁾ Therefore, the Puritans, like Jesus Christ, made abundant use of word pictures or illustrations in their sermons to help person’s faith by the imagination.

In addition, according to Joel Beeke and Mark Jones, Puritan believed that “the promises (of God) are the pathways where Christ meets the soul.”⁴²⁾ Suffered Christians need hope that God’s promises bring. Helping congregation understand God’s promises ensure that they find hope. Thought, however, they find a meaningful promise, they don’t understand how to apply it to their life. Puritan pastors tried to educate their congregation on how to understand God’s promise, and helped apply them. The Puritans believed 2 Corinthians 1:20, “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are Yes in Christ. And so through him the Amen is spoken by us to the glory of God,” that all of God’s promises come true in Jesus.

The Puritans believed that a proper understanding of God’s

40) Keller, “Puritan Resources for Biblical Counseling,” 28.

41) Richard Sibbes, “The Soul’s Conflict with Itself, and Victory over Itself by Faith,” *Works of Richard Sibbes* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1981), 180: quoted in Keller, “Puritan Resources for Biblical Counseling,” 31.

42) Beeke & Jones, *A Puritan Theology*, 401.

promises resulted in obedience. Pastors encourage congregation to obey God's commands and take seriously God's warnings for disobedience. God's promises confirm obedience, that is, "they confirm what God, motive by His sovereign mercy and good pleasure, will do for us. Thus, a promise reveals a truth that will benefit us in particular. It declares God's will concerning the good with which He will bless us or the evil He will remove from us"⁴³⁾ Applying God's promises moves congregation to action by keeping God's promises ready to meditate on, promote obedience, and instill hope. The Puritans were wise pastors who knew that the fulfillment of God's promises might not happen right away. Christians would doubt their certainty of God's promises on their feelings. So, pastors encouraged Christians to be patient and hopeful while living obediently. And Puritan pastors believed praying God's promises were the culmination of and most important aspect of applying God's promises.

Moreover, the Puritans believes that biblical meditation involved the mind and the heart, as believers approached God and his Word with our intellect and affections. On the topic of Puritan meditation, James Packer writes, "Knowing themselves to be creatures of thought, affection, and will, and knowing that God's way to the human heart (the will) is via the human head (the mind), the Puritans practiced meditation, discursive and systematic, on the whole range of biblical truth as they saw it applying to themselves."⁴⁴⁾

Thomas Watson defined meditation, as "a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves."⁴⁵⁾ This experience in

43) Beeke & Jones, *A Puritan Theology*, 402.

44) Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 24.

45) Thomas Watson, *Heaven Taken by Storm* (Morgan, PA.: Soli Deo Gloria, 2000), 23.

meditation corresponds to the result pastor seeks to achieve with troubled Christians: changed affections, Word-driven obedience, and a commitment to fight sin. For the Puritans, meditation is pivotal to the practice of piety and one of the principal means by which the Holy Spirit sanctifies the Christian.

III. Conclusion

We have seen that the cure and care of souls has historically been at the very heart of Christianity. Christian Pastors had a broad and rich tradition of understanding human beings and treating their problems long before modern. In particular, we focus on the Puritan whose theology, preaching, and counseling were eminently practical for pastoral care. Such a practical approach was originated from their emphasizing upon glorifying and enjoying God in all areas of life.

The basic struggles of fear, depression, anxious, personality disorder, and chaotic and random world were all problems in their day as well as ours. Applying Scripture and theology to all practical living, the Puritans made their significant contribution to the Christian pastoral care. To study their insights can be of precious benefit in helping the congregation effectively. Pastoral care has to relate theology and biblical teachings to what has traditionally been understood as the care of the soul. The process begins on the foundation of the Word of God. Those resources is organized into systematic theology, an organized doctrine to all that God has revealed to us in Scripture. We then study historic teaching to collect what we can from the godly Christians who have gone before us. They have given us biblical and practical approaches for pastoral care that

impacts the actual areas of everyday life. It is to be hoped that we can be enable to more faithfully think God's thought, and care our neighbors with resources corroborated in the history and shaped in the light of God's word.

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【 국문초록 】

성경적 목회적 돌봄을 위한 청교도의 자원

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목회적 돌봄은 오랜 그리고 풍부한 역사적 자원을 가지고 있다. 비록 시대와 문화가 상이했지만, 기독교 내에서 돌봄을 위해서 활용해 왔던 그동안의 돌봄의 내용과 도구를 찾는 것은 현대를 위해서도 유용한 작업이 된다. 여기서 도출된 돌봄의 원리는 여전히 현대의 목회 돌봄과 상담에 필요한 자원이 된다. 본 논문은 역사적 자원 찾기 위해, 첫째, 기독교적 돌봄에 대한 역사적 연구를 시도한 선행연구를 살펴본 후에, 특별히 청교도 시대의 목회적 돌봄의 자원에 초점을 맞춘다. 주로 돌봄에 대한 역사적 연구의 흐름은 어떻게 돌봄에 대한 기독교적 접근이 일반 심리적 접근으로 확대되었는지 추적하고 있다. 또한 목회적 돌봄의 전통을 성경적 상담이 계승하고 있으며, 일부 기독교 상담 역시 기독교의 돌봄적 자원을 역사 속에서 찾고 있다는 것을 알게 된다. 청교도들의 돌봄은 기독교적 자원에 중심을 두고 성도에 대한 구체적인 돌봄이 시도되었다는 독특한 특징이 있다. 둘째, 논문은 청교도들의 신학적 입장과 강조하고 있는 돌봄적 요소를 개관한다. 설교와 상담은 하나님의 말씀의 공적 그리고 사적 적용이 이뤄진 주된 활동으로 청교도적 돌봄의 핵심이다. 이 밖에도 돌봄에 있어서 이들이 강조한 다른 요소들은 죄에 대한 강조, 죄를 해결하기 위한 접근, 소망, 묵상과 반추 등으로, 이를 통해 자신의 내면을 살펴보고 영적이고 정신적인 회복을 시도한다.

중심단어 : 목회적 돌봄, 청교도, 설교, 소망, 묵상