



A theology of biblical counselling

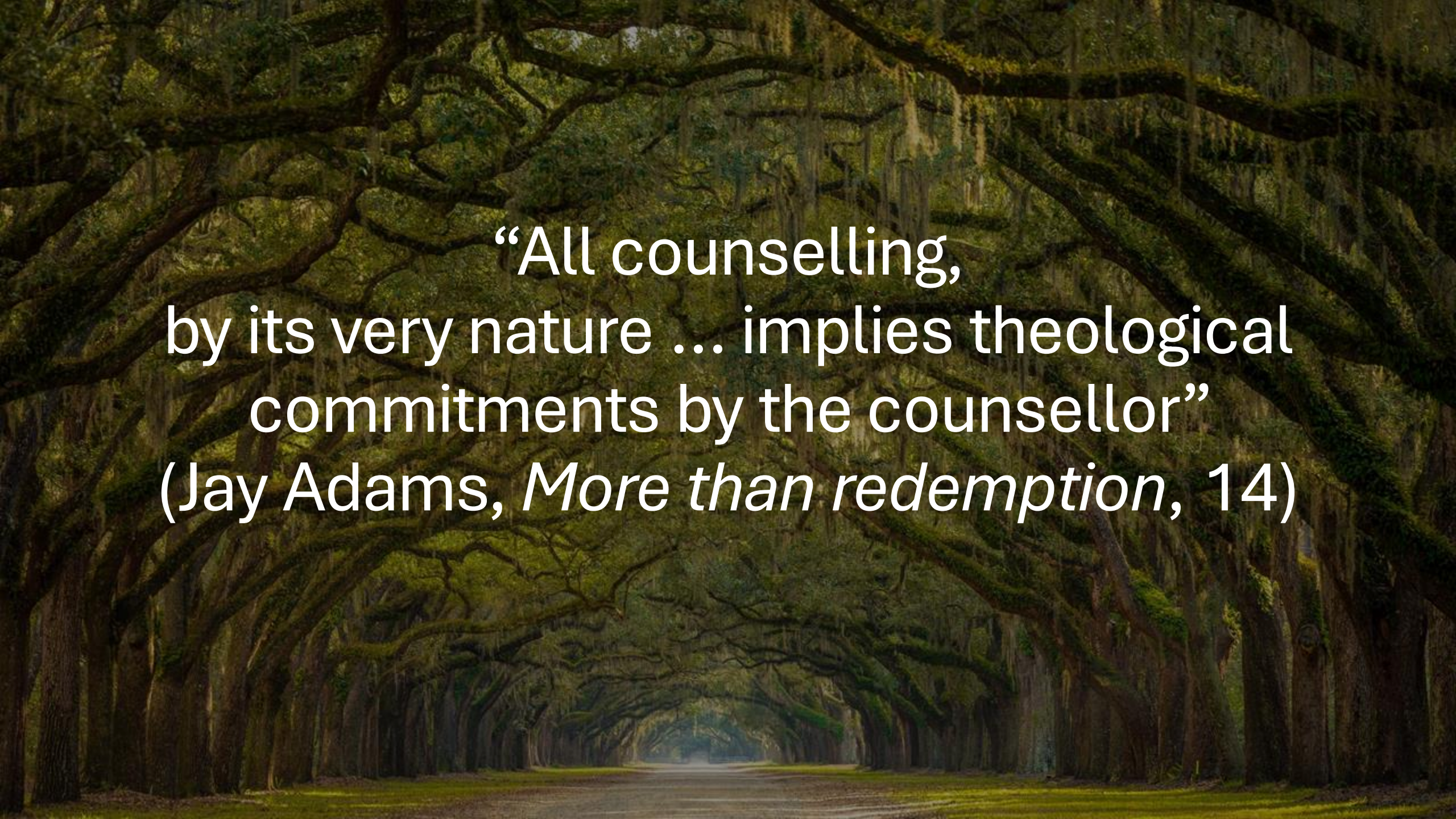
The doctrinal foundations of counselling ministry

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(summary by Neil Richardson)

“Counselling is a theological discipline.”

“You are simply not ready to think about counselling – let alone practice it – until you have thought long and hard about theology.”

A photograph of a long, straight path lined with large, moss-covered trees, creating a tunnel effect. The path is paved and leads into the distance, where a bright light is visible at the end. The trees are covered in thick green moss, and the overall atmosphere is serene and somewhat mysterious.

“All counselling,
by its very nature ... implies theological
commitments by the counsellor”
(Jay Adams, *More than redemption*, 14)

“You are counselling all the time.”



1. Counselling and theology: a crucial introduction



Theology = “What the whole Bible teaches us today about any given topic” (Grudem & Frame)



“**Counselling** is a conversation where one party with questions, problems, and trouble seeks assistance from someone they believe has answers, solutions, and help.”



“To do counselling, the one thing the counsellor must do is articulate some vision of reality that understands the dilemma of the counsellee and offers a respond to that dilemma.”

1. Counselling and theology: a crucial introduction

- Vision of life
 - Who we are
God's definition of 'human'
 - What is wrong with us
God's diagnosis: sin
 - What should be right with us
God's expectation: righteousness
 - What it would take to fix the problem
God's solution: Christ

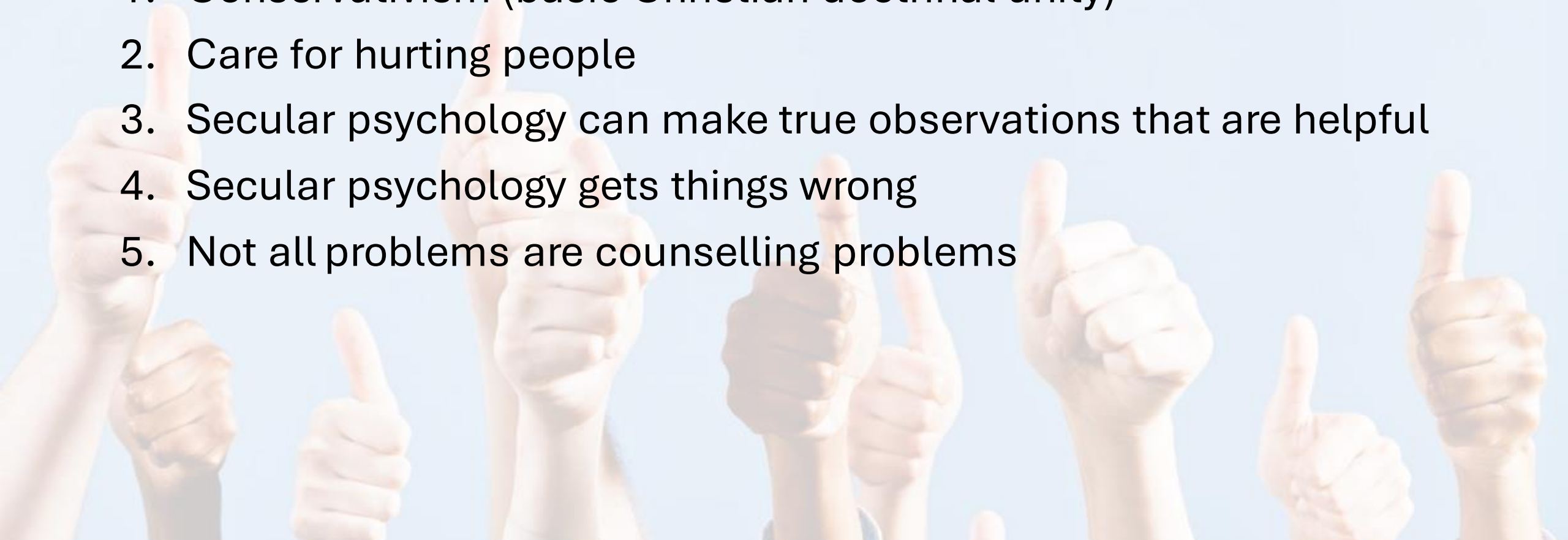
1. Counselling and theology: a crucial introduction

- Theology and secular counselling
 - Disavowal of the authority of God
 - “The work of secular counselling practitioners is not neutral or scientific.”
 - Theological vision of reality is incorrect
- Theology and Christian counselling
 - “20th C marked by... the embrace of secular counselling principles by conservative Christians.”
 - Integrationists, Christian counsellors, Christian psychologists, etc.

1. Counselling and theology: a crucial introduction

Biblical and Christian counsellors: areas of agreement

1. Conservatism (basic Christian doctrinal unity)
2. Care for hurting people
3. Secular psychology can make true observations that are helpful
4. Secular psychology gets things wrong
5. Not all problems are counselling problems



1. Counselling and theology: a crucial introduction

Biblical and Christian counsellors: areas of disagreement

1. The necessity of secular counselling techniques
2. The sufficiency of Scripture as a counselling resource

“Because the Bible lacks information Christian counsellors believe to be pertinent to counselling, they move towards psychology, expecting it to fill in the gaps.”