



# FAITH BIBLE COLLEGE

*2 Timothy 2:15*

*"Study to show thyself approved unto God,  
a workman that needs not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the word of truth."*

# CHRISTIAN COUNSELING



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### ***Dear Student***

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*"Leaders are those whose aroma lingers long after they have completed  
the task and others who sniff it, wants to be like them"*

*"Leadership is not a title but a Function  
& that Function pulls you to its Position  
& the Position determines your Title"*

*Blessings & Graceful Studying  
Professor Ronnie Moodley*

# **CHRISTIAN COUNSELING**

## **ASSIGNMENTS TOWARDS - FINAL EXAMINATION** **CHRISTIAN COUNSELING FOR MINISTRY LEVEL**

Please complete all assignments in the Manuals  
Towards Christian Counseling for Ministry Level.

Must be done in typing – According to Questions in Manuals.

MARKS will be awarded for

- (1) Presentation;
- (2) Research;
- (3) Neatness;
- (4) Contents.

# **CHRISTIAN COUNSELING**

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## WHAT IS COUNSELLING

There are many definitions – to what is counseling.

To me counseling is helping people to help themselves.

**It is a solution medication.**

Counseling is the interaction to real life problems. Christian Counseling adds the application of the principles of God's word to the problems of living.

Counseling is also seen as a helping Ministry given to the church or to the corporate body to assist people in areas of growth. Christian counseling is an applied discipline designed to assist in meeting the deepest needs in the soul realm of mankind.

***ROM.12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to the world: but be ye transformed by renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that is good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.***

Counseling assists people to look & think differently to the issues & challenges they are facing. The function is to get the counselee to learn & move differently to what they were accustomed to walk in.

**You can & must allow them to Lean on you as a counselor for a time only:**

### **LEAN**

**L – Listen –**

**E – Evaluate –**

**A – Advise –**

**N – Nurture –**

**You can allow the counselee – LEAN on you Temporarily in order to assist them to:**

### **MOVE**

**M – Motivate –**

**O – Objective –**

V – Vision –

E – Encouraged –

## **WHAT ARE THE 5 PRIMARY FUNCTIONS IN COUNSELLING**

**The 5 main areas or functions that a counselor will be handling are:**

- 1) **HEALING** – wholeness and completeness in ones life. One of the main functions is to bring about healing into the lives of the people. Our function is allow them to take medication of change & renewing of thinking to be delivered from the issues at hand.
- 2) **SUSTAINING** – the ability to assist people to handle difficult times in their present situation. These include the crises of life that comes in uninvited. Our function is to sustain them & give them real HOPE.
- 3) **GUIDING** – removing confusion from people and giving them a set of beliefs through TRUTHS and standard that they can live by and trust. No false hope or incorrect beliefs should be entertained. No lies or deceit should be compromised & agreed upon. Begin with the Milk tart rather than the meat or bone crunching.
- 4) **RECONCILING** – the re-establishing of relationships that have been broken. Both with the Lord & with one another. Always remember that no problem is hard enough to heal & reconcile for the LORD, yet all problems are impossible for us to restore or reconcile. For we can only give ADVISE whilst the Lord injects HIS balm to restore & reconcile. Our function is not to agree to break, but rather to hear & give sound advise for restoration.
- 5) **NURTURING** – helping people to help themselves, in the sense and security and affirmation of being loved within the body of Christ. Build confidence that they are wonderfully & fearfully designed by God for a destiny & reason.

**Remember, our function is to show the counselee how to fish.** If we give them a fish, they will come again. But once you teach them how to fish, they will nourish themselves & help others how to fish.

## **THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL COUNSELING**

### **WHILST COUNSELING:**

- 1) Talk to the person, not AT them.
- 2) Smile at the person, not about them or there challenges
- 3) Listen to the people, & avoid hearing others
- 4) Use there names & forget it not
- 5) Be friendly and helpful not sociable & playful
- 6) Be warm & sincere, not cold and crafty
- 7) Show interest and respect not disrespect to other people
- 8) Compliment people & not compete with people
- 9) Consider and respect people's feelings and opinions – do not run them down
- 10) Understand and accept people for who they are not what they are.

### **When Counseling**

#### **Love People**

**Find that Loveable quality that is in each of Us.**

**Put the other Person Ahead of Yourself.**

**And the Love you Give will Return to You.**

## INTRODUCTION

### THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN COUNSELING MOVEMENT

Before we begin to study the methods and the means by which pastors and lay persons should counsel, it is important that we begin by providing a brief summary of how Christian Counseling became part of the Church's ethos.

If we had to look back to the time of the Dark Ages, we notice that many of the doctrines and the practices of Jesus and the early church were abolished because of the religious systems that were placed in their stead. For example the important doctrines of the confession of sins, baptism in water and in the Holy Spirit were replaced by confession to a priest, sprinkling of babies with water and no emphasis in the speaking in tongues. However, because of the time of restoration, these doctrines along with many other important practices of the early church have been restored and have returned to the Church through different movements and great men like Martin Luther, John Wesley etc.

Even though counseling is not part of the six doctrines that are mentioned in the Book Of Hebrews chapter 6, the practice of warning, reproving and admonishing one another was a practice of the early Church. Jesus, when He stood in the synagogue declared from the book of Isaiah 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me, because the LORD has appointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to announce that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the LORD's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. To all who mourn in Israel, he will give beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning, praise instead of despair. For the LORD has planted them like strong and graceful oaks for his own glory."

This "ethos" therefore, like the other doctrines mentioned in Hebrews 6 and many others practiced by Jesus and the Early Church, though lost to the Church has been restored in these latter years. The Christian Counseling movement began in three specific stages:

**Stage one:** In the late 1950's and 1960's when people began to voice concern that the church at that time was not teaching methods that were addressing the many problems of that time a man by the name of Clyde Narramore began to introduce Christian Counseling into Churches. It was during this time that Fuller's Seminary Graduate School of Psychology was founded.

**Stage two:** The second stage took place in the 1970 under the influence of Jay Adams. Academics and research continued to grow during this time, giving credibility to the movement and several more psychologists gained acceptance during this stage. For example: Larry Crabb, James Dobson, Bruce Narramore and Gary Collins.

**Stage three:** The third stage began in the mid 1980 when the movement became very popular and the "best selling" book titles at the time were those that were related to inter and intra personal pain.

Since that time there have been many great men and women who have been actively involved in helping people deal with their emotional and relational problems, for example, Joyce Meyers. These men and women have taught the importance and the place of counseling in the church and therefore as a result many churches have established counseling as a vital part of the Church. Crises Counseling offices have been set up. Premarital counseling has been established and general counseling is provided by the pastoral care within the church.

### **DEFINITIONS AND TERMS**

There are two types of counseling that will be reviewed in this course material:

#### **PSYCHOLOGY:**

The first type of counseling is that which is secular and is commonly known as psychology. The word "psychology" is the combination of two terms:

- study (ology),
- soul (psyche), or mind

The derivation of the word from Latin gives it this clear and obvious meaning: "The study of the soul or mind".

#### **CHRISTIAN / NOUTHETIC COUNSELING:**

The second type of counseling, that which we are more concerned in learning about is, "nouthetic" counseling. The Bible is clear that counseling is beneficial to us. In both the Old and the New Testament there is evidence of this practice.

