

Faith-Informed Counseling and Temperament Theory: A Ghanaian Perspective on Integrating Theology, Psychology, and Culture

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Abstract

This work presents a Ghanaian approach to integrating theology, psychology, and culture in the practice of faith-informed counseling. Grounded in biblical anthropology and guided by temperament theory—particularly the Arno Profile System (APS)—the study explores how Christian counseling can effectively address emotional, relational, and spiritual needs within the African context. It examines the convergence of faith and science, arguing that spiritual formation and psychological insight are not opposing paths but complementary aspects of holistic healing. The book employs both theological reflection and qualitative case analysis to demonstrate how the APS model enhances counselor understanding of personality, behavior, and emotional needs.

In Ghana, where Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality coexists with communal cultural values, counseling must respond to complex realities—spiritual warfare, family expectations, and societal change. This text proposes a Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM) that blends biblical principles, temperament analysis, and culturally sensitive techniques to promote transformation. It affirms that the Holy Spirit sanctifies temperament rather than erasing it and that faith-informed counseling equips individuals to walk in wholeness through grace and understanding. The book aims to serve as both an academic text and a practical manual for Christian counselors, pastors, and students in Africa and beyond.

Keywords

Faith-informed counselling; Temperament theory; Christian psychology; Theology and psychology integration; Cultural context; Ghanaian counselling practice; Creation Therapy; Spiritual formation; African pastoral care; Biblical anthropology; Mental health in Africa; Contextual theology; Christian counselling models; Intercultural psychology; Holistic healing.

Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

Counseling in Africa, and particularly in Ghana, has long been a sacred intersection between faith, community, and the search for inner peace. In churches, homes, and clinics, people come burdened—some with visible pain, others with unspoken struggles. They sit before pastors, elders, or counselors not merely for advice but for hope. Over the years, I have met believers whose faith was strong yet whose hearts were weary. They prayed fervently, fasted faithfully, and served zealously, but still carried unresolved wounds of fear, guilt, and rejection. Such experiences have repeatedly raised a central question in my mind: *How can the Church minister healing that reaches both the spirit and the psyche of the believer?*

The answer, I have come to see, lies in a renewed model of counseling that honors the Word of God while recognizing the complexity of human emotion. Faith-informed counseling is not a compromise between theology and psychology; it is their rightful partnership. When the two walk together, truth becomes compassionate and science becomes redemptive. This is the vision that birthed my work with the Arno Profile System (APS) and the larger commitment to integrating temperament theory into the Christian counseling ministry in Ghana.

Counseling in the Ghanaian Context

Ghana's counseling tradition, both secular and spiritual, reflects its communal identity. The extended family system and the church community have long been the first lines of support when individuals face distress. In many Akan-speaking families, elders often say, "*Abofra bo a, na wura bo,*" meaning "When a child is broken, the owner is broken." This proverb captures the African conviction that individual pain affects the whole community. Yet, as society modernizes, these traditional safety nets have weakened, and emotional suffering has become more complex.

In the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, which now dominates Ghana's Christian landscape, pastoral care remains central. Believers seek deliverance, prophetic direction, and prayer for emotional burdens that often have psychological roots. A young woman once shared in a counseling session how she had attended several prayer meetings seeking relief from recurring sadness and panic attacks. Each time, she was told to "pray harder" or "renounce fear." Her faith was genuine, but her inner turmoil persisted. When we explored her temperament profile, we discovered a deep Melancholic pattern—a temperament prone to introspection, self-criticism, and perfectionism. For her, healing began not with exorcism but with understanding. Through Scripture, reflection, and structured counseling, she came to see her emotional wiring as part of God's design, not a spiritual defect.

Cases like hers are common. Many Christians wrestle not with unbelief, but with the mystery of their own emotions. Without understanding the inner structure of temperament, counselors risk treating symptoms as sins and spiritualizing human weakness. The challenge for today's faith-based counselor is therefore not only to pray but also to perceive—to discern both spiritual and psychological realities within the same soul.

Western psychology, for all its scientific merit, often emerges from worldviews detached from faith. It speaks of behavior, cognition, and affect, but seldom of spirit. Meanwhile, much of African pastoral counseling focuses on prayer and morality while neglecting emotional structure. Ghanaian Christianity now stands at a pivotal point where these two paths must converge. The emerging generation of believers is educated, emotionally expressive, and spiritually curious. They want answers that make sense both in Scripture and in life.

Faith-informed counseling offers that bridge. It accepts psychological insight without surrendering theological authority. It acknowledges that the human person is a unity of spirit, soul, and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23), and that emotional restoration is part of God's redemptive work. In practice, it means helping clients to interpret their emotions through both biblical truth and temperament awareness. A Choleric's drive for control, a Sanguine's need for acceptance, or a Melancholic's pursuit of perfection are not random behaviors—they are temperamental expressions of deeper needs that, when unmet, produce conflict. The counselor's task is to bring these needs under the lordship of Christ and to guide the counselee toward balance, humility, and love.

In Ghana, where faith is deeply woven into daily life, counseling that ignores spirituality is incomplete. Yet spirituality without psychological understanding can wound the very souls it seeks to heal. The tension between these two realities calls for a new paradigm—one that respects divine revelation and human design alike.

The Role of Temperament Theory

Temperament theory, particularly as expressed in the Arno Profile System (APS), provides a structured framework for understanding personality from a biblical viewpoint. It identifies the

inner emotional needs that shape behavior and relationships across three domains: Inclusion (social interaction), Control (decision-making), and Affection (intimacy and love). Through this system, counseling moves from general advice to personalized understanding.

In my counseling work, I have seen couples on the brink of divorce find reconciliation simply by understanding their temperamental differences. A husband with a Choleric temperament in Control often misinterprets his wife's Phlegmatic calmness as disinterest, while she experiences his assertiveness as aggression. Once both realize that these patterns are inborn tendencies rather than moral failures, empathy replaces accusation. The Holy Spirit uses knowledge to heal misunderstanding. Temperament theory thus becomes a tool for grace—it does not label, it enlightens.

