THE SOCIALITY OF LOVE AS THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING

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Introduction

The task of this paper is the examination of the social and institutional dimensions of pastoral care and counseling from the perspective of a theology of Christian love. The structure of this paper unfolds in two sections. The first presents a diagnostic discussion of the impact of dominant cultural sensitivities upon what we understand to be the principal mode of pastoral interaction emerging from the pastoral caring and counseling disciplines. Some evaluation of this mode of ministerial response is offered. The second section undertakes a theological assessment of the Christian doctrine of love as an appropriate foundation for a theology of pastoral care. Included here is a strong emphasis on the institutional and social contexts of all human interactions.

The Cultural Context of Pastoral Care and Counseling

As it has evolved during the past two decades the disciplines of pastoral care, pastoral counseling, and pastoral theology have provided the Church community with the theoretical foundations for an integrated understanding of the individual as participant in the community. Somewhere along the line, however, the impact of contemporary narcissistic cultural forms of social life have exerted noticeable influence upon the manner in which this integrative corpus of theory has been appropriated in pastoral practice. The prevailing emphasis in pastoral counseling on the person as individual—whether as soul, psyche, client, counseling contact— forms a dominant construct in the Church's perception of the pastoral function.[1] It is instructive to illustrate this observation with reference to common performance expectations for clergy roles. More often than not these are guided by assumptions that the pivotal concern of the pastor must be the individual parishioner or the parishioner's family. Some attribute this

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[1]E. Brooks Holifield, "Ethical Assumptions of Clinical Pastoral Education," *Theology Today*, Vol. 26, #1, April 1979, 30-44; we are using the term "narcissism" throughout this paper in its cultural sense and not in its more limited clinical definition as treated by Heinz Kohut, *The Analysis of Self: A Systematic Approach to the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorder* (International University Press, 1971).

distortion of the pastoral function to a residuum of Enlightenment philosophy formalized in institutions which value privacy, individualism, and freedom.[2]Others trace its roots to the evolution of technocratic culture.[3] Weber locates its origin in the development of Protestant piety and consequent soteriology.[4] Still others view the development as a distortion of human sociality productive of a "narcissistic personality" in our generation.[5] As clergy we operationalize this orientation to ministry, more culturally prescribed than traditionally authenticated, in a variety of direct and subtle ways. We visit in the homes of individual parishioners, we attend the sick and bereaved, we administer the sacraments as telescoped penitential and salvific rites directed to individual persons. In other words, we confirm behaviorally and theologically the growing breach between the personal and the institutional, an ambiguity and tension which resides in the breadth of our theological tradition.

Unlike the ambience of the 1960's wherein sociality formed the dominant construct for apprehending personal meaning, the 1970's have brought to fruition a narcissistic trend in American life. This trend has been regarded as both disturbing to those who understand social cohesiveness as integral to community viability and as dangerous to the social fabric of the society as a whole We can draw lines of similarity between the atomization of social consciousness in the society at large and the patterns of ministry and life within the Church today. An emphasis on individualism and privatism manifests itself in diverse forms within the Church. Dean Kelley notes the increase in the conservative evangelical pietists, an observation made real in such movements as "good news" within United Methodism and such splinter groups as the Presbyterian Church of America within Presbyterianism.[6] Berton speaks to a Church "gone comfortable" in pursuit of the abundant life affluently conceived and individualistically incarnated.[7] Hadden notes the conflicts within liberal churches as they address a societal perspective of ministry.[8] Ellwood details the development of a plethora of esoteric cults and sects whose prin-

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[2]William A Clebsch and Charles R Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective* (Prentice-Hall, Inc , 1964), pp 28-31

[3]Theodore Rosak, *The Making of a Counter Culture* (Doubleday, 1969)

[4]Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958 ed) Ch V, pp 155-183)

[5]Peter Marin, "The New Narcissism," *Harpers,* 251 (October, 1975), pp 45-56, Christopher Lasch, "The Narcissistic Personality of Our Time," *Partisan Review,* Vol, 44, #1, 1977, pp 10-19

[6]Dean Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches are Growing* (Harper and Row, 1972)

[7]Pierre Berton, *The Comfortable Pew* (Lippincott, 1965)

[8]Jeffery Hadden, *The Gathering Storm in the Churches* (Doubleday and Company, 1969)

ciple claims to popularity reside in their offers of unmediated religious experience.[9] The quest for meaning continues today, but that quest has developed a discernibly internal and privatized focus.