### **In the book of Proverbs:**

Proverbs is a book filled with counsel, giving abundant advice and instruction on living a godly life. The Hebrew word for “proverb”<sup>1</sup> means a comparison, and came to mean a wise pronouncement of morality. The Hebrew word “etsah” used in most of the references in the book of Proverbs means “advice, advisement and counsel”. Proverbs 19:20-21 “Get all the advice and instruction you can, and be wise the rest of your life. You can make many plans, but the LORD's purpose will prevail.”

### **In the book of Isaiah:**

In Isaiah 9:6, Jesus Christ was designated as, “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God” To expand on Jesus’ role in counseling, the prophet went on later to say, “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me, because the LORD has appointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to announce that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the LORD's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. To all who mourn in Israel, he will give beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning, praise instead of despair. For the LORD has planted them like strong and graceful oaks for his own glory.” (Isaiah 61:1-3)

### **In the New Testament letters:**

There are several Greek words that are related to the definition of Christian counseling found in the New Testament:

- *Gnome* <sup>1</sup>: This word means “to know, perceive, reason, or that which is thought or known”. In application, it refers to a view, judgment, or opinion as to what should be done to resolve an issue. It means to do something as a result of knowledge. “And there he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined (*gnome*) to return through Macedonia” (Acts 20:3).
- *Boule* <sup>1</sup>: *Boule* is used in Christian counseling in determining a course of action. It means a counsel, a piece of advice, or to resolve a matter. It is used both of the counsel of God (Luke 7:30; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 13:36; 20:27; Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 6:17), and of men (Luke 23:51; Acts 27:12, 42; 1 Corinthians 4:5).

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

- *Paraklesis* 2: *Paraklesis* means to call to one's side to console, comfort, encourage, soothe, or exhort. It means to advocate on someone's behalf with legal assistance or aid (1 John 2:1). John used it of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter or Helper (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). Paul wrote, "and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage (*parakaleo*) you as to your faith...for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted (*parakaleo*) about you through your faith...Therefore comfort (*parakaleo*) one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 3:2, 7; 4:18; cf. 2 Corinthians 1:3-6; 2:7).
- *Phroneo* 2: *Phroneo* builds even more on the Bible teaching about the definition of Christian counseling. It means to think, to be mindful of, and it contains the idea of thoughtfully reflecting on moral considerations as opposed to unreasoning opinion. Paul used it this way, "For those who are according to the flesh set their minds (*phroneo*) on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Romans 8:5; verses 6, 7).
- *Nouthesia* 2: *Nouthesia* is the key word in understanding the Bible teaching about defining Christian counseling. The definition of this type of counseling is putting people in mind of the principles and practices of the Word of God by the leading of the Holy Spirit in order to effect change for the good of the person concerned. The Greek word "Nouthesia" according to Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, means "the admonition or putting in mind"<sup>3</sup>. There are three ideas found in the word *nouthesia*:
  1. Confrontation: This implies the use of the Word of God. The counsellor does not confront with what he believes, or with good ideas, but all warning and teaching is to come from the Word of God. "All Scripture is breathed out by God and useful for teaching, for conviction, for correction and for disciplined training in righteousness in order to fit and fully equip the man from God for every good task." (2 Timothy 3:16,17). The counsellor will therefore warn, instruct and teaching with the Word of God.

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<sup>2</sup> Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

<sup>3</sup> W.E. Vine's M.A., Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

To warn: It is used in 1 Cor 10:11 (speaking about warnings from Israel's history) of the purpose of the scriptures: "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come." Titus 3:10 "Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him."

To instruct and teach: Eph 6:4 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord". Col 1:28 "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ". Col 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God".

2. Concern: The counselling that will take place will always take place for the benefit of the counselee. His welfare is always in view in biblical counselling. Nouthetic counselling is not a question of arguing with someone and opposing them in hostility or defiance, but rather of bringing people face to face with the word of God and the principles contained therein. Our advice must help, benefit and restore the counselee; it is not a licence to highlight their failings or verbally lambaste them. Paul wrote, "I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children" (1 Cor 4:14-16). There is always a warm, family note to biblical counselling which is done among the saints of God who seek to help one another become more like Christ.
3. Change: All counseling -- biblical or otherwise-- attempts change. However, only the biblical counselor knows what a counselee should become as the result of counseling - he should look more like Christ. Christ is to be the standard for change. Biblical counseling is done by Christians who are convinced that God is able to make the changes that are necessary as His Word is ministered in the power of the Spirit.

### **ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS:**

Before we continue in the study of Christian counseling, it is important that you first assess your beliefs concerning counseling. To do this you will need to answer the following questions:

- What is your attitude toward Christian counseling?
- Do you believe that Christian Counseling still has a place in the Church?
- What role should Christian Counseling play in the church?
- Is Christian Counseling for everyone or for only those who have emotional problems?
- How would you go about incorporating Christian Counseling within your church framework / structure?
- How would you categorize who needs “what type of counseling”?
- Do you believe that you have been called to be a Christian counselor?

## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIAN (NOUTHETIC) COUNSELING AND SECULAR COUNSELING (PSYCHOLOGY)?

Before we begin to look at the differences between these types of counseling, let us first consider the similarities:

- Both converse with people
- Both care about people
- Both get to know people
- Both are interested in motivation, thoughts, emotions and behaviour
- Both explore various circumstances of a person's life
- Both give feedback

However, although appearing to be similar in so many aspects, there are vital differences between secular and Christian counseling. So what are these differences?

### DIFFERENCE IN PERSPECTIVE

#### **Secular counseling:**

Secular counseling looks at life and its problems through the eyes of natural experiences, personal opinions and man's ideas. There are five common characteristics concerning the different psychological schools of thought in dealing with man's behaviour. These are:

- **Man is good:** This is based on humanism and comes from an independence from God. It tends to believe that man has everything that he needs within him to solve his own problems. This however is not the truth because the Bible declares: Psalm 62:9 "From the greatest to the lowliest— all are nothing in his sight. If you weigh them on the scales, they are lighter than a puff of air." Romans 3:10-18 "As the Scriptures say, "No one is good— not even one. No one has real understanding; no one is seeking God. All have turned away from God; all have gone wrong. No one does good, not even one." "Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their speech is filled with lies." "The poison of a deadly snake drips from their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "They are quick to commit murder. Wherever they go, destruction and misery follow them. They do not know what true peace is." "They have no fear of God to restrain them." Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Romans 7:18 "I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. I want to, but I can't.

