

## The American Council of Christian Churches—

- *Provides* information, encouragement, and assistance to Bible-believing churches, fellowships and individuals;
- *Preserves* our Christian heritage through exposure of, opposition to, and separation from doctrinal impurity and compromise in current religious trends and movements;
- *Protects* churches from religious and political restrictions, subtle or obvious, that would hinder their ministries for God; and
- *Promotes* obedience to the inerrant Word of God.



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# THERAPISTS AS PASTORS



A POSITION STATEMENT  
ISSUED IN 2025  
BY THE

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

EARNESTLY CONTENDING  
FOR THE FAITH  
WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED  
UNTO THE SAINTS

JUDE 3

The Apostle Paul warns of those who “beguile you with enticing words” (Col. 2:4) and “spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8). Only in the triune God will anyone find “hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). Paul exhorts, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught ... For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:6-10). Salvation and sanctification are found in Christ alone.

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul encourages his protege, “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” He continues, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:14-17). Jesus himself elevates the Scriptures to a position of supreme honor when He prays for His people in John 17:17, “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” Salvation and sanctification are found in Christ alone as revealed by the Scriptures alone.

Christ and His Word are received and applied to the lives of God’s people by faith alone. Christians are saved “by grace ... through faith” (Eph. 2:8, 9), and God then commands them to “walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). Hab. 2:4 summarizes the Christian life when it declares, “The just shall live by his faith.”<sup>1</sup> Only a faithful life fulfills the Apostle Paul’s charge in 1 Cor. 10:31 to “do all to the glory of God.”

Yet, as Paul observes the church at Galatia, he laments, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6, 7). “Are ye so foolish,” the Apostle asks the Galatians, “having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal. 3:3).

Sadly, nearly one in four Americans lean on the arm of flesh by seeing a secular mental-health therapist, many of whom reject these truths of Scripture, and almost half of Americans plan to visit one within a year. This therapy is especially predominant among younger generations. Conversely, only 16 percent of Americans confide in their religious leaders,<sup>2</sup> and only one-third of the United States’ population attends church on even a monthly basis.<sup>3</sup> Secular shepherds are pastoring an increasing number of people in matters of morality, ethics, and spiritual well-being—ministries once sought in the church.

According to the magazine *Psychology Today*, each session with a therapist “is, essentially, a problem-solving session. You describe your current situation, and your feelings about it, and then the therapist uses their expertise to assist you in trying to resolve the problem so you can move closer to having the life you wish to have. ... You won’t be criticized, interrupted or judged as you speak.” *Psychology Today* presents therapists as superior to friends and family because “people who already know you might not always be completely objective when listening to you.” Therapy is “a unique opportunity to share everything you’re feeling, and everything you want to create, without anyone interrupting you, imposing his or her anxieties onto the conversation, or telling you that you’re ‘wrong’ or that you ‘can’t.’”<sup>4</sup>

“Having the life you wish to have” stands in stark contrast with the words of Jesus in Luke 9:23, 24: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For

whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.” The therapist always affirms his client. Unquestioning affirmation keeps them coming back to hear various modern renditions of that ancient devilish deception, “Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5).

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 84th annual convention, October 21-23, 2025, at Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, resolves to urge everyone to trust in Christ and the holy Scriptures alone for both eternal salvation and everyday sanctification. God invites his people to pray to Him at all times (1 Thess. 5:17), and He promises to answer any prayers for spiritual guidance through the Bible. In addition, Christ established His church to be “the pillar and ground of the truth” (Mt. 16:15-18; 1 Tim. 3:15). In that sacred assembly, Christ calls on his people to regularly gather for edification and encouragement (Heb. 10:24, 25). Satan’s psychological counterfeits may superficially heal the soul for a season (Jer. 6:14), but only through Christ and His Word can a person earnestly and eternally enjoy “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7) with “joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1:8).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This verse is also quoted in the New Testament in Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, and Heb. 10:38.

<sup>2</sup>Hanna DeWitt, “Thriveworks 2025 Pulse on Mental Health Report” (thriveworks.com, 5/12/2025).

<sup>3</sup>Gregory Smith, Alan Cooperman, Becka Alper, Besheer Mohamed, Chip Rotolo, Patricia Tevington, Justin Nortey, Asta Kallo, Jeff Diamant and Dalia Fahmy, “Decline of Christianity in the U.S. Has Slowed, May Have Leveled Off.” Pew Research Center. doi: [10.58094/4kqq-3112](https://doi.org/10.58094/4kqq-3112) (pewresearch.org, 2/26/2025).

<sup>4</sup>Susan Gelb, “What Really Happens in a Therapist Session” (psychologytoday.com, 12/5/2015).

<sup>5</sup>Physical factors sometimes play a role in a person’s mental health needs. In such cases, qualified physicians can provide help by prescribing physical exercise, dietary changes, sleep therapies, hormonal medications, etc.