Within the liberal churches the preoccupation with personal, individualistic expression of ministry takes the form of highly professionalized emphasis on *ministry as the counseling of individuals.* Much of recent pastoral care literature reflects an individualistic focus in its technical concentration on pastoral counseling.[10] In the dominant ministerial paradigm, pastoral care focuses primarily on the "care and cure of souls." This concern concretizes itself in the primacy of the interpersonal therapeutic counseling relationship. There needs to be a corrective to this professional rush to the precipice of psychic and spiritual atomization. That corrective is both theological and ethical in character. We understand that the intellectual forms of this concern reside in the disciplines and art of pastoral care and theology.

These disciplines provide some corrective to the trend toward the atomization af the person in contemporary society. In his discipline-shaping work, Seward Hiltner remains ever conscious of the pastoral function as larger backdrops or contexts in which individual shepherding concerns—healing, guiding, sustaining— take place.[11] It is important to note Hiltner's explicit development of communicating and organizing as complementary functions alongside shepherding in pastoral care. This integration, however, is a dimension often lacking in the actual practice of pastoral care as pastoral counseling.[12] Indeed, Hiltner devotes substantially more space to shepherding tasks than to those of structural and institutional caring.

The conflation of pastoral caring into pastoral counseling is a distortion of the call to Christian ministry. We offer this observation not in an effort to denigrate the counseling function nor to disparge

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[9]Robert Ellwood, *Religious and Spiritual Groups in America* (Prentice Hall, 1973); "The Study of New Religious Movements in America," The Council on the Study of Religion Bulletin, Vol. 10, #3, June 1979, pp. 69-72).

[10]A principal example of this perspective is the *Journal of Pastoral Counseling.* The title appropriately indicates the focus of the discipline's development in recent years.

[11]Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology,* Chapters 4, 9, 10. In these chapters Hiltner links the shepherding function of pastoral care to the complementary functions of communicating and organizing. We seek to identify common structural linkages between the caring functions of shepherding and the caring functions of organizing in the context of institutional relationships. Though he establishes the basis for such linkages, Hiltner does not develop the connections.

[12]Holifield's analysis of the two principal camps in the clinical pastoral education tradition is alluminative of the ethical and structural tensions in the disciple's development. Don S. Browning offers a corrective to the overemphasis on the privatization of shepherding and subsequent exclusion of other institutionally relevant aspects of pastoral care in *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care* (Westminster. 1976).

the creative work now proceeding in the micro-personal aspects of human dynamics but for the sake of a healthier, more integrated and corporate church life. We understand the counseling dimension of pastoral care to be but *one* dimension of a holistic disciplinary frame of reference. Pastoral care presses the professional minister and the community in which that ministry develops toward more sophisticated understandings of how the social context and institutional structures of contemorary life impact individual personal and interpersonal growth.

There is, to be certain, an important dimension of sociality emerging from successful pastoral counseling. Such a dimension, however, at present appears to be more tacit and unarticulated than owned and affirmed within the Church and by its clergy. We press therefore for a larger, more inclusive and institutionally responsive theory of counseling than which appears operative in much of the counseling practice in today's church.

It is not necessary for the pastor to relinquish pastoral interpersonal relationships in order to assure responsibility for shaping, guiding, and nurturing the formation of institutional life. The pastorally sensitive person engaged in shaping "caring" institutions and environments is as much involved in pastoral care as the pastor engaged in one-on-one pastoral counseling. The nurture and sustenance of institutional life appropriates an essential form of pastoral care, its moral-ethical constituent. Browning calls this the "highest" form of such care.[13] As such, pastoral care is an institutionalized form of loving care for persons *and* their environments, their institutions.