- **Man is a superior animal:** This holds that the basic view of man is that his behaviour is wrongly conditioned or programmed by his environment and circumstances. He therefore needs to be reconditioned or reprogrammed by manipulation of behaviour through positive and negative stimuli. He is maneuvered to respond to reward and punishment in order to improve himself. However, God says (Romans 1:18-32): John 15:4-5 "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful apart from me. "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. James 4:10 "When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on him, he will lift you up and give you honor.
- **Man can change himself:** Although being wounded by circumstances and environment, man can change bad behaviour. Man is believed to be able to overcome himself and his bad behaviour through education, logic and reason. However, God says: Jeremiah 13:23 "Can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin? Can a leopard take away its spots? Neither can you start doing good, for you always do evil. Ezekiel 18:20 "The one who sins is the one who dies. The child will not be punished for the parent's sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child's sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own goodness, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness. Ezekiel 36:26-27 "And I will give you a new heart with new and right desires, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony heart of sin and give you a new, obedient heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so you will obey my laws and do whatever I command.
- **Man is a victim of conscience:** It is believed by psychology that man is driven by instincts, thwarted by family, by society, by upbringing and others who are responsible for his problems. But God says: Ezekiel 18:20 "The one who sins is the one who dies. The child will not be punished for the parent's sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child's sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own goodness, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness". Philip. 2:3-4 "Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. 1 Tim. 4:1-2 "Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from what we believe; they will follow lying spirits and teachings that come from demons. These teachers are hypocrites and liars. They pretend to be religious, but their consciences are dead.

- **Man is a bargainer.** When the person has tried all the above and found that it does not work, then he will begin to use the world trade-offs. But God says, Romans 12:21 "Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good. Philip. 2:3-4 "Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing.

Man's ways are self orientated, he is his own god as evidenced by no biblical confrontation, no conversion experience expected or considered, no repentance, no work of the Holy Spirit and no sanctification process in bearing the image of God.

### **Christian counseling:**

Christian counseling looks at life and its problems through God's perspective.

- Isaiah 55:8-9 ""My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."
- Proverbs 14:12 "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death. "

The Biblical perspective concerning "self" and its "problems" is exactly opposite to what the wisdom of the world proclaims. Because of God, we are able to change our coping mechanisms from reacting to life to responding to life on the basis of God's Word. Biblical counselors unlike secular counselors do not follow the contributions of manmade problem solving. Instead they look to the Word of God as their source in understanding and counseling people (2 Tim 3:15-17, 2 Peter 1:4). Biblical counseling allows God to speak into the situation through His word so that the person is able to not only make decisions on what they should do about a situation but rather on what God views as the best method of dealing with problems and situations. Christian counseling follows the Bible and seeks to minister the true and living God whose love deals with sin and produces obedience (1 John).

## **DIFFERENCE IN RESPONSE TO LIFE**

Secular counselors teach a counselee to respond to life's challenges in a manner that pleases and honors self.

However, Christian counseling looks to honour God and not gratify self.

- 1 Cor. 3:19-20 "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As the Scriptures say, "God catches those who think they are wise in their own cleverness." And again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are worthless."
- 1 John 2:15-17 "Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world. And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever."
- 1 John 2:20 "But you are not like that, for the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and all of you know the truth."
- 1 John 2:27 "But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you all things, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So continue in what he has taught you, and continue to live in Christ."
- 1 Cor. 2:12-13 "And God has actually given us his Spirit (not the world's spirit) so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. When we tell you this, we do not use words of human wisdom. We speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths."

## **DIFFERENCE IN HOPE BEING OFFERED!**

Secular counseling does not offer Christ and therefore does not offer any hope. However Christian counseling provides hope. It provides an anchor to the soul because it affects the whole person, the spirit, soul and the body. It is Christ within, the anointed One, who comes and breaks the yoke of the oppressed.

Christian counseling therefore deals with the whole of man whereas secular counseling does not deal with man's spirit ( the real root of all problems in this life). The hope that we have been provided with as Christians can be seen in:

- Our freedom from the power and the penalty of sin (Rom 6:3-7, 14, 18, 23). The past has been dealt with once and for all and therefore cannot have a hold on us in our present and in our future.
- That God will never allow us to be tempted and tested beyond what we would be able to handle (Rom 8:35-39, 1 Cor 10:13, 2 Cor 4:7-10). He always provides us with the grace and strength to endure all things
- Christ will grant us mercy and provide grace to help in every need. Christ is interceding for us (Heb 2:18, 4:15-16, 7:25, Rom 5:10).
- That trials and tests will develop and mature us in Christ (Rom 5:3-5, James 1:2-4)
- That God's peace and joy are available to us (Luke 6:35-38, Matt 6:33, Rom 5:3-12, Phil 4:4-7)
- That only God can change people (Ezek 36:36-27, Philip 1:6)
- That when we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins (1 John 1:7-9, Rom 5:10, Heb 7:22-25, 10:22-23)

### DIFFERENCE IN ITS GOAL

Both Christian and secular counselors attempt to help clients gain insight and change behaviour, attitudes and responses. Both teach responsibility and skills in communication and problems solving. However, the great difference between these two is that Christian Counseling is:

- **God centered - Bringing people to a place of knowing God:** The goal of Christian counseling is to bring the person who is seeking help to love God and to a place of intimacy and relationship with Him. From this comes a heart that will be willing to live by the Biblical standards and values that God has given to us in the Word of God. 2 Cor. 5:14 "Whatever we do, it is because Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for everyone, we also believe that we have all died to the old life we used to live". The goals of counseling is threefold, "good, better, best". Good in that it enables a person to become healthy in the area of their emotions. Better in that it teaches people how to love and help others. But the "best" is that it has a divine goal of spiritual healing and health. The goal of counseling is to free people to worship and serve God by helping them become more like the Lord.

- **Christ-exalting:** There is no true success in counseling if a person does not recognize the importance of Christ and His work on Calvary for us. A relationship with God can only come through the Father and therefore it is imperative that Jesus is seen as the Way, the Door, the Life and the Truth. The goal of Christian counseling is a vital and rich experience of Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him
- **Cross cherishing:** Galatians 6:14 "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead." The cross of Christ is the ground of true humility and hope. There is no true mental and emotional health without understanding the desperate condition we were in without the cross and without feeling the joy of His deliverance because of the power of the Cross.
- **Love centered:** In I Timothy 1:5 Paul put it this way: ""But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a sincere faith." The purpose of preaching and counseling is God's glory. But the underneath side of that splendid rainbow is love. A simple biblical definition of love is: The fulfillment of God's commandments. Love is a responsible relationship to God and to man. Love is a relationship conditioned upon responsibility, that is, responsible observance of the commandments of God.
- **To help people become who God has called them to be:** What does this mean? It means that they become whole spiritually, physically and emotionally. It is therefore directed at changing people from being broken, lost and lonely to being people who are whole, knowing their position in Christ and knowing the direction of God's plans and purposes for their life . The goal and emphasis of your counseling should be to grow people from dependency upon you to dependency on God. It is the objective to make sure that the counselees grow up and mature in Christ. Christian maturity is developed by: Dealing with any immediate problem circumstances in a manner that is consistent with Scripture and developing an inward character which conforms to the character of Christ. This means having His attitudes, His beliefs and His purposes.

## **It affects a change!**

Change is a result of the working of the Holy Spirit within the counselee so that they will no longer walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Change is a personal choice and is dependent upon the person wanting to be conformed into the image of God. It is a commitment that is made with God to live according to the principles that God has given us (Eph 4:25-32, Col 5:17, Rom 12:9-21, 1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 3). It deals with the person choosing to work out their salvation Genesis 4:7 "You will be accepted if you respond in the right way. But if you refuse to respond correctly, then watch out! Sin is waiting to attack and destroy you, and you must subdue it."

Ephes. 5:14-16 "And where your light shines, it will expose their evil deeds. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." So be careful how you live, not as fools but as those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days."

