If I read William Oglesby's comments about my article correctly, he is suggesting that his distinctions between three therapeutic objectives (knowing, doing and being) clarify the presuppositions behind my three Biblical models (Psalmic, Proverbic and Parabolic). Specifically, he contends that I have given primacy to the "knowing" objective because, in my discussion of the parabolic model, I place considerable emphasis on insight. He himself favors "being," which stresses relationship.

I have two responses to this suggestion. The first is that I emphasized the parabolic model (with its concern for insight) because the literature on Biblically informed pastoral counseling either neglects Jesus’ parables or views them as moral illustrations, thus making them serve essentially proverbic purposes. Biblical scholarship in recent years has overwhelmingly rejected this view of the parables. It was important, therefore, for me to clearly differentiate the parabolic model from the other two, more common types of Biblically informed pastoral counseling (Psalmic and Proverbic). But it was not my intention to argue for its primacy over the other two models. As I will indicate in a moment, I believe the three Biblical models serve different, but equally legitimate, therapeutic purposes in pastoral counseling.

My second response is that I do not equate insight and knowledge. Because I don't, there is no justification for his conclusion that I consider knowledge to be primary in the helping process. I do not identify insight with knowledge but with perception. My views on this point are similar to Carl Rogers’ early article on "Perceptual

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Reorganization in Client-Centered Therapy," where he argues that a
safe, nonthreatening therapeutic relationship makes perceptual
reorganization possible. Whether relationship ("being") precedes
perceptual change or perceptual change gives rise to altered
relationships is a chicken-and-egg question that, as far as I am
concerned, the parabolic model does not, and need not, answer. The
important point is that, as I pointed out in my list of the
characteristics of the parable, Jesus’ parables emphasize both new
insight and altered relationships. The parabolic model does not give
primacy to insight over relationship, and it certainly does not give
primacy to knowledge. So, at least on this particular issue, I believe
that my views are quite similar to Oglesby’s own position.

Given the conceptual difficulties that arise when my three Biblical
models are interpreted in terms of Oglesby’s three therapeutic
orientations, I believe that a better way to set the stage for fruitful
dialogue would be to focus on the possible connections between his use
of Biblical themes in his book, Biblical Themes for Pastoral Care
(Abingdon, 1980) and my use of Biblical forms. I would suggest that
these are two complementary ways of appropriating the Bible for
pastoral counseling, with themes concerned with the dynamic contents
of the counseling process (its narrative flow) and forms emphasizing
the structural elements of the process. To further this more useful level
of dialogue, perhaps I may take this opportunity to comment briefly
on ways in which the Biblical forms that I have proposed help to
structure the counseling process. I can best address this issue by
noting the relationship between these three forms and three major
types of pastoral counseling: grief counseling (Psalmic), premarital
counseling (Proverbic) and marriage and family counseling (Parabolic).

For structuring the process of grief counseling, the psalm of lament
is especially important. Bernhard W. Anderson’s Out of the Depths
(Westminster, 1974) and Claus Westermann’s The Psalms: Structure,
Content and Message (Augsburg, 1980) provide valuable discussions
of the basic structure of the lament. Articles by Westermann and by
Walter Brueggemann on the lament are also most valuable. These
resources reflect a general agreement among Biblical scholars that the
lament consists of the following elements: invocation, complaint,
review of God’s past help, petition, divine response, and vow to praise.

This structure can be most helpful to the pastor in guiding the grief
process. Significantly, Brueggemann shows that the Kubler-Ross
stages of dying (which are also frequently applied to the grief process)
lack critical elements of the lament form (e.g. the petition in the lament
becomes a desperate and unfruitful bargaining in Kubler-Ross.)

For providing structure for premarital counseling, Proverbs’
emphasis on moral concerns is particularly suggestive. As Gerhard