The individually focused pastor-client relationship can be instrumental in enlarging the scope of pastoral care by attending to the communal context in which that most intimate and interpersonal encounter takes place. Many who practice pastoral care and counseling appropriately maintain that a contract between a counselor and a counselee is a social relationshlp made possible because of the element of sociality intrinsically a part of us as humans. The *potential* for enlarged sociality, and thereby increased and matured social responsibility, within the primary counseling relationship does not, however, ensure its embodiment in practice. Successful counseling relationships are those which enable the counselee to reengage him/herself in responsible social relationships—personal and institutional. At one level our claim is not new. That it is made explicit, however, with respect to counseling tasks within the context of pas-

[13]Browning, *Moral Context*, p. 90.

toral care and linked further to a theological assessment of the sociality of love may prove it useful for the equipping of the church's social ministry.

The Sociality of Love as Theological Foundation

In framing the elements of a theology of pastoral care we do not operate in a disciplinary vacuum. Hiltner and Lapsley along with Oates and Hulme stand in debt to such disciplinary architects as Boisen and Thurneysen, and such "secular" resources as Menninger and Rogers. Although the primary thrust of pastoral care during the past several decades has reflected a preoccupation with the individual psyche, the work of Hiltner and Browning and that of their Lutheran colleague William Hulme provide alternative perspectives to that of atomistic individualism. In the work of these persons we see the affirmation of both personal and structural/institutional dimensions of selfhood. Out of our reading of these theorists has emerged an understanding of the centrality of theological assumptions about the nature and content of Christian love for the practice of pastoral care and counseling. We shall sketch some of these dimensions of love's character and the implications they bear for our approach to the pastoral caring and counseling tasks.

There is little dispute at the theoretical level that the context of pastoral care and counseling is at every point social. Out of such a social frame of reference integrating insights into the character of love emerge for theology. These insights take seriously the relation of the person to the larger community, sometimes called the Church. We identify and outline four dimensions of love's character. There are, doubtless, other dimensions equally worthy of inspection. Those we indicate evolve from a central theological and christological affirmation: the primary reality on which the Gospel of Jesus Christ rests is the sociality of God's investment in creation. This sociality is apprehended in a theology of incarnation finding initial expression in a doctrine of Christian love. Incarnational reality demands attention to institutional structure (ecclesiology) as one essential context for the manifestation of God's image in human society. We claim in this regard that institutional reality bears the mark of God's love to the extent human interactional forms of that love find expression within and through institutional structures. These affirmations provide a set of theological and sociological beginning points for understanding pastoral care as insitutionally sensitive ministry.

The character of love reveals fundamental insights into the nature of human personhood. Love is dynamic not static. Love is

organic in its impact on all aspects and dimensions of human personality. Love provides the foundation for integrating the essentially personal with the inclusively social dimensions of living. As Larry K. Graham of The Iliff School of Theology faculty observes, "the nature of loving and belonging requires expansion of horizons and demands attention to the structures of life and community, including institutions."[14] As we illustrate below, each ingredient in love's character bears implications for the shaping, formation, and reformation of both personal and institutional relationships. Each ingredient stands grounded on the dual foundations of theological/ethical tradition and personality assessment in the social sciences. The four dimensions of love's character we have identified and which form the hermeneutical framework for understanding love's social nature are: relation-questing, value-engendering, community-affirming, and liberational. These categories emerge from the synthetic process of reflection upon the literature of pastoral theology, relational social ethics, and concrete personal pastoral experience. Though this writer has many mentors in this process, none should be held accountable for any distortions or inaccuracies which may arise from this simplified schematic. Such accountability rests solely with the author.

Love is relation-questing. Both Daniel Day Williams and H. Richard Niebuhr have impressed upon us the ontological *fact* that love's nature insists upon the expansion of the horizons of personal relationships. Static love is no love at all but personality *incurva in se ipsa.*[15] At its core human nature bears the dynamics of love. Pressing toward fuller personhood we extend our own personality in the risks of human relationships. We become vulnerable to pain as well as open to joy. Appropriately, then, to be human involves entering into quest for community, for relationship. It is to expand the parameters of the self into the social environment. The will to belong, the quest for union with others, therefore, involves a sense of reciprocity and mutuality which in turn is emblematic of love's character.

The communing character of love shapes human nature in its essence.[16] This dimension of love operates as a check on the threat

[14]Unpublished lecture of Dr. Larry K. Graham, The Iliff School of Theology, Winter 1979.

[15]This understanding of sin is appropriated by Augustine and exerts normative influence upon the doctrine's development in later periods. In this Christian appropiation of classical thought and myth we see the first theological critique of narcissistic personality traits.

