

4-1-1996

# Separating the Wheat from the Tares: Evaluating Christian Theories of Personality and Counseling

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## Recommended Citation

Bufford, Rodger K., "Separating the Wheat from the Tares: Evaluating Christian Theories of Personality and Counseling" (1996).  
*Faculty Publications - Graduate School of Clinical Psychology*. Paper 45.  
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Running Head: Wheat and Tares

Separating the Wheat from the Tares:  
Evaluating Christian Theories of Personality and Counseling  
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Presented at the Christian Association for Psychological Studies Annual  
Meeting, St. Louis, MO, April, 1996.

## Separating the Wheat from the Tares:

### Evaluating Christian Theories of Personality and Counseling

#### Abstract

Since 1970 numerous approaches to Christian counseling have emerged. Implicit in them is a theory of personality and of normal and disturbed psychological functioning, though this underlying theory is seldom explicitly addressed. Little effort has been devoted to appraising the adequacy of the various theories or to providing criteria by which they can be evaluated. Criteria are proposed for such evaluation, including background issues of audience, purpose, and author's credentials; philosophical worldview issues such as view of what exists and how it can be known, concept of causality, and nature of persons; view on the relationship of mental health and Christian beliefs--issues such as view of God, sin, salvation and spiritual maturity; relationship to the basis disciplines of theology and psychology; counseling implications, including counselor qualifications, therapy goals, outcome evaluation, and role of spiritual factors. Examples of current theories illustrate application of the proposed criteria. Systematic application of these criteria may aid us in identifying the stronger theories and facilitate their further development.