**SUMMARY OF CONTRASTS**

**PSYCHOLOGY**

**BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY**

Comes from the heart of man

Comes from the heart of God

Man's origin-random events

Special creation

Truth is where you find it-man is final judge

Bible-absolute source of truth

Psychology -a priesthood of therapists who quote one another

A leadership of ministers who preach from the Scriptures

Claims to have answers to mans ultimate question

Claims to have explanations for the deepest questions man can ask (Where did I come from? Why am I here? How am I to behave? How can we change? What is the future?)

Claims to explain the unconscious drives of the human mind

The Bible claims to reveal the motives of the heart

Claims that man can transform himself by learning to understand, accept, and love himself

Humans are transformed by the miraculous mysterious power of God

Man is essentially good and needs to recognize his potential

Man is a sinner, separated from the life of God

Man is only limited by his imagination

Without Christ, man is hopeless

Man can find his own way

Christ is the ONLY way

Psychology says man suffers from disorders

The Bible calls sin by name

Man is a victim of his environment

Man is responsible for his choices

We must return to our past, embrace our pain and explore our inner self

We can be forgiven, cleansed, healed

Conscience is desensitized to guilt

God's forgiveness is realized

We must actualize self

We must crucify self

## **WHO NEEDS COUNSELING?**

Everyone needs counseling at some time in their lives. God did not make us to live totally isolated, independent lives one from another. God uses the analogy of sheep to describe us. Sheep are animals that need a lot of care. God is the Chief Shepherd, but He also appoints others under Himself to aid in the care of the flock.

As seen previously we note that counseling does not mean only a private session between a counselor and a counselee, but it also refers to times of teaching and instruction. Counseling therefore can be done during home groups and church meetings when teaching of the Word of God is done. However there are times when this counseling is not enough to free a person from their past and bring restoration and healing to their emotions. It is here that personal session between a counselee and a counselor are to be set up so that the past can be dealt with and the bondages of the devil can be broken over their lives.

### **There are specific situations where more “counseling” is required:**

- When you face major decisions such as marriage, career choice, and spiritual direction.
- When you face crisis issues such as divorce, job loss, major or long-term illness, financial loss, the death of someone near, and physical, mental, emotional, verbal, and sexual abuse.
- When you face unresolved conflicts such as in family relations, employer-employee relations, other social relations, church relations, and civil relations.
- When you face addictions such as substance abuse (drug, alcohol, nicotine, and food), sexual addictions, work, ministry, or entertainment addictions, and fantasy addictions.
- When you face uncontrolled negative emotions and thoughts such as fear, anger, jealousy, bitterness, hate, suicide, depression, doubt, and guilt.
- When you have difficulties with sleep such as needing excessive amount of sleep, getting too little sleep, or having nightmares and excessive daydreams.
- When you experience physical problems without a known physical cause.

- When you become spiritually unsure or confused about your salvation from sin, your relationship with God, your spiritual future, or living a proper spiritual life.

It is when these circumstances arise that the person should seek advice from the Church pastoral team or counseling team in order to find out what has caused these problems and then deal with them so that their future will not be affected by their past and present circumstances.

PRODUCT OF FAITH BIBLE COLLEGE

## PART TWO: THE COUNSELOR

### JESUS CHRIST

Isaiah 9:6 "For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

The Hebrew word for "wonderful" is "pehleh"<sup>4</sup> which means "wonderful in the sense of a wonder of a miracle". Psalm 77:14 "You are the God of miracles and wonders! You demonstrate your awesome power among the nations." The Hebrew word for "Counselor" is "yaas"<sup>4</sup> which means "advise, counsel, to purpose and to plan".

When Isaiah said that Jesus would be called a wonderful Counselor he meant that Jesus knew every counsel and every plan that God had ever made and that He had come to earth so He could show those plans to us. He arrived in that manger so He could tell us about God's intentions for us. He was called the Prince of Peace because He was going to restore the peace that this world did not offer. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

### **IS THERE PROOF OF JESUS COUNSELING PEOPLE?**

Matthew 11:28-30 "Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light."

There are numerous examples in the Gospels where Jesus offered counsel to both men and women:

- **Jesus revealed man's real need:** To Nicodemus, the earnest, searching Pharisee, Jesus said that he must not rely upon his religious position or trappings but get to the root of his spiritual need. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Nicodemus did not understand his real need, and Jesus revealed it to him.

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4 Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

- **Jesus showed the need of repentance:** To the woman He met at Sychar's well, Jesus administered shocking counsel when He said, ". . . thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband" (John 4:18). She realized that she was being confronted by One who knew all about her. He had graciously and tactfully led her to this point in the conversation; nevertheless, it was a jarring revelation to her that she must repent of her sin and forsake it. There was to be a change in her life, her course was to be set in a new direction.
- **Jesus counseled about the wrong motives of the heart:** To the man who wanted Jesus to be the judge in his financial affairs, He spoke plainly by precept and by parable that the focus of his life was all wrong: "Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses (Luke 12:15).
- **Jesus counseled with compassion yet confrontation:** To the adulterous woman, Jesus was gentle and courteous. He knew the conditions that had brought about her sinful lifestyle. Nevertheless, His word to her was clear-cut and distinct: ". . . go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).
- **Jesus counseled on having faith:** Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, was a fine man in many ways, but he was experiencing the crushing blow of a great sorrow: his only daughter was dying. This drove him to seek out Jesus. He wanted Jesus to come and heal his little girl. An interruption arose and they were delayed in their journey. When a messenger came to tell Jairus that his daughter was already dead, Jesus turned to him and said, "Fear not, believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Luke 8:50). Jairus had displayed an imperfect faith in coming to Jesus. Now, the master Counselor would lead the good man on to a deeper, more vibrant trust in Him, not by criticizing his small faith but by nourishing and challenging it.
- **Jesus counseled on how to live our lives:** A Jewish lawyer (one who was an expert in Old Testament law and tradition) came to Jesus, not to seek advice, but to trap Jesus into saying something that could be proven false. In response to the lawyer's question, Jesus asked "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told the well-known story of the Good Samaritan. When the lawyer correctly identified the Samaritan as the true neighbor of the injured man, Jesus said to him, "Go thou and do likewise!" (Luke 10:37).

Jesus, the all-wise Counselor, dealt with each individual on the basis of that person's need. But in each case, the goal of the counsel was the same: You must change. Sometimes it was a change of attitude that was needed,

sometimes a change of direction of life, sometimes a call to faith or an enlargement of faith already present in imperfect form. But always, it was change!

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

John 14:16 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor, who will never leave you."

The Greek word used for "Counselor" is "*parakletos*"<sup>5</sup> which means to be "called to one's side, i.e., to one's aid". It is primarily a verbal adjective, and suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid. It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus described the "*parakletos*" (the Advocate or the Comforter) as being:

- "the Spirit of truth" or simply "the Spirit" - John 14:17; John 15:26; John 16:13
- "the Holy Spirit" ("the Holy Ghost" in the KJV) - John 14:26

#### **What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is our Paraclete?"**

The time of the arrest and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ was drawing near. As Jesus met with His disciples in the "upper room," He expounded to them many things. In John 13:33, He stated: "My children, I will be with you only a little longer . . . where I am going you cannot come." The announcement of the coming separation led to the indication of its purpose. The season of bereavement was to be a season of spiritual growth. To this end Christ gave a commandment designed to lead His disciples to appropriate the lessons of His life, and in so doing, to realize their true character, to follow and to find Him as indicated in verses 34 and 35.