For Ghanaian counselors, this model offers an added benefit: it harmonizes with African communal philosophy. The African worldview values balance, relationship, and belonging. The APS reinforces these by helping individuals understand how their emotional needs influence their participation in community and family life. In a society where hierarchy, respect, and spiritual authority play strong roles, knowing one's temperament can prevent both misuse of power and emotional withdrawal.

Cultural and Spiritual Realities

Culture shapes emotion as much as faith does. In Ghana, social expectations around gender, leadership, and emotional restraint often affect counseling outcomes. Men are expected to be strong and composed, while women are encouraged to be gentle and accommodating. These norms can silence emotional honesty. A Melancholic man who feels rejected may mask it with silence; a

Supine woman who needs affection may express it through service rather than words. Faith-informed counseling provides a safe space for both to rediscover their emotional voice in the light of Scripture.

Furthermore, the spiritual worldview of the Ghanaian believer cannot be ignored. Many interpret anxiety or depression as spiritual oppression. While spiritual warfare is real, not all suffering is demonic; some is simply human. Understanding temperament allows counselors to discern where prayer ends and process begins. It helps believers learn that deliverance is not only casting out darkness but also cultivating light—through truth, renewal of the mind, and healthy emotional rhythms.

Purpose and Direction of the Book

This book seeks to provide a framework for counseling that is faithful to Scripture, psychologically informed, and culturally grounded. It is written for counselors, pastors, educators, and Christian leaders who desire to serve the African church with both wisdom and compassion. It will show that faith-informed counseling is not a modern innovation but a rediscovery of biblical wholeness.

Each chapter builds upon this foundation. The next sections will explore the theological roots of human personality, review relevant literature, and present case studies from Ghanaian practice. The goal is to propose a **Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM)**—a framework that unites biblical principles, psychological understanding, and cultural awareness into a coherent approach for Christian counseling in Africa.

From years of pastoral and counseling work, I have learned that when people truly understand themselves in the light of God’s design, they experience not condemnation but clarity. That clarity

is the first step toward transformation. In this spirit, the pages that follow are not just theoretical reflections but lived testimony—a journey of discovery, both human and divine.

Chapter Two: Theological and Theoretical Foundations

The human person is a mystery both divine and complex. Scripture tells us that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14), yet experience reminds us that we are also fragile and conflicted. The tension between divine design and human brokenness forms the foundation of counseling. To understand healing, one must first understand the human being who seeks it. Every counseling encounter begins with a theological question: *Who is man?* And every successful intervention must, in some way, restore man to his intended harmony with God, with others, and with himself.

In counseling practice, I have often seen how this question shapes everything else. A woman battling anxiety interprets her restlessness as a lack of faith. A man burdened by guilt believes he has disappointed God beyond redemption. Their pain is not only emotional but spiritual. Healing, therefore, cannot stop at psychological insight; it must reach the soul. Biblical anthropology gives meaning to psychology because it reveals *why* we feel, *how* we think, and *who* we are in the eyes of our Creator.

2.1 Biblical Anthropology: Understanding the Human Person

The Bible portrays human beings as triune in nature—spirit, soul, and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23). This triadic structure mirrors the image of God Himself, a Trinity of unity and distinction. Each aspect of the human being plays a vital role in counseling and emotional health.

- **The Spirit** is the God-conscious dimension, enabling communion with the Creator through worship, prayer, and revelation.
- **The Soul** (Greek *pseuchē*) houses the mind, will, and emotions—the realm where thoughts, decisions, and feelings interact.
- **The Body** is the physical vessel through which spiritual and emotional realities find expression.

When sin entered the human experience, it fractured this unity. The spirit was alienated from God, the soul became disordered, and the body became subject to decay. This fragmentation explains much of human distress. Depression, anger, guilt, and fear are not random states; they are signals of disconnection—from God, from self, or from others.

Biblical counseling seeks not merely to repair behavior but to restore divine order. The Psalmist’s prayer, “Why are you downcast, O my soul?” (Psalm 42:5), captures this inner dialogue between spirit and soul. Healing begins when the spirit—enlightened by truth—speaks peace to the soul. Thus, faith-informed counseling must always begin with a theology of the person, recognizing that emotional pain has both spiritual and psychological dimensions.

In the African context, this understanding resonates deeply. Ghanaian culture does not separate the sacred from the personal. Illness, emotion, and behavior are seen as part of a spiritual continuum. A disturbed mind is often interpreted as a disturbed spirit. While this worldview sometimes leads to over-spiritualization, it also holds a valuable truth: human problems cannot be solved apart from spiritual insight. The counselor, therefore, becomes a restorer of harmony—reconciling spirit, soul, and body under the transforming grace of Christ.

2.2 Integrating Theology and Psychology

The relationship between theology and psychology has often been uneasy. In some circles, psychology is viewed with suspicion, as though it undermines faith. In others, theology is dismissed as unscientific. Yet, both disciplines study the same subject—the human person. Theology begins with divine revelation; psychology begins with human observation. Where they meet, counseling becomes both a science and a ministry.

Faith-informed counseling stands on this intersection. It does not deny the findings of psychology but interprets them through Scripture. It recognizes that while psychological theories describe behavior, only theology explains its purpose. The Christian counselor, therefore, must learn to hold a Bible in one hand and a case file in the other—allowing grace and knowledge to work together.

Several psychological theories have shaped modern counseling practice. **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** emphasizes the renewal of thought patterns, a concept that echoes Romans 12:2: “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” **Family Systems Theory** highlights how individuals are influenced by family dynamics, paralleling biblical teachings on generational blessing and responsibility (Exodus 20:6). Even **humanistic psychology**, with its focus on self-worth, finds resonance in the biblical truth that each person bears the image of God.

In Ghanaian counseling, these theories take on new meaning. African identity is relational; people see themselves as part of a family and community. A young man’s anxiety may stem not from individual failure but from the weight of family expectation. A woman’s low self-esteem may reflect years of cultural silencing. Psychology helps the counselor identify these patterns, while

theology provides a redemptive language to heal them. Together, they affirm that human dignity is restored not merely by self-understanding but by grace.

