

Position Paper 3

Katherine Rivera

Alliance Graduate School of Counseling

Theology in Mental Health Counseling (GCN 618.OA)

Professor: Dr. Julio Orozco

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According to the Oxford English Dictionary, sanctification is defined as the action of the Holy Spirit in making holy the believer, by the implanting within him of the Christian graces and the destruction of sinful affections (2023). As we have learned this semester, sin separates us from God, but the grace of God provides us with the opportunity for redemption. Redemption allows for a process of change, therefore allowing us to develop a salient relationship with God through His Holy Spirit.

When I think of sanctification, I think about forgiveness and love. Acts 26:18 says that those who are sanctified will receive forgiveness and a place among other believers of Christ; “to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (NIV). Sanctification is not just a process of forgiveness, but rather a process of growth within you; where you as a forgiven sinner can now understand how to love and forgive others, as God has loved and forgiven you. Understanding sanctification in this way helps me to understand that forgiveness provides a space for personal growth, and love provides for moments of grace.

According to Kim-Van Daalen, L., those who believe in Christ Jesus do so by virtue of special, or particular, grace, that is, the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit on the basis of Christ sacrifice for repentant sinners (2012). In the article *the holy spirit, common grace, and secular psychology*, we learn that there is a connection between grace and the Holy Spirit. To understand grace through the Holy Spirit, is to understand that by having the Holy Spirit dwell within us we become an extension of the love of God and His grace upon us. Since Christ can love us so much to extend his grace upon us through His death on the cross, we too can extend that same grace to others. According to Kim-Van Daalen, L., common grace does not exist independently of what

God has done on the cross (2012). As counselors it is important to understand that Christ death on the cross was not only for believers, but for all people.

When applying this concept of common grace with our clients, we as therapists can extend grace by having a genuine relationship with our clients free of judgment. Ethically we cannot impose our own beliefs onto our clients, but this does not mean that we do not internally pass some form of judgment. When we change our thought process and instead view our clients through the lens of Jesus, we can extend the grace that Jesus spared on the cross for us and remember that He also spared himself for our clients. Our clients do not need to be believers to be loved by God and to be given grace. According to Mark 2:17 Jesus has called us to sit with sinners and to help them heal; it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners (NIV). If Jesus who was made perfect in the image of God can sit with sinners, have a meal, and provide healing; how are we who fall short of God's glory called to do anything other than the same. By keeping this scripture in mind, I know that God has called me on this path of counselor because there are so many souls in need of healing, and as a believer He knows that I can reach them on various levels. It is important to me to view my client's as a child of God, rather than as a believer or non-believer.

According to Kim van Daalen, L., Christians can engage with psychotherapy in several ways. First and foremost, Christians are called to make use of gifts of common grace in order for believers to live life to the fullest extent possible... Secondly, engaging with the good that the Holy Spirit brings through secular psychotherapy in order to benefit humanity in general is a task that Christians need to take seriously. Christians are called to participate in the world, to let the light of special revelation shine on the works of common grace, and thus to work as servants for God's kingdom. In doing so, they

participate in the fight against sin, sorrow, and suffering, and they take captive every insight to make it obedient to Christ (2012).

God has not called us to pass judgement, but rather to allow the Holy Spirit to work through us as we engage with others.

Whether working in a Christian setting or in a secular setting, we are called to be an extension of God's love and grace. Whether working with a client who is a believer or a non-believer, we are called to counsel in a way that is respectful of our client's beliefs and views, and it is important that we meet our client's needs right where they are. As noted in Colossians 3:12- therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (NIV). In conclusion, therapists, [...] are enabled by the Spirit to use knowledge of psychological growth discovered by observation of the natural world. They guide and nurture their clients toward health [and the] outcome is the beauty of restoration (McMartin, J. 2015). As counselors we are called to aide those in need, as Christians we are called to love those in need, and as Christian counselors we are called to lovingly aide those in need. I believe that through this mindset we will be able to guide our clients through a positive process of change.

References

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