In light of their weak faith at this point, Jesus told them in John 14:1, "Do not let your heart be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me . . . ." Jesus had just explained to them that one of them was a traitor; He had warned Peter that he would deny His Lord three times; and, perhaps the heaviest blow of all was that Jesus was going to leave them (John 13:33). Now He says, ". . . let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1). In John 14:16- 17, Jesus gives them a statement of great encouragement: "And I will ask the Father (pray), and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever . . . the Spirit of Truth".

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5 Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

The Greek word translated "Comforter or Counselor" is "Parakletos" as found in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7. It brings forth the sense of Advocate, counsel, one who pleads, convinces, convicts, who strengthens on the one hand and defends on the other. Christ as the Advocate pleads the believer's cause with the Father against the accuser Satan (1 John 2:1; compare Romans 8:26, and also Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1). The Holy Spirit (Parakletos) as the Advocate pleads the believer's cause against the world (John 16:8ff) and also Christ's cause with the believer (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:14).

By saying what He did to His disciples, Jesus was comforting their troubled hearts. In 14:16 He states: "I will pray to the Father and He will send you another Comforter (paraklete--another is 'heteros,' one of the same kind, which is the Holy Spirit). First of all, this Paraclete is God the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. He is a true personality and a personal being. He indwells every believer. He has been called in some translations "Encourager." As the "Spirit of Truth," the Holy Spirit illumines the Word of God so believers may understand it. He leads us in that truth of God's Word. He uses the Word of truth to guide us into the will and the work of God.

The Holy Spirit abides in every believer. He is a gift from the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son (verse 16). During His earthly ministry, Jesus had guided, guarded, and taught His disciples, but now He was going to leave them. The Spirit of God would come to them and dwell in them, taking the place of their Master's literal presence. Jesus called the Spirit "another Comforter" --another of the same kind. The Spirit of God is not different from the Son of God for both are God (One in essence). The Spirit of God had dwelt with the disciples in the Person of Jesus Christ. Now He would dwell in them.

During the Old Testament Age, the Spirit of God would come on people and then leave them. God's Spirit departed from King Saul (1 Samuel 16:14; 18:12); and David, when confessing his sin, asked that the Spirit not be taken from him (Psalm 51:11). When the Spirit was given at Pentecost, He was given to God's people to remain with them forever. Even though we may grieve the Holy Spirit, He will not leave us. Jesus said in Matthew 28:20 " . . . And surely I am with always, to the very end of the age." How is He with us when we are taught that He is in Heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father? He is with us by His Spirit (the other of the same kind -- the Parakletos --the Comforter, the Advocate), who indwells us and never will leave us if we are true believers in Jesus Christ.

To have the Holy Spirit as our "Paraclete" is to have God Himself indwelling us as believers. He teaches us the Word and guides us into the truth of that Word. He also reminds us of what He has taught us so that we can depend on God's Word in the difficult times of life. The Spirit uses the Word to give us His peace (John

14:27), His love (John 15:9, 10), and His joy (John 15:11). These are profound truths that comfort our hearts and minds in a troubled world. The power of this indwelling "paraclete" gives us the ability to "live by the Spirit so that we will not gratify the desires of the sinful flesh" and "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25). We, then, can have the "fruit of the Spirit" produced in our own lives (Galatians 5:22, 23) to the glory of God the Father.

### **How does the Holy Spirit counsel?**

- He brings the Word of God: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies" (Rev. 2:7). "As promised, "He will teach [us] all things, bringing to remembrance all that Jesus said to [us]" (John 14:26).
- He brings knowledge, wisdom and understanding: The Spirit of counsel comes to bring us knowledge, wisdom and understanding. As noted above, the word "counselor" in Greek has the image of a legal representative--one who fully knows the law and advises his person in that area. It is no surprise that God tells us it is only by living in or with the Spirit that we can fulfill the law. God's Son condemned sin in the flesh, "that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). The flesh is continually warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17). When we walk in the power of the Spirit of God, letting Him empower us, then "we absolutely won't carry out the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

## LAY PERSONS – THE MINISTRY OF COUNSELING

### NOUTHETIC COUNSELING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Done by the whole church:** It is clear from the Bible, that nouthetic counseling and confrontation should be assumed by all Christians. In Colossians 3:16 Paul urged: "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and *confronting one another nouthetically*." According to Paul, all Christians must teach and confront one another in a *nouthetic fashion*. In support of this proposition Paul also wrote (Romans 15:14): "Concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to *confront one another nouthetically*." In both Colossians and Romans then, Paul pictured Christians meeting in nouthetic confrontation as normal everyday activity. He was sure the Christians in Rome were able to do so because they were filled with knowledge and goodness. These qualities equipped them to confront one another nouthetically.

**Done by called ministers of the Word:** But while all Christians ought to engage in such confrontation, nouthetic activity particularly characterizes the work of the ministry. Paul considered nouthetic confrontation a vital part of his own ministry. Incidental remarks in several passages indicate clearly that such activity was central. In Colossians 1:28, for instance, Paul declared: "We proclaim him *confronting every man nouthetically*, and teaching every man with all wisdom in order that we may present every man complete in Christ." Paul's proclamation of Christ involved confronting every man nouthetically. Certainly public confrontation in preaching was a part of Paul's nouthetic activity, but he was engaged also in the nouthetic confrontation of individuals. Colossians 1:28 does not refer primarily to Paul's public ministry, but principally to his private ministry to individuals. This is apparent when he speaks of "nouthetically confronting every *man*." Paul confronted people nouthetically in the day-by-day contacts of pastoral work. The fullest biblical account of Paul's private nouthetic activity occurs in his farewell address to the Ephesians elders in Acts 20.

### WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

After the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to indwell the believers. This indwelling came with power from God. Men and women, baptized in the Holy Spirit began to prophecy, evangelize, teach and declare the good news of God. They became witnesses of God's work here on earth. Acts 1:8 "But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." They became ambassadors of Christ reconciling men and

women to God. 2 Cor. 5:20 "We are Christ's ambassadors, and God is using us to speak to you. We urge you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, "Be reconciled to God!"

With the baptism of the Holy Spirit came the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Romans 12:4-8 "Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others. God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If your gift is to encourage others, do it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly."

A gift and a calling into the ministry were given to each and every person who was baptized in the Holy Spirit. However, not everyone had the same gift. As we note in the book of Romans, 2 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians chapter 4, everyone was given a specific ministry that they were to do. It was therefore the responsibility of each of these people to do and complete the ministry that Christ had given them. 2 Tim. 4:5 "But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at bringing others to Christ. Complete the ministry God has given you."

In the Body of Christ everyone has been called to preach the Word of God and teach people in the instruction of the Word of God (Matthew 28:19-20), however there are some who have been given specific callings to do this (pastors, teachers, counselor). Not everyone has been called to counsel people in areas of deep emotional hurt. For example the prophet is called to bring forth the Word of the Lord for a specific time. In the Old Testament the prophet was not a man that people would flock to in order to hear what God was saying. However the counselors and the pastors were the ones that people would come to be to be shepherded.

## **WHAT MINISTRY HAVE YOU BEEN CALLED TO?**

The gifting that God has placed in the inside of you has been there since before you were born.

- Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou came forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."
- Isaiah 49:5 And now, says the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength."
- Galatians 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

### **SELF ASSESSMENT:**

- When you were still a child what do you remember was your greatest interest?
- When you ask people what they feel your ministry is, what do they say?
- In the past ten years, what ministry have you been actively involved in? Has this been a voluntary choice or was it required as part of your position in your church?
- If you were to remove some form of involvement from your "tasks" what would this be?
- Which of the tasks that you are required to do are your favorite and most fulfilling?

Do you know what God has called you to? Unless you are able to answer this question, you will not be efficient in ministry as you will probably be filling someone else's calling instead of your own. Know what it is that God has called you to!

## THE DIFFERENT GIFTING (ROMANS 12):

Gift	Titles	Characteristics
<b>Administrator:</b> Administrator is found in Romans 12:8. It comes from the Greek word "proistemi" ᾧ (4291) that means to stand before, to be over, to rule, to maintain, to practice, or to preside.	Leader, director, overseer, organizer, pioneer, visionary.	Thorough, objective, responsible, organized, goal-orientated and efficient
<b>Compassionate:</b> Compassionate person is found in Romans 12:8. It comes from the Greek word "eleeo" (1653) to be compassionate by word or deed (by God's grace), have compassion, pity on, have (obtain, receive, show) mercy (on).	Comforter, Counselor, helper, mercy giver, feeler, builder of broken relationships	Cheerful, practical, personal, emotional, joyful, compassionate, merciful
<b>Giver:</b> Giver is found in Romans 12:8. It comes from the Greek word "metadidomi" (3330) to give over, share, or impart	Stewards, financial manager, delegate finances and resources, supporter, volunteer, strong belief in tithing	Generous, loving, resourceful, hospitable, frugal and careful
<b>Exhorter:</b> Exhorter is found in Romans 12:8. It comes from the Greek word "paraklesis or parakaleo" (3870,3874) a calling to one's side to aid.	Encourager, helper, builder of people, "people" person, counselor, opportunist	Edifying, encouraging, uplifting, expectant, vibrant, positive
<b>Teacher:</b> Teacher is found in Romans 12:7. It comes from the Greek word "didasko or didasklia" (1321,1319) to teach or to give instruction	Researcher, lecturer, instructor, good communicator, presenter, preparer	Logical, systematic, searching and validating the truth, loves to research, read and study, checking up facts, objective, factual
<b>Server:</b> Server is found in Romans 12:7. It comes from the Greek word "diakonia" that means to be an attendant or a minister, to use the office of deacon, and relief	Servant, volunteer, finisher, benevolent, worker and follower	Practical, observes others needs, meticulous, organized, detailed and loves to entertain
<b>Prophecy:</b> Prophecy (Perceiver) is found in Romans 12:6. It comes from the Greek word "propheteia" (4394) that means an inspired speaker	Spokesman, speaker, declarer, inspired teacher, inspired speaker, prophet	Exhorting, instructing, proclaiming, warning, judging, sensitive, discern God's plan, seeing right or wrong

## SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

To find out what your motivational gifting is complete the following questionnaire by honestly answering the following questions on a scale from 0-5 (0 = not like me, 5 = very much like me)

### PROPHECY:

1. I have a strong sense of right and wrong, I do not tend to justify wrong actions.
2. I am a good judge of character.
3. I feel uncomfortable around those who sin without repenting and changing. I try to distance myself from people like this.
4. I am receptive when others point out my blind spots.
5. I view hardships and difficulties as an opportunity to produce personal growth.
6. I am very selective about who my close friends are. I have not had many deep friendships in my life.
7. The Bible is the truth. I would like to know as much about it as possible.
8. It is important that people be told about the truth of salvation and God's will.
9. I want everyone who knows me to know that I'm a Christian. I speak openly and persuasively about my opinions and beliefs.
10. I think God can use drama, songs, poetry or literature to reach people. (verbal art)
11. I am honest and real with people and expect them to be the same. I would never be phony to try to impress anyone.
12. I am interested in current events and how they apply to Biblical prophecies.
13. I am forward-thinking. I set long range goals and consider future events.
14. I am obedient when I feel God is telling me to do something.
15. I love to talk about things I've learned or what God has revealed to me.
16. I form opinions and judgments quickly.
17. I have a strong sense of justice. I want to see wrong actions punished so that other will be warned.
18. I am usually direct. I don't beat around the bush.
19. I feel compelled to speak up to defend the truth or what is right.
20. I tend to see situations as black or white not shades of gray.

### Trouble Points

1. I can be judgmental, unforgiving or stubborn about my beliefs.
2. I close off to someone if their opinions differ from mine. We can't both be right.
3. I struggle with a low self-esteem because I don't meet my own high standards. Or sometimes I feel like no one else sees things the way I do.
4. I can alienate people because I can be too direct, blunt, pessimistic or pushy about my opinions and beliefs.
5. I form opinions quickly and sometimes speak up inappropriately or impulsively.

### Prophecy total

### SERVING:

1. I have a good memory for special dates and occasions. I can recall people's specific likes and dislikes. I do what I can to make sure people feel remembered.
2. I am usually neat, well organized and detailed.
3. I am welcoming and hospitable.
4. I notice when things need doing and jump in to help.
5. I have a hard time saying no to requests for help.
6. I sometimes use my own money or resources to get a project done quickly.
7. I prefer short-term to long-term projects.
8. I'd rather show someone I love them by doing something for them. Actions speak.
9. I need to feel useful and appreciated.
10. I get a lot of joy out of knowing that I'm being helpful.

11. I'm not usually a leader, but I like to assist and support those in leadership.
12. I have been called a perfectionist.
13. I prefer to do work myself than delegate it.
14. I have a lot of energy and motivation to get a project finished.
15. I like to do projects and crafts or I'm good at fixing and building things.
16. I enjoy working in a group, especially if there is a clear leader, organized projects and instructions.
17. I hate to see something left undone. I will even do more than my share to get a project finished in a timely matter. I am not a procrastinator.
18. I tend to find myself very involved with many projects or commitments.
19. I am often drawn to care for the sick or suffering.
20. When I serve people, especially leadership, I feel like it frees them up to do more important things.

**Trouble Points**

1. I get frustrated with people who don't pull their weight or offer to help. Sometimes that might make me appear pushy or bossy.
2. I find myself involved with way too many projects, sometimes to the point of physical exhaustion or illness.
3. I hate to be served, waited on or taken care of by others.
4. I tend to neglect my family or my own needs because I'm too busy serving others or have volunteered for too many things.
5. I am deeply hurt if someone is ungrateful or unappreciative of my help. I can work more for approval of others than the approval of God.