[16]Daniel Day Williams, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love* (Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc. 1968), pp. 136 and 160.

of narcissistic self-isolation. Love presses toward interdependence with others. Hence, the capacity for relational mutuality stands as a central component in our assessment of personal maturity, integrity, and the possibility for interpersonal responsiveness and institutional responsibility. Out of this dimension of love's character arises the capacity for social engagement and the evolution of personal accountability for social structures of one's environment.

The primary therapeutic relationship between pastoral counselor and counselee should provide the initial context for an intensified sociality which resources this dimension of love. In this fashion the counseling relationship can never be seen as an appropriate *end in itself*. The counseling relationship is a means toward a larger and deeper level of sociality for the relation-questing self. The counseling interaction provides opportunity for focused inquiry into the pre-existing as well as future possibilities for engaging others beyond the self. It creates opportunity for exploring the barriers to such engagement. Therefore, while the counseling relationship involves an essential retreat from engagement with larger structures of personality and institutions in the short run, its long range purpose is clearly the expansion of social engagement: the integration of meanings into a more adequate, realistic, and vocationally serviceable structure resourcing social engagement. Browning likens the search for integration through interpersonal counseling to what anthropologists call the state of "liminality".[17] The liminal person functions with relaxed ego boundaries in search of new syntheses of meaning in his/her relation to a larger social environment. Thus the "counseling retreat" functions for Browning in much the same manner as rituals of liminality but with reference to a more comprehensive structure of personal resources for engaging socially both persons and social structures. In this counseling matrix the function of the counselor is that of "guiding priest." He/she provokes a new synthesis of social and personal meaning which the counselee internalizes and appropriates outside the counseling relationship. The context of pastoral care in this regard naturally demands recognition and attention as an integral dimension of that care. Thus the relation-questing component of love's character provides a practical interpretive handle for the pastoral counselor in dealing with the dialectic of withdrawal/isolation of the self and social engagement.

Love is value-engendering. One of the problems with narcissistic models of personality may be seen in the self's relationship to the

[17]Browning, *Moral Context,* pp. 33-37.

past. Narcissism, by definition, involves the collapse of social meaning into personal, private meaning. The narcissistic self is primarily a-historical. One might, as a corollary, claim that such a self is similarly a-moral. This dimension of love's character develops directly from an understanding of love as relation-questing. To be related to another involves some appreciation of time, time over which that relationship develops. So it is with value. Value is transmitted and appropriated in the contexts of owned traditions—traditions which identify a usable and meaningful past and regard future as potential, thus, promise-filled. In such a matrix—past-present-future—relationships embodying love express continuity bonds not only across time but within time, within history. It is in history that the community provides the moral and value context for the development of the individual person. The institutional, social and moral environments of human interaction are not passive properties against which humans interact and relate. Human nature, again, is fundamentally social and derivatively moral. The work of Lawrence Kohlberg grounds these observations of the developmental character of morality in human personality.[18] James Fowler's study of "faithing" as a moral category bridges the gap between the social construction of value and social experiences in the environment of religious institutions.[19] John Westerhoff's tri-partite understanding of the process of faithing provides a holistic assessment of the function of community in supporting and nurturing this aspect of personality development.[20] Values provide the grounding constructs around which personality grows, the structure around which personality grows, the structure around which the content of personality develops and out of which the character of personality evolves. When H. Richard Niebuhr writes about the "center of value" for the person, he identifies not only the metaphysical locus and source of value but the practical hub of value essental for the integration of healthy personalities.[21]

Value conscious pastoral care and counseling involves the counselee in the examination of and discovery of those operational value centers in day to day living. It involves the tracing of the relationship of these practical value centers to wider norms of value as these are a part of the person's tradition of value. Reiterating Browning, we claim that "care at the highest level must consist primarily of

[18]Lawrence Kohlberg, *Collected Papers on Moral Development and Moral Education,* (Kohlberg, 1973).

[19]James Fowler, *Lifemaps* (Word, 1978).

[20]John Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (Seabury, 1976); "Betwixt and Between," *Liturgy,* Vol., 22, #6, September 1977, pp. 4-11.

[21]H. R. Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (Harper, 1960).