2.3 The Place of Temperament in Christian Counseling

Temperament theory provides the missing link between theology and psychology—it explains the *how* of human behavior in light of divine design. The **Arno Profile System (APS)**, developed by Drs. Richard and Phyllis Arno, builds upon classical temperament theory but interprets it through a biblical framework known as *Creation Therapy*. It proposes that God created each person with an inborn temperament—a unique emotional and relational pattern that shapes how one interacts with others, makes decisions, and experiences love.

The APS divides temperament into five core types—Melancholic, Choleric, Sanguine, Supine, and Phlegmatic—and assesses them across three relational dimensions:

1. **Inclusion:** how a person relates socially and intellectually with others.
2. **Control:** how one makes decisions, handles responsibility, and exercises authority.
3. **Affection:** how love, intimacy, and emotional closeness are expressed.

Each temperament has strengths that reflect divine creativity and weaknesses that reveal the need for sanctification. A **Melancholic** may be analytical and loyal yet prone to self-criticism. A **Choleric** may be decisive and visionary yet impatient. The **Sanguine** brings warmth and joy but may lack discipline. The **Supine** is gentle and service-oriented but often hesitant to express needs. The **Phlegmatic** offers peace and stability but risks passivity. Understanding these temperaments allows counselors to interpret conflict not as moral failure but as a collision of unmet needs and unhealed wounds.

In one counseling case, a Christian couple struggled with constant arguments over household leadership. The husband, a Choleric in Control, saw his role as command, while his wife, a Melancholic in Affection, longed for reassurance. Both were sincere Christians yet misread each other's temperament needs. Through temperament analysis, they began to see how God had wired them differently for purpose, not competition. Their marriage began to heal—not through power, but through understanding.

In Ghanaian culture, where respect and hierarchy shape relationships, temperament counseling helps balance traditional values with biblical equality. It gives language to emotions that are often suppressed by cultural expectations. It helps men acknowledge vulnerability without shame and encourages women to express strength without guilt. Most importantly, it restores empathy—the foundation of every Christ-centered relationship.

2.4 Temperament and Spiritual Formation

Christian counseling cannot stop at diagnosis; it must lead to transformation. Temperament awareness is only the beginning. The true work of counseling is the sanctification of temperament—the process by which the Holy Spirit refines natural tendencies into Christlike character. The Scriptures teach that “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23). These virtues do not replace temperament; they redeem it.

A Choleric learns gentleness without losing courage. A Melancholic learns joy without losing depth. A Sanguine learns discipline without losing warmth. A Supine learns confidence without

losing compassion. A Phlegmatic learns initiative without losing peace. This is the beauty of faith-informed counseling—it does not seek to erase individuality but to consecrate it.

For counselors in Ghana and Africa, this perspective transforms practice. It moves counseling from mere advice-giving to spiritual mentoring. It acknowledges that healing requires both revelation and relationship. The counselor becomes not only a professional but also a shepherd of souls, guiding clients toward the discovery of God’s purpose within their temperament.

2.5 Summary of the Foundational Integration

From this exploration, one can see that theology provides the “why,” psychology provides the “how,” and temperament theory provides the “what” of human behavior. Together, they form a threefold cord that is not easily broken.

Faith-informed counseling, rooted in temperament theory, invites both counselor and counselee to see human emotion through God’s eyes. It reminds the African church that true wholeness does not come through suppression or denial but through self-understanding and spiritual renewal. The next chapter will therefore build upon these foundations by reviewing relevant literature—both biblical and psychological—to locate this work within the larger discourse on Christian counseling and cultural integration in Africa.

Chapter Three: Review of Related Literature

The study of faith-informed counseling and temperament theory stands at the meeting point of theology, psychology, and human experience. Scholars and practitioners across the world have long sought to understand how divine truth interacts with human emotion and behavior. From early

pastoral care models in the Church to contemporary faith-based psychology, the conversation continues to evolve — now finding new resonance in Africa, where spiritual life and communal culture remain deeply intertwined.

This chapter examines key literature relevant to three thematic areas: (1) the development of Christian counseling as a faith-integrated discipline, (2) the theory and application of temperament analysis — particularly the Arno Profile System (APS), and (3) contextual perspectives on counseling practice within African and Ghanaian settings. These perspectives illuminate the intellectual, theological, and cultural underpinnings of the present work.

3.1 The Development of Christian Counseling: A Faith–Psychology Dialogue

Modern Christian counseling emerged from the growing recognition that spiritual formation and psychological healing share a common goal — the restoration of human wholeness. Early pioneers such as Clyde Narramore, Larry Crabb, and Gary Collins established the foundation for an integrative model that embraced both Scripture and psychology. Narramore (1960) was among the first to articulate a counseling approach grounded in biblical principles yet informed by empirical understanding of behavior. Crabb (1977) advanced the concept of biblical integration by asserting that “all truth is God’s truth,” arguing that psychological insights, when properly interpreted, complement biblical revelation rather than contradict it.

Mark McMinn (2011) later proposed a three-dimensional model of integration — *theology, psychology, and spirituality* — emphasizing that effective counseling involves both cognitive transformation and spiritual renewal. Similarly, Siang-Yang Tan (2011) articulated a “Spirit-directed integration,” where psychological tools are used under the illumination of the Holy Spirit

to achieve healing that is both clinical and sanctifying. For Tan, the counselor must operate simultaneously as a scientist, theologian, and servant — discerning how grace works through the human mind.

Faith-informed counseling therefore resists the false dichotomy between sacred and secular. It does not seek to replace prayer with technique, nor to replace theology with therapy. Instead, it sees both as partners in the same redemptive process. As McMinn observed, the Christian counselor functions not merely as a mental health professional but as a spiritual companion guiding clients toward Christlikeness.

This integration has found global application through Christian universities, counseling centers, and seminaries that offer dual training in theology and psychology. Yet, despite its expansion, the Western discourse often underrepresents African perspectives — where counseling operates not only within clinical walls but within living faith communities.

3.2 Temperament Theory and the Arno Profile System (APS)

Temperament theory traces its roots to classical philosophy, with early references in the writings of Hippocrates and Galen, who classified human behavior into four temperaments: Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic. These early notions sought to explain why people behave differently under similar circumstances. Over time, psychology reinterpreted temperament as a biologically based and stable component of personality.