**Serving total:**

**TEACHNG:**

1. I like to have proof that what someone is saying or reporting is true.
2. I have the greatest respect for those with higher learning and credentials.
3. I am very aware of factual details and will notice discrepancies in what others say or write.
4. I like to read, write, study and/or research.
5. It is important to learn and understand as much as possible in your lifetime.
6. I usually wait until others have had their say and I have had a chance to think it all out before I say or do anything.
7. I enjoy researching and compiling information, sometimes even more than teaching it to others.
8. It really bothers me when information is taken out of context.
9. I think it is important to be honest and correct in what you do and say.  
(Follow rules and laws)
10. I like to present facts in a clear, orderly fashion, backed up by proof or an established system of truth.
11. I like knowing the origins and meanings of words.
12. I usually base my decisions on logical, objective facts not emotions.
13. The truth, if presented clearly, doesn't need anecdotes to make it more truthful.
14. I am usually self-disciplined and patient.
15. The truth is powerful and can change people if they are looking for it.
16. I form opinions carefully and rarely change my mind.
17. If I have no reason to trust the source I don't trust the message.
18. I am a good student. I can motivate myself to study and learn.
19. I am very uncomfortable evangelizing. I would much rather teach Christians.
20. I am picky about my close friends.

<p><b>Trouble Points</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some people may think I'm cold, unemotional or suspicious.</li> <li>2. I have a tendency to lean on my own reason and knowledge rather than God's.</li> <li>3. I will reject the whole message if one aspect of it is faulty or not based on truth.</li> <li>4. It is possible that sometimes I appear proud of my knowledge, education or high standards.</li> <li>5. I have been called a loner because of my interest in books, or hours spent studying, researching or writing.</li> </ol> <p><b>Teaching Total:</b></p>	
<p><b>EXHORTATION</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am generally thought of as an optimist.</li> <li>2. I get a thrill out of seeing people hungry to learn about God.</li> <li>3. I like interaction when I'm speaking with or teaching others. (ie: nod, eye contact, applause if speaking before a group)</li> <li>4. When problems happen to me or others I think of how God could use it to help us become stronger Christians.</li> <li>5. I can visualize people being successful in their life and like to encourage them toward that goal.</li> <li>6. I can usually talk to people where they are regardless of culture, background or spiritual maturity.</li> <li>7. I like to come up with steps that someone can follow to help them grow.</li> <li>8. I like to discuss my thoughts with others. Feedback is important.</li> <li>9. I love to talk to or counsel people one on one.</li> <li>10. I try to bring harmony to diverse groups of people.</li> <li>11. I use life examples to illustrate ideas or scriptural concepts all the time.</li> <li>12. I enjoy people. I like being around both groups and individuals.</li> <li>13. I communicate well. People say I'm a good listener or offer good advice.</li> <li>14. I am rarely judgmental.</li> <li>15. I would rather witness with my actions than practice overt evangelism.</li> <li>16. If I have a conflict with someone I want to confront and repair the problem.</li> <li>17. I set high standards for myself and others.</li> <li>18. I want to challenge myself and others to keep growing and improving.</li> <li>19. When I read the Bible I immediately think of how it applies to my life or put the theme into a contemporary setting.</li> <li>20. I like to apply things that I've read and learned. I appreciate a practical approach with clear steps to follow to achieve success.</li> </ol> <p><b>Trouble Points</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is more important to make a point that someone can understand than to worry about whether the facts or scriptures I use are accurate and in the right context.</li> <li>2. I can come across as very opinionated or outspoken.</li> <li>3. I tend to have more confidence in my own counsel than listening to God.</li> <li>4. My desire to use life illustrations may cause me to share a personal story without permission.</li> <li>5. People tend to rely on me when they should rely on God.</li> </ol> <p><b>Exhortation total:</b></p>	
<p><b>GIVING</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I get great joy out of giving my money, time, talents and/or resources.</li> <li>2. I am happy to remain anonymous when I give.</li> <li>3. I can be easily content with the basic necessities. I am not usually extravagant.</li> <li>4. I don't respond well when someone tells me exactly how much to give and to whom or what. I like to make those judgments or let God tell me.</li> </ol>	

5. I love to see someone receive a gift that they really needed or wanted.
6. I notice when someone has a valid financial need and I want to help them.
7. It's a thrill when I know my gift is an answer to prayer.
8. When I give a gift to someone I care about I put a lot of thought into it and it is important to me that it is the highest quality.
9. I believe God has given me all I have and trust he will provide for me.
10. When I give to an organization I feel like I'm a part of it.
11. I respect people who handle their funds wisely.
12. I am wise and organized when it comes to money, saving and investing.
13. I think it's very important to give joyfully.
14. I work hard and look to get a good value for my money.
15. I like to see others give and hope I can set a good example.
16. I save money so that I will not be a burden and will be able to help if someone comes to me with a genuine need.
17. I like the concept of planting a seed with my gift and allowing God to help it grow into something fruitful.
18. I think it is important to give offerings in addition to tithing.
19. I volunteer to help or give to people in need.
20. I believe hospitality, love, talents, time and abilities as well as money are all opportunities to give.

**Trouble Points**

1. I have been known to push others to give or volunteer their time and resources without asking first.
2. I have a tendency to spoil children.
3. My frugality is viewed as stinginess by my family or friends.
4. If I give to a person or project I could feel that gives me the right to control or interfere with how the money gets used.
5. I might be too judgmental about who gets or deserves my gifts.

**Giving Total:**

**LEADING**

1. I have the ability to see the big picture. I can organize resources effectively and recognize people's strengths.
2. I delegate tasks well. I know what can and cannot be delegated.
3. I have great respect for authority.
4. I believe role models should take seriously the responsibility of setting a good example for those that look up to them.
5. I tend to stand on the sidelines unless responsibility is given to me by someone in authority.
6. I can break down major goals into smaller achievable tasks that an individual or team can work on.
7. I like to encourage and inspire people with cheerfulness, praise, approval and challenges.
8. I have the ability to stay focused and not get distracted by minor details.
9. If no authority exists I will step in. Lack of leadership bothers me.
10. I take my responsibilities seriously.
11. I am not easily swayed by peer pressure, criticism or complaints.
12. I don't care who gets the credit as long as it gets done in a timely manner.
13. When I finish one challenge or project I look for another.
14. I like to provide for those that have no one to take care of them.
15. I often have innovative ideas and solve problems creatively.
16. I like working with people and communicate clearly.
17. I have a low threshold for boredom. I like to be challenged.
18. I'm good at multi-tasking. I can mentally organize complicated scenarios.
19. I get great joy out of working to see all the parts come together in a finished project.

20. I look for people who are hard workers, optimistic and loyal to the task.

**Trouble Points**

1. Sometimes I push people to finish a project in spite of weariness or schedules.
2. I tend to show favoritism to those that work harder or are more loyal.
3. I have been known to ignore others input because it is not part of my plan.
4. I'm so interested in getting things done that people may feel "used" by me.
5. I can neglect my family or chores because of my commitments and responsibilities outside the home.

**Leading Total:**

**MERCY**

1. I am drawn to those suffering emotionally and they are often drawn to me.
2. I want to do whatever I can to remove the hurt from people's lives.
3. I identify more with emotional and mental pain than with physical pain.
4. I avoid being firm or confrontational unless I clearly see how it can bring benefit.
5. I am careful not to use words or actions that might offend others.
6. I can often sense intuitively if someone is covering up sorrow, pain, anger or other emotions.
7. I get very upset when someone I care about has been hurt. I help carry burdens.
8. I get involved in helping causes for those that can't help themselves. (Children, elderly, animals, etc.) I like being around others that are sensitive to these needs.
9. I am not judgmental. I welcome friendships with people of all types.
10. I need to have deep friendships with mutual commitment.
11. I have the ability to see and expect the best from people.
12. I feel like God is working through me when someone needs me.
13. I am generally thought of as an optimist.
14. You can trust me.
15. I trust people unless I have a reason not to or feel they are not sincere. I tend to pick up on deception.
16. I like to pray for and with those that are hurting.
17. I empathize. I rejoice when others are blessed and grieve when others hurt.
18. I am very forgiving if I feel they are sincerely repentant.
19. I have great patience with people that are hurting. Even if they fail or give up on themselves I will start from the beginning to help or encourage them.
20. I will drop anything to make myself available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for someone who needs me.