'moral inquiry' ".[22] Note, we do not say "moralistic" inquiry. The task of the pastorally sensitive person is clearly not that of prescribing a comprehensive set of moral norms. But with equal clarity it must be claimed that the pastorally sensitive person neglects the moral-critical and value-critical task of diagnosing value constructs, evaluating their adequacy, and identifying alternatives only at the risk of denyiny the value-conserving dimension of love's character in the counseling relationship. Again Browning: "Acceptance, forgiveness, love or *communitias* are meaningless and formless concepts without a context of moral norms, judgements, and structures."[23] Pastoral care presses toward such explicit and structural affirmation of value in the interpersonal and social contexts of that care. Pastoral counseling undertaken in such a context requires sensitivity both to the personal and the institutional experience of the counselee.

Love is community-affirming. Human nature and personality are appropriately understood as primarily social realities, questing for fulfillment in relationship to other persons and to the larger social environment. If we understand love as the concretizing of that quest, it becomes possible to sketch out aspects of love's character in relation to the social and institutional context as that communal reality. It is in the context of human community that our understanding of the reality of God as incarnational reality is appropriately discussed. When speaking of the sociality of God and of relatedness as a principal constituent of God's essence, it is appropriate to speak of the community in which that understanding is nurtured as the "covenant people of God." Such imagery again affirms the fundamentally social character of the divine as well as the incarnational significance of social structures and human relationships. Just as relation-questing stands as an appropriate starting point for discussing the character of love, the direction of that quest demands attention to the aspect of communal reality encompassed by the concept of God's incarnation in community. We are thus led to affirm human existence as social reality. Such sociality requires historical continuity as a condition of existence and for meaning. It then becomes possible to claim that historical existence occasions social existence. In this manner our understanding of love's community-focused affirmation rests solidly upon an understanding of historical continuity in human interpersonal relationships and institutional structures.[24] Whether between two

[22]Browning, *Moral Context,* p. 90.

[23]*Ibid.,* p. 77.

[24]It should be noted that we are operating out of a structure-functional model of sociality and owe substantial sociological debt to Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton. Simultaneously, we are aware of the latent bias toward structural and functional inertia and resistance to change in such a theoretical orientation.

persons or within the extended group, community becomes possible only in a historical frame of temporal reference wherein the past is recoverable through memory. In this context, through anticipation, future impacts present patterns of meaning. The possibility of human love rests clearly upon the contingency that human existence is fundamentally historical and social.[25] It stands as a significant corollary to these assertions that the sociality of love and the communal dimension of personhood bear the marks of God's love as community takes shape. As we affirm, claim, and own divine *agape* in human community, relationships are transformed from atomistic couplings to *communitas.* We shall have more to say about the transformational effect of this dimension of love's character in our discussion of liberational love.

These insights support an equally contextual understanding of the pastoral caring task. The significance of the social relationships embodied within the specific and temporally bound pastor-counselee setting provides an initial set of relational givens. These presenting data in personal counselee history become significant resources for assisting persons accept increased responsibility for their own relationships and for their engagement with their larger social environments. Within the communal context of personhood individuals can own norms of justice and reciprocity as evidences of their co-participation in incarnational reality—*communitas.* The counseling relationship of pastoral care intensifies the struggle for such ownership in the professionally "bracketed" context of interpersonal and intrapsychic dynamics for the purpose of equivalent owership in the expanded social context of the counselee's external relationships. Thus, the community's function in the counseling dynamic stands not simply as a neutral stage upon which the counselee acts out social meanings. On the contrary, the community of engagement and support becomes an integral resource for the healthward movement of the counselee. The community becomes not only the context for but an agent of healing and nurture. And the movement of the counselee is movement toward increased sociality, interaction, and responsibility within the life of the community.

Love is liberational. The communal dimension of love's character opens for individuals new awareness of their personhood as the horizons of relationship expand. Self-giving relationship transforms both the initiator and the receiver in the dialogue. In this manner of inter-

[25]Though not alone in this perspective, James Gustafson provides clear atriculation of the relation of community to time, history, and future in his essay *Treasure in Earthern Vessels* (University of Chicago Press, 1961), note Appendix, pp. 113 ff.

action love's liberating dynamic frees persons for commitment and loyalty beyond the narcissistically personal. Liberational love unlocks the determinisms of former experience, thus enabling persons to claim their pasts and to be no longer tyrannized by them. In such a relational-temporal matrix the category of future becomes a present reality and subsequently a foundation for hopeful change. Liberational love is the dynamic of risk-filled venturing toward relationship with others and the larger social world.

Liberating love brings persons and institutions face-to-face with reality of suffering as a means toward transformed understanding of human meaning and purpose. Williams discusses this dimension of love's character in the context of the theological doctrine of "atonement".[26] Liberating love calls the individual to see an identification of self in the "other." Liberation theologian Frederick Herzog calls this understanding of atonement "corporate selfhood" and identifies this as the central liberating activity and reality of Christ in human history.[27] Liberating love frees persons to care for their social environments, for themselves as well as other persons, and for the institutional structures which shape their lives. Thus, liberational love finds fulfillment not in the extrication of self from institutional configurations of power, conflict, and decision but in acceptance of tension as an inevitable consequence of love's freedom to become involved with larger communities outside the strictly personal. It allows and enhances the integration of personal values with the value traditions of historic community—family, church, community of saints.

One of the more provocative insights arising from love's liberational character is that of identifying linkages between the individual and the larger, ultimately global or universal, context of personhood and relationship. Considerable sociological and organizational sophistication is required of the counselor who seeks to build upon the liberational character of love in the pastoral context. It is important to be concrete at this point. The pastor who chooses to operate in this mode of love's character in his/her counseling relationships functions both as an interpreter of institutional linkages and as an *architect* of those linkages with and on behalf of the counselee. Unless this dynamic obtains the liberational character of love's sociality may remain locked in a shell of pietistic individualism or more likely remain simply a theoretical tool in the pastor's arsenal of therapeutic concepts.

The liberational dimension of love's character stands as the most

[26]Williams, *Spirit and Forms of Love*, p. 180.
[27]Frederick Herzog, *Liberation Theology* (Seaburg, 1972), pp. 62-63.

Christocentric element in this four-fold typology of of love's character. Liberational love enables persons to enter into corporate life, into community with others, taking responsibility for their relationships of power, decision, and conflict. Liberational love views the connectedness of persons and institutions as a source of personal and communal power and responsibility. Liberational love, thus, is the dynamic and expanding dimension of love's character propelling the individual as a member of community into engagement with the larger, more complex, somewhat less personal (initially at least) and less parochial environment of the social/global community. Liberational love lays claim on the individual on behalf of an authority, the Christ, directed toward more inclusive community beyond the private self. Liberational love shatters the bonds of narcissistic preoccupation with self. In this way the Christian community claims the universality of its personal thrust and the inclusiveness of its institutional manifestations.

These four dimensions of love's character inform the tasks of pastoral care and counseling. They provide both theological and sociological grounds for integrating the personal dynamics of pastoral counseling with institutional dynamics of the larger social community. We emphasize at this point the pastor's task as an enabler of sociality and relatedness in the counseling relationship. We have emphasized a view of pastoral care and the counselor's role in that care as an institutionlized form of loving care for both persons and institutions. It is incumbent upon the pastor to approach the counseling task aware not only of the intrapsychic dynamics of his/her clients' life situations but also with both diagnostic and evaluative data concerning the dimensions of sociality *already* resident in the counseling situation. Such a perspective on the larger counseling and caring environment illuminates options for enlarging that sociality and building on it as an important component of the counseling agenda.[28]

The requirements for counseling in such an approach to the pastoral caring tasks involve explicit talents in ethical analysis and demonstrated capacity in the transaction of interinstitutional linkages. As Browning notes, integral to the training of pastoral counselors is their development as social ethicists and social theorists.[29] Our understanding of love's sociality speaks directly to this shortcoming in much of professional theology and pastoral education today. There is certain-

[28]James N. Lapsley, *Salvation and Health* (Westminster Press, 1972), especially Chapter 4; this paragraph is drafted with awareness of Lapsley's attention to "levels" of salvatory potential and the relation of salvation to health as seen in the capacity of an individual to participate in the life of a community for that participation's sake.

[29]Browning, *Moral Context* p. 96.

ly historical precedent for such an understanding of the social role and institutional function of the pastoral office. It is this writer's hope that by articulating a theological basis for a sociologically informed approach to counseling persons and structuring institutions, some contribution to the professional ministry issue may be made.