In the 20th century, the Arnos advanced the theory by introducing a biblically grounded framework known as *Creation Therapy*, operationalized through the Arno Profile System (APS). This system measures emotional needs and behavioral responses across three relational domains — Inclusion,

Control, and Affection — offering a detailed picture of how individuals relate to themselves, others, and God.

Arno and Arno (1990) argue that each temperament is divinely designed, reflecting both strength and vulnerability in human character. They present temperament as “God’s emotional blueprint,” asserting that emotional conflicts often arise when individuals act contrary to their God-given temperament or fail to meet their legitimate emotional needs in a healthy way.

In clinical and pastoral contexts, the APS has proven useful in identifying hidden emotional struggles behind spiritual or relational crises. For instance, a counselee’s recurring anger may stem not from rebellion but from unmet Control needs, while another’s withdrawal may reflect fear of rejection rooted in their Inclusion temperament. By clarifying these patterns, the counselor can design interventions that are both biblically and psychologically sound.

Scholars such as Worthington (2005) and Cloud & Townsend (1992) have emphasized the importance of understanding personality in developing healthy boundaries, empathy, and self-regulation. Worthington’s *Hope-Focused Counseling* model aligns with the APS framework by promoting forgiveness, communication, and spiritual hope as core components of emotional recovery.

In Ghana, temperament theory is gaining traction among faith-based counselors. Oheneba-Dorny (2024) highlights its relevance in African Christian contexts where emotional expression, family obligation, and spiritual belief systems are tightly interwoven. He argues that temperament analysis enables African counselors to respect cultural values while addressing personal emotional needs, providing a bridge between biblical insight and cultural understanding.

3.3 Counseling in African and Ghanaian Contexts

Counseling in Africa cannot be understood apart from its cultural and communal setting. The African worldview emphasizes interconnectedness — between the individual, the family, the community, and the spiritual world. As John Mbiti (1969) famously stated, *“I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.”* This communal ontology shapes how people experience and express emotional distress. A person’s psychological pain is often interpreted as a communal imbalance rather than a private affliction.

In Ghana, this perspective is particularly evident in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, where counseling, prayer, and deliverance are intertwined. Oduro (2016) observes that Ghanaian pastoral care often prioritizes spiritual warfare and moral discipline, yet many of the issues presented — such as marital conflict, anxiety, or grief — also have psychological dimensions. Consequently, pastors and counselors must learn to discern when to pray and when to process, when to cast out demons and when to build emotional resilience.

Appiah-Kubi (2022) adds that Ghanaian counseling must account for cultural norms governing emotional expression. Men are often discouraged from vulnerability, while women are expected to carry emotional burdens silently. The result is a pastoral environment where many believers internalize distress, leading to depression, resentment, or burnout. Integrating temperament analysis into counseling thus becomes a means of restoring permission to feel, understand, and heal.

Several studies on faith-based mental health in Ghana highlight a growing openness to psychological perspectives within the church. Research by Osei-Tutu (2018) shows that premarital

and family counseling programs in Charismatic congregations are beginning to incorporate personality assessments, emotional intelligence, and biblical conflict resolution. Similarly, African theologians such as Oduro and Asamoah-Gyadu (2013) advocate for a theology of pastoral care that recognizes the interplay of faith, culture, and psychology.

3.4 Cultural and Theological Synthesis in Counseling

The integration of theology and psychology in Africa demands cultural humility. Western counseling models often emphasize individual autonomy, while African societies prize interdependence. Effective faith-based counseling must therefore adapt its principles to communal values without losing biblical integrity.

In Ghanaian Christianity, the concept of *healing* transcends the individual; it encompasses family restoration, social harmony, and divine favor. This holistic view aligns with the biblical vision of *shalom*—not merely peace as absence of conflict, but peace as wholeness. Faith-informed counseling, supported by temperament theory, affirms that healing the soul also heals relationships, and that psychological insight deepens, rather than diminishes, spiritual growth.

The literature reveals that successful Christian counseling in Africa must address three levels simultaneously: **spiritual formation**, **emotional literacy**, and **cultural sensitivity**. These form the tripod upon which a Ghanaian model of faith-informed counseling can stand. The works of Tan (2011), Worthington (2005), and McMinn (2011) offer universal frameworks, but their true power emerges when adapted through contextual theology — one that listens to the heartbeat of the African soul.

3.5 Summary of Literature Insights

From this review, one can see that global scholarship provides the tools, while African scholarship provides the context. Western theorists have refined the science of integration; African theologians have preserved its spirit. When joined, they create a model of counseling that is both intellectually credible and spiritually authentic.

Temperament theory, when grounded in biblical anthropology and practiced within Ghana's communal ethos, becomes more than a diagnostic tool — it becomes a pastoral bridge. It teaches that to counsel effectively in Ghana is not merely to interpret symptoms, but to interpret stories — stories of faith, family, and survival.

The next chapter, therefore, will draw from these foundations to present a **Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM)** — a conceptual framework designed for African Christian counselors who seek to unite theological truth, psychological insight, and cultural wisdom in their ministry of healing.

Chapter Four: The Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM): Conceptual Framework and Application

Faith-informed counseling must do more than explain—it must transform. The heart of this transformation lies in a counseling model that integrates faith, temperament, and cultural understanding into a coherent process. The **Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM)** was developed from years of Christian counseling practice, teaching, and observation within Ghana's Pentecostal-Charismatic and pastoral care contexts. It seeks to bridge the gap between the spiritual, psychological, and cultural dimensions of human experience.

The FTIM is both theological and therapeutic. It recognizes that the human being is a creation of God—fearfully and wonderfully made—but also a being in need of healing and sanctification. This model therefore rests on three central convictions: (1) every person possesses a divinely designed temperament, (2) spiritual growth transforms temperament rather than erasing it, and (3) cultural understanding provides the context through which counseling can be meaningful and sustainable.

4.1 Foundations of the Faith–Temperament Integration Model

The Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM) builds upon three interrelated foundations: **biblical anthropology, temperament theory, and cultural-contextual counseling practice.**

1. **Biblical Anthropology** affirms that human beings were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27), endowed with emotional, cognitive, and moral capacities that reflect divine attributes. Sin distorts these capacities, but grace redeems them. The counselor’s role is therefore redemptive—helping clients rediscover their divine image through self-understanding and spiritual renewal.
2. **Temperament Theory**, particularly the Arno Profile System (APS), provides the psychological foundation. It helps the counselor identify core emotional needs and behavioral tendencies across the three relational dimensions of Inclusion, Control, and Affection. By understanding temperament, the counselor interprets emotional struggles not as failures of faith but as unmet needs that must be addressed in healthy, God-honoring ways.
3. **Cultural-Contextual Counseling** grounds the model within the Ghanaian and broader African worldview. Counseling in Ghana must respect communal interdependence, family

hierarchy, and spiritual worldview. The FTIM therefore situates counseling within a relational and faith-based community, aligning therapeutic intervention with biblical truth and local cultural understanding.

Together, these foundations allow the model to function as a living synthesis—where theology interprets psychology, psychology illuminates behavior, and culture gives context to experience.

4.2 Conceptual Dimensions of the FTIM

The FTIM operates through **five interdependent dimensions**, each representing a phase in the counseling journey:

1. **Spiritual Awareness and Identity** – recognizing that healing begins with awareness of one's divine origin and purpose.
2. **Temperament Discovery** – using the APS or equivalent tools to explore the client's innate emotional and relational design.
3. **Faith Integration and Renewal** – aligning temperament tendencies with biblical truth through prayer, Scripture reflection, and guided self-examination.
4. **Cultural Reframing** – interpreting emotional and relational experiences through a culturally sensitive lens that honors both African values and biblical principles.
5. **Transformation and Empowerment** – facilitating behavioral and spiritual change through sanctification, discipline, and relational growth.

These five dimensions do not always occur sequentially; in practice, they often overlap and reinforce one another. The FTIM thus mirrors the dynamic nature of the counseling relationship—a movement from understanding to renewal, from insight to transformation.

4.3 The Counseling Process within the FTIM

The Faith–Temperament Integration Model translates these dimensions into a structured but flexible counseling process. It unfolds in **six progressive stages**, reflecting both psychological depth and spiritual direction:

Stage 1: Assessment and Spiritual Grounding

Every counseling journey begins with relationship and trust. The counselor conducts an initial intake session to assess the client’s emotional, spiritual, and social history. Tools such as the APS Temperament Analysis or a psychosocial inventory may be used. This phase includes prayer, reflection, and the establishment of a safe and confidential environment.

In Ghana, where counseling often occurs within church spaces, this stage may also include collaboration with pastoral leadership or family members. The goal is to affirm the client’s identity in Christ before addressing behavior or symptoms.

Stage 2: Temperament Exploration

The counselor guides the client through understanding their temperament profile—examining strengths, weaknesses, and relational tendencies in the Inclusion, Control, and Affection areas. This step provides emotional literacy, helping clients articulate needs they may have repressed due to cultural expectations or fear of judgment.

For example, a Supine in Affection client who constantly feels unloved may begin to understand that her need for affirmation is not weakness but design. In one counseling case, a young Ghanaian woman serving as a church administrator confessed that she often felt guilty for wanting attention

from her pastor and colleagues. Through temperament analysis, she learned that her Supine temperament required expressions of appreciation to feel valued. This insight brought peace, replacing guilt with gratitude.

Stage 3: Faith and Scripture Integration

Faith becomes the interpretive lens through which temperament is sanctified. The counselor introduces Scripture and spiritual disciplines relevant to the client's temperament struggles. For instance, a Choleric struggling with control might reflect on James 1:19—"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry." A Melancholic prone to guilt might meditate on Psalm 103:12—"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

In this phase, the counselor combines theological reflection with cognitive restructuring—helping clients replace distorted thoughts with biblical truth. This aligns with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy principles but is enriched with spiritual insight.

Stage 4: Cultural and Relational Reframing

This stage addresses how culture shapes emotional expression and interpersonal dynamics. In Ghanaian settings, where hierarchy and respect influence relationships, counselors help clients navigate emotional needs within culturally accepted boundaries.

For example, a Phlegmatic husband may suppress frustration to avoid disrespecting his wife or pastor, while a Sanguine wife may over-express affection in ways misinterpreted as immaturity.

The counselor helps both partners reframe these behaviors in light of both Scripture and cultural values—teaching balance between honesty and humility, between expression and respect.

Stage 5: Healing, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation

The FTIM emphasizes forgiveness as a therapeutic and spiritual milestone. Many emotional disorders in Ghanaian Christian settings are rooted in unresolved offense—between spouses, church members, or parents and children. Using guided prayer, narrative therapy, and biblical meditation, the counselor helps the client confront pain and release bitterness.

Forgiveness is not denial; it is a conscious spiritual act of surrender. In practice, this may involve writing forgiveness letters, confession during prayer sessions, or symbolic acts of release such as tearing a written grievance. The counselor ensures that forgiveness is accompanied by renewed boundaries and understanding, preventing relapse into emotional captivity.

Stage 6: Transformation and Empowerment

The final phase focuses on consolidating growth. Clients are guided to establish personal disciplines—Bible study, accountability partnerships, journaling, and community service—that sustain their transformation. Follow-up sessions emphasize living out faith in daily interactions.

The FTIM holds that sanctified temperament produces Christian maturity. A Melancholic becomes a thoughtful encourager, a Choleric a servant leader, a Supine a compassionate helper, a Sanguine a joyful motivator, and a Phlegmatic a stabilizing presence in community. Transformation is thus both psychological and spiritual—a movement toward Christlikeness that also enhances emotional health.

4.4 Ghanaian Case Illustrations

Case 1: The Overburdened Pastor's Wife

Ama, a 45-year-old pastor's wife in Accra, came for counseling due to exhaustion and resentment. Her APS results revealed a Supine in Inclusion, Melancholic in Control, and Phlegmatic in Affection temperament. She was a faithful leader but found it difficult to say "no" to endless church demands. Her cultural and spiritual upbringing taught her that self-sacrifice equals holiness.

Through the FTIM process, Ama learned to distinguish between godly service and unhealthy self-neglect. She began practicing Sabbath rest and redefined obedience as stewardship rather than slavery. Within months, her joy returned, and her marriage improved. Her transformation reflected not rebellion against tradition, but rediscovery of balance through biblical and emotional wisdom.

Case 2: The Young Professional and Fear of Failure

Kwame, a 28-year-old banker, suffered from anxiety and sleeplessness. Raised in a strict Christian home, he internalized a deep fear of failure. His APS revealed a Melancholic Compulsive temperament in all three areas—a profile associated with perfectionism and high self-imposed standards.

In counseling, he explored Scriptures on grace and the acceptance of weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). Culturally, he reframed success through community values rather than Western individualism—learning to see worth in being, not just doing. Kwame's recovery journey demonstrated how the FTIM helps blend theology, psychology, and cultural meaning into sustainable healing.

4.5 Strengths and Contributions of the FTIM

The Faith–Temperament Integration Model offers several contributions to faith-based counseling practice:

- **Holistic Integration:** It unites biblical revelation, psychological insight, and cultural sensitivity in one coherent framework.
- **Cultural Relevance:** It contextualizes faith-based therapy for Ghanaian and African settings where community and spirituality are central.
- **Personalized Application:** Temperament analysis ensures individualized care rather than one-size-fits-all counseling.
- **Spiritual Transformation:** It moves beyond symptom management toward genuine sanctification and character formation.
- **Practical Accessibility:** It can be implemented in churches, counseling centers, and lay leadership training programs without losing academic rigor.

From this model, one can see that counseling becomes more than a professional service—it becomes ministry in motion, a sacred encounter between divine grace and human need.

4.6 Transition

The Faith–Temperament Integration Model demonstrates that theology and psychology, when harmonized through cultural understanding, can bring profound healing to the human soul. The next chapter will therefore explore **training implications and professional practice**, focusing on how counselors, pastors, and faith-based institutions can adopt this model to strengthen mental health and spiritual formation in the African church.

Chapter Five: Training and Practice Implications for Faith-Based Counselors in Africa

The growing interest in faith-informed counseling within Africa presents both an opportunity and a responsibility. The opportunity lies in developing a distinctly African Christian approach to mental health that honors both theology and psychology. The responsibility, however, lies in equipping those who serve in the helping professions — pastors, counselors, lay leaders, and educators — to apply this integration competently and ethically. The **Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM)** provides a framework through which such training can be institutionalized and sustained.

This chapter explores how the FTIM can be embedded within counselor education, supervision, and church-based practice. It also discusses its relevance for academic programs such as those at the *Oheneba-Dornyo University College of Counselling Psychology (ODUCCP)* and for broader partnerships with seminaries, ministries, and professional bodies across Africa.

5.1 Building the Foundation for Faith-Based Counselor Training

Africa’s counseling movement is still young, yet rapidly evolving. Historically, pastoral care in Ghana and much of sub-Saharan Africa relied heavily on prayer, exhortation, and moral correction. While these remain vital aspects of ministry, they often overlook emotional processing, personality structure, and mental health literacy. Many pastors and lay leaders minister sincerely but without psychological training, leading to misdiagnosis or spiritual overgeneralization of human struggles.

To bridge this gap, faith-based counselor education must focus on three pillars: **knowledge, formation, and practice.**

1. **Knowledge** — providing theological, psychological, and cultural understanding of human behavior.
2. **Formation** — shaping the counselor’s spiritual and emotional maturity through mentoring and reflective practice.
3. **Practice** — equipping trainees with real-world counseling skills, supervision, and ethical competence.

At ODUCCP, these pillars already inform the design of certificate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs. Integrating the FTIM into these frameworks can create a unified training philosophy rooted in African theology and empirical counseling methods.

Students can learn how to interpret behavior through temperament analysis while grounding their intervention in Scripture and prayer. A training course might, for example, combine *Temperament Theory and Biblical Anthropology* with *Applied Counseling Practicum*, allowing students to both understand and embody the principles of faith-informed counseling.

5.2 Curriculum Integration of the FTIM at ODUCCP

The FTIM lends itself naturally to curriculum development across multiple levels of professional formation. Its integration can occur through the following strategies:

1. Core Course Development

Courses such as *Faith-Informed Counseling Theory*, *Temperament and Christian Personality*, and *Biblical Psychology of the Soul* can provide academic grounding. Each course can include:

- Biblical foundations for personality and emotional life.

- Comparative analysis of secular and Christian counseling models.
- Ghanaian case studies demonstrating temperament application.

Students will be assessed not only by exams but through reflection journals, supervision reports, and case conceptualizations that require integration of Scripture with psychological reasoning.

2. Practicum and Supervision

Supervised field practice remains the heartbeat of counselor training. Under the FTIM framework, supervision goes beyond case management — it becomes spiritual mentoring. Supervisors model prayerful discernment, cultural sensitivity, and ethical decision-making.

For instance, a student counselor serving in a church clinic in Accra may work with clients whose presenting issues range from marital conflict to depression triggered by spiritual guilt. Supervision sessions guide the student not only to apply counseling techniques but to interpret the client's temperament and spiritual condition responsibly. Reflection after each session becomes part of both academic grading and personal growth.

3. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

ODUCCP and allied Christian institutions can institutionalize FTIM through CPD programs for pastors, chaplains, and educators. Workshops on *Faith and Mental Health*, *Temperament in Ministry Leadership*, or *Biblical Boundaries in Counseling* can deepen professional competence across denominations. Such CPDs can also serve as bridges between academic knowledge and church-based ministry practice.

5.3 Supervision and Mentoring Framework

One of the weaknesses in current African counseling systems is limited supervision capacity. Many faith-based counselors work in isolation, without structured oversight. The FTIM emphasizes mentorship as an essential dimension of counselor formation.

Mentorship, in this context, is not hierarchical but relational — modeled after Jesus’ own approach to discipleship. The mentor guides the counselor through three processes:

1. **Reflection:** Helping the counselor examine personal temperament and emotional responses during sessions.
2. **Discernment:** Teaching spiritual and ethical sensitivity in understanding client needs.
3. **Integration:** Encouraging counselors to unite professional skill with spiritual dependence on the Holy Spirit.

At ODUCCP, supervision sessions could include prayer reflections, peer discussions, and review of temperament reports. For example, a supervisor may ask a trainee:

“How did your own Choleric temperament influence your response to this client’s Supine tendencies?”

Such reflective dialogue transforms supervision into a sacred learning process — forming not just competent counselors, but compassionate ministers of grace.

5.4 Church-Based Application and Ministry Practice

Faith-informed counseling must not remain confined to academic halls. The church, as the spiritual home of millions of Ghanaians, remains the most powerful setting for emotional healing and

restoration. Implementing the FTIM within church structures can transform pastoral care from reactive prayer meetings into proactive emotional discipleship.

1. Counseling Ministries and Lay Training

Churches can establish counseling ministries staffed by trained lay counselors who understand both temperament and theology. These volunteers can offer basic support, referrals, and discipleship-based guidance. A church in Tema, for instance, might train its marriage committee in temperament awareness to improve premarital preparation.

2. Sermons and Discipleship Series

Pastors can preach and teach about emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, and self-awareness using biblical characters as temperament illustrations. David, for instance, reflects a Melancholic-Sanguine profile — passionate but reflective; Paul exhibits a Choleric temperament tempered by grace. Teaching through such examples helps congregations embrace emotional diversity as part of God’s creative design.

3. Pastoral Counseling Centers

Urban churches can develop formal counseling centers combining prayer ministry with professional guidance. ODUCCP’s Professional Christian Counselling Clinic (PCCC) serves as a model — offering assessment, therapy, and pastoral guidance through certified counselors. Embedding the FTIM here ensures that every counseling encounter reflects balanced integration of theology, psychology, and culture.

5.5 Regional and Continental Expansion

Beyond Ghana, the FTIM can serve as a template for developing contextually relevant counselor education in other African nations. In Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa, Christian universities and seminaries are increasingly seeking culturally rooted counseling models. Partnerships with ODUCCP could foster exchange programs, curriculum alignment, and joint research projects focused on African Christian psychology.

A continental network of **Faith-Informed Counseling Institutes (FICI)** could emerge — uniting scholars, practitioners, and pastors around the common vision of integrating theology and therapy in African contexts. The FTIM can form the backbone of such collaboration, offering a shared language and framework adaptable across cultures.

Conferences and journals such as the *ODUCCP Journal of Counselling and Faith Integration* could publish cross-country studies on temperament and faith dynamics, promoting academic dialogue and best practices.

5.6 Ethical and Professional Standards

As faith-based counseling expands, ethical practice becomes paramount. The FTIM advocates for standards that protect both clients and counselors, blending professional ethics with Christian virtue. Counselors must uphold confidentiality, informed consent, and non-maleficence while maintaining pastoral sensitivity and prayerful discernment.

Faith-informed counselors must also guard against spiritual overreach — recognizing the limits of their competence. Not every problem is demonic, and not every symptom is purely psychological. The mature counselor learns to discern through wisdom, prayer, and consultation. ODUCCP's

ethics courses and Ghana Psychological Council guidelines provide a structure for balancing these responsibilities.

Furthermore, temperament awareness helps counselors manage transference and countertransference. A Choleric counselor, for instance, must resist imposing control; a Supine counselor must avoid over-identifying with clients. Through ongoing supervision, personal reflection, and humility, faith-based counselors learn to let God work through, not merely beside, their professional efforts.

5.7 Institutionalizing the Vision

Institutionalization ensures that the Faith–Temperament Integration Model does not remain a theory but becomes a movement. This requires leadership, advocacy, and research.

1. **Leadership:** Universities and theological colleges should champion integration by developing academic chairs in Faith-Based Counseling.
2. **Advocacy:** Church councils and professional associations can promote policy frameworks that recognize faith-based counselors as key contributors to national mental health.
3. **Research:** Students and scholars should document case studies, field experiences, and quantitative outcomes of the FTIM to build empirical credibility for the model.

ODUCCP is uniquely positioned to lead this transformation — bridging academia, ministry, and national development. By institutionalizing the FTIM, it can train a new generation of African Christian counselors who are both spiritually grounded and professionally skilled.

5.8 Summary and Forward Vision

From this exploration, one can see that the future of faith-informed counseling in Africa depends on intentional training, structured supervision, and cultural authenticity. The FTIM provides a unifying philosophy — practical enough for ministry, rigorous enough for academia, and spiritual enough for transformation.

Counseling in the African church must move from intuition to insight, from inspiration to formation. The counselor is not merely a helper, but a vessel through whom divine wisdom meets human vulnerability. Institutions like ODUCCP must continue to serve as beacons of this integration — nurturing counselors who minister with both knowledge and anointing.

The next and final chapter will therefore summarize the theological, psychological, and cultural discoveries of this work, and outline recommendations for the future of faith-informed counseling scholarship and practice across Africa.

Chapter Six: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Every generation of the Church faces the challenge of interpreting human brokenness in the light of divine truth. In Africa today, that challenge has become both spiritual and psychological. The hearts of many are weighed down by depression, marital conflict, guilt, and hidden trauma. Yet beneath these struggles lies a hunger — not merely for therapy, but for understanding; not merely for advice, but for wholeness. This book was written in response to that longing, drawing upon years of pastoral counseling, teaching, and research within the Ghanaian and wider African context.

Through the **Faith–Temperament Integration Model (FTIM)**, this work has sought to harmonize theology, psychology, and culture into a unified approach to Christian counseling —

one that is biblically faithful, psychologically sound, and culturally grounded. The reflections, models, and case studies shared throughout this text affirm that emotional healing in the African church must arise from both revelation and reason, prayer and process, faith and formation.

6.1 Summary of Key Insights

The journey began with an understanding of the human person as portrayed in Scripture — a being created in God’s image, yet marred by sin and in need of redemption in spirit, soul, and body. Biblical anthropology provided the foundation for seeing the counselee not merely as a client but as a soul in process, loved by God and capable of renewal.

The second major pillar, **temperament theory**, particularly the Arno Profile System (APS), illuminated the diversity of human behavior and emotional need. By explaining the relational dimensions of Inclusion, Control, and Affection, temperament theory offered a framework through which counselors could discern inner motivations rather than judge outer behavior. This insight transforms counseling from correction to compassion, from guilt to grace.

The third pillar, **cultural contextualization**, reminded us that counseling cannot exist in a vacuum. In Ghana and across Africa, faith and community define identity. Healing, therefore, must respect communal values, family systems, and spiritual realities. The FTIM integrates these dimensions, allowing the counselor to interpret the counselee’s world through both biblical revelation and cultural wisdom.

Chapter Four presented the **conceptual framework of the FTIM**, outlining its dimensions of spiritual awareness, temperament discovery, faith integration, cultural reframing, and transformation. These were not abstract theories but living processes drawn from real counseling

encounters. Through the stories of Ama, Kwame, and other counselees, we saw that self-awareness guided by Scripture becomes the soil in which transformation takes root.

Chapter Five extended these principles into practice — showing how the FTIM can be institutionalized through curriculum design, supervision, and ministry application at the Oheneba-Dornyo University College of Counselling Psychology (ODUCCP) and beyond. By embedding this model in academic and ecclesial structures, ODUCCP and similar institutions can shape a new generation of African Christian counselors who are both spiritually grounded and professionally excellent.

6.2 Theological and Psychological Synthesis

At the heart of this work is the conviction that theology and psychology are not rivals but partners in the ministry of healing. Theology provides the truth of divine purpose, while psychology offers tools to understand human experience. When joined under the authority of Scripture, these disciplines reveal the beauty of God’s design for emotional life.

Christian counseling, therefore, must move beyond simplistic dichotomies — beyond “spiritual versus psychological,” or “faith versus science.” Instead, it must embrace what the apostle James describes as “wisdom from above... pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit” (James 3:17). That wisdom allows counselors to pray with discernment, diagnose with insight, and intervene with grace.

The FTIM embodies this synthesis. Its theological base ensures that counseling is grounded in redemption and sanctification. Its psychological lens allows for accurate understanding of personality and emotion. Its cultural consciousness prevents alienation from the African

worldview. Together, they form a wholistic model of healing rooted in the incarnational ministry of Christ, who met people not as cases but as beloved souls.

6.3 Lessons for the African Church and the Counseling Profession

From this study, several lessons emerge that speak directly to the African church and the professional counseling community.

1. **Wholeness is both a spiritual and emotional journey.** Many believers suffer silently under the misconception that faith alone eliminates emotional struggle. The Church must teach that faith transforms suffering through understanding, not through denial.
2. **Counseling is ministry, not competition.** Pastors and professional counselors must see themselves as collaborators in God's healing mission. Where the pastor provides spiritual direction, the counselor brings emotional discernment. Together, they form one continuum of care.
3. **Temperament awareness fosters grace.** Understanding how God has designed each person promotes tolerance, empathy, and unity within the body of Christ. Marital conflicts, leadership tensions, and generational misunderstandings all diminish when people understand temperament differences as divine diversity.
4. **Training must reflect African realities.** Models imported wholesale from Western psychology often fail to capture the spiritual and communal dimensions of African life. The FTIM, emerging from Ghana's Charismatic and pastoral landscape, offers a contextual model that speaks the language of both faith and culture.
5. **Counselors must embody integrity and humility.** The credibility of faith-based counseling in Africa will depend not only on theoretical models but on the personal

maturity of those who practice it. The counselor must be a healed healer — grounded in Scripture, disciplined in practice, and compassionate in spirit.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Practice and Scholarship

To advance the practice of faith-informed counseling in Africa, several strategic actions are recommended:

1. **Institutional Strengthening**

Faith-based universities and seminaries should adopt integrative curricula that teach both psychology and theology. Programs like ODUCCP's *Bachelor and Doctor of Counselling* should become regional benchmarks for Christian counselor education.

2. **Research and Publication**

There is a need for ongoing research on the outcomes of temperament-based counseling in African settings. Graduate students and faculty should publish in journals such as the *ODUCCP Journal of Counselling and Faith Integration*, contributing empirical and theological evidence for the FTIM.

3. **Professional Certification and Ethics**

Faith-based counselors must align their practice with both the Ghana Psychological Council and Christian counseling associations. Ethical guidelines should emphasize confidentiality, informed consent, and responsible spiritual intervention.

4. **Community Engagement and Church Partnerships**

Churches should be encouraged to establish counseling ministries equipped with trained professionals. Workshops, conferences, and support networks can bridge gaps between theology, mental health, and social welfare.

5. Continental Collaboration

A Pan-African Faith Counseling Consortium could be formed to promote the FTIM across borders, adapting it to local contexts in Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and beyond. This would foster exchange programs, training hubs, and joint research projects on faith-based mental health models.

6. Spiritual Formation and Self-Care

Counselors must maintain personal spiritual disciplines — prayer, reflection, mentorship, and rest — to prevent burnout. The FTIM affirms that the counselor's inner life is part of the counseling tool itself.

6.5 Concluding Reflections

From this exploration, one can see that counseling, when anchored in faith and guided by understanding, becomes a sacred act — a ministry of presence where God meets humanity in its most vulnerable form. The Faith–Temperament Integration Model is not a new invention but a rediscovery of ancient truth: that the God who made the human heart also provides the wisdom to heal it.

In my counseling practice, I have witnessed what happens when Scripture, psychology, and culture are woven together. The timid find courage; the angry learn peace; the weary rediscover purpose.

Healing begins when people understand that grace does not erase their temperament — it redeems it.

The future of Christian counseling in Africa depends on this revelation. It is time for the Church, the academy, and the counseling profession to walk hand in hand. When theology and psychology kneel together at the feet of Christ, the result is transformation — not just of individuals, but of families, churches, and nations.

As Isaiah wrote, “*The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden; like a spring whose waters never fail*” (Isaiah 58:11). May every faith-informed counselor in Africa become such a spring — nurturing healing, wisdom, and divine peace in a thirsty world.

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