**Trouble Points**

1. I can be oversensitive, getting easily hurt or offended by others.
2. I so long to remove hurt that I will fail to see how God can use it to help us become stronger Christians.
3. My tendency to show physical affection could be uncomfortable or misinterpreted by others.
4. I have taken on too much of other's problems to the point of stress or illness. I need to learn how to give everything to God.
5. I will hold a serious grudge against an offender who hurts or rejects someone I care about.

**Mercy Total:**

From this assessment were you able to find out what your calling is? Has it been confirmed that you have really been gifted with the motivational gift of “counseling”?

To do any further research on motivational gifting go online to the following websites:

[www.gifttest.org](http://www.gifttest.org)

[www.wholeperson-counseling.org/ndoc/motive-t.html](http://www.wholeperson-counseling.org/ndoc/motive-t.html)

[www.mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm](http://www.mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm)

PRODUCT OF FAITH BIBLE COLLEGE

## **QUALIFICATION OF A COUNSELOR**

In the self assessment question you were able to see whether or not you had been called into the ministry of counseling. But there is more necessary than merely a call. With the call needs to come the character and the qualifications to be able to help another person especially in the realm of deep and abiding emotional hurts from the past. What character qualifications are necessary in order to be a counselor? What will a person look for in a counselor before they begin to divulge things from their past. In the next few pages we will be looking at these qualifications so that you can become a more effective counselor for your counselee. The calling of God upon your life cannot be fabricated, you are who God has called you to, however the character of God (especially for counseling) can be developed in your life so that you can be a more effective and efficient counselor.

### **What are people looking for in a counselor?**

When asked the question of "to whom do you go to when you need help?" many people have answered and said:

- Someone whom I know and trust. Someone that I can feel comfortable with and have confidence in
- Someone whom I like and that I know has genuine warmth and concern for my life
- Someone whom I can respect and who has an exemplary walk with God
- Someone who has indicated in the past by words and by deeds that they are interested in counseling and in listening to other people's problems
- Someone who is competent and who is able to offer more than talk. Someone who has been skilled and informed in counseling.
- Someone who has professional ethics and is able to be confidential about all the information that I give them
- Someone who knows God and understands the importance of the divine help of the Holy Spirit

These are all great suggestions and are practical in their application, but what is it that the Bible says about the character qualifications that should be developed in your life as you pursue this calling? Let us look at these qualifications in two specific categories: Firstly, spiritual requirements and secondly character requirements.

## **SPIRITUAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. KNOW WHO GOD IS!**

Having a knowledge of who God is, through a vital and living relationship with Him, is imperative for a counselor. Consider a tour guide. Unless a tour guide has already been to all the places that he desires to take his tourists, he will not know the way that he will need to go. In the same manner, unless the counselor has walked the road of knowing God and seeking Him (Phil 3:10-14), that person will not be able to point the way to a person who has come to them for counseling. It is therefore the responsibility of the counselor to ensure that before he grows in knowledge of the methods and the means of counseling, that he first, "... **GROW** in the grace and **KNOWLEDGE** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18).

**Seek God:** 1 Chronicles 16:10-11 Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore!" Psalms 34:8-10 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing". Isaiah 55:6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near".

**Pursue the knowledge of the Lord:** Hosea 6:3 "Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth."

**Delight in The Lord Your God:** Deu 6:5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." Psa 1:1-3 "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper." Psa 37:4-6 "Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday."

How well do you know God and how deeply has He touched your life. Every concept of biblical counseling must build upon the fundamental conclusion that there really is an infinite and personal God who has revealed Himself to man through the written word, the Bible and through the living Word, Jesus Christ.

## **2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD**

The second spiritual requirement is that we have a knowledge of the Word of God. Before we can counsel others in the Word of God and before we will be able to direct them into truth, we need to know where that truth is found. How will we be able to give our counselee scriptures of hope if we do not know them? It is therefore the responsibility of the counselor to ensure that he is saturated with the principles of the Word of God so that we will be ready in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2).

2 Tim. 2:15 "Work hard so God can approve you. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.

Hebrews 5:13-14 "And a person who is living on milk isn't very far along in the Christian life and doesn't know much about doing what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right."

Some important chapters and books to know as a counselor are:

- Proverbs 1-8,
- Rom 6, 8, 12,
- Gal 5-6,
- Eph 4-6,
- Phil 4,
- Col 3,
- James,
- 1 Peter 3,
- 1 John 1 & 2

### 3. OBTAIN WISDOM

**Christ was filled with wisdom:** When the prophet Isaiah prophesied about the Coming of Christ he said, "And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:2). When Jesus was growing up we note that "... He was filled with wisdom beyond his years, and God placed his special favor upon him.(Luke 2:40). When He ministered, He ministered with wisdom. Matthew 13:54 "He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was astonished and said, "Where does he get his wisdom and his miracles?" If Jesus ministered in the wisdom of God, then we too should demonstrate this wisdom as we counsel people in the truth of God.

**What is wisdom?** The Oxford dictionary defines wisdom as being "the ability to discern or judge what is right and true. Insight."<sup>7</sup> Wisdom is the application of knowledge. It is the ability to see life from God's perspective and then to know the best course of action to take. Eccles. 8:1 "How wonderful to be wise, to be able to analyze and interpret things. Wisdom lights up a person's face, softening its hardness".

Not only should the counselor have knowledge in the Word of God, but more importantly he needs to have wisdom so that application of the Word of God can be made correctly in the situations that the counselor will face in the counseling sessions. True wisdom is not the same worldly wisdom that is based upon knowledge and education of worldly principles and studies. True wisdom comes from:

- The fear of the Lord Job 28:28 "And this is what he says to all humanity: 'The fear of the Lord is true wisdom; to forsake evil is real understanding.' "
- Understanding the Word of God and walking in His precepts: Hosea 14:9 "Let those who are wise understand these things. Let those who are discerning listen carefully. The paths of the LORD are true and right, and righteous people live by walking in them. But sinners stumble and fall along the way. 2 Tim. 3:15 "You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. Matthew 7:24 Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Wisdom is more than knowledge.

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<sup>7</sup> Oxford Dictionary

It is a practical application of the knowledge that you receive. It is not only being hearers of the Word of God (knowledge) but it is doing the Word of God by living the Word on a day to day basis (Wisdom) (James 1:22). It is living a life of an overcomer!

### **How can we receive this wisdom?**

- Live a life that is pleasing to God: Eccles. 2:26 "God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who please him."
- Ask God for it: Ephes. 1:17 "asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. James 1:5 "If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking."

Solomon was an example of this when he was placed over the kingdom of Israel. More than anