

## BOOK REVIEWS/COMPTEs RENDUS

List of Reviewers:

DAVE FLEIGER  
*Edmonton, Alberta*

JAMES A. FOSTER  
*Acadia University*

FRAN VARGO  
*University of Alberta*

*Christotherapy: Healing Through Enlightenment*,\*  
Bernard J. Tyrrell, Scarborough, Ontario: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1975, 203 pp. \$10.25.

Reviewed by:

Dave Fleiger  
Psychologist, Private Practice  
Edmonton, Alberta

Over the years, the reviewer has experienced the repeated phenomenon of outstanding works which seemingly arrive on the professional scene usually unheralded and quite unnoticed by the majority of conscientious practitioners. Bernard Tyrrell's book, *Christotherapy: Healing Through Enlightenment*, is one such work deserving to be brought to the attention of all practitioners of the healing arts.

Perhaps outstanding is the author's scholarly, yet discernible, articulation and synthesis of psychological and religious truths — truths grounded in Christian revelation and affirmed in everyday life experiences. As a Christian practitioner, I consider *Christotherapy* to be a 'rare' find for it provides the meaningful integration of psychological thought and scriptural grounding so often desired but seldom realized among the competing systems of counselling, psychotherapy, personality, and behaviour.

The preface of the book best summarizes its multiple goals;

- to the sufferer who truly seeks healing . . . a path of wholeness.
- to the seeker of meaning and direction in life . . . a concrete process of existential diagnosis and discernment.
- To spiritual directors, therapists, and counsellors . . . an initial model of a

psychotherapeutic approach rooted and grounded in Christian revelation.

- to readers interested in the dynamic relationship between psychology and religion . . . a nontechnical sketch of a theology of healing which focuses attention on Jesus Christ as healer of the wounded psyche and spirit of man through the saving light of the meaning and value he incarnates and reveals.

It is precisely this final goal from which the book derives its name, *Christotherapy* — a therapy or healing that comes through Christ, through the light and value that are revealed in Christ.

If one were to find any criticism of Tyrrell's work, it is probably his lack of specificity and concreteness in application. Case illustrations could enhance the reader's understanding of two of *Christotherapy's* basic processes — existential diagnosis and existential discernment. Such studies usually allow for an easier grasp of connections as is the case in *Christotherapy's* evolved techniques of mind-fasting and spirit-feasting, both intrinsically linked to the aforementioned existential processes. On a more personal level, I, as a practitioner of *Christotherapy*, have experienced the dynamic interplay and significance of each within the healing process with many wounded sufferers. Perhaps this is sufficient — to be experienced in its authenticity, instead of prescribed within a superimposed structure and human bias. Tyrrell does include an appendix with helpful discussions on *The Good News of Healing and Healing Signs in the Church*.

In summary, I highly recommend this book. It is not often that one finds the quality of nourishment the author provides to the reader who seeks authentic value and meaning in his/her life experiences. If, as John Dunne suggests in a recent issue of *Psychology Today* (January, 1978) that "the quest for understanding requires that one give up the search for certainty and go on a voyage of discovery", then *Christotherapy: Healing Through Enlightenment*, is a "must" reference for all such committed travelers and practitioners.

\*Pour l'édition française, adressez-vous aux:  
Editions Sainte-Yves, Inc.,  
C.P. 9638,  
Québec, P.Q.,  
G1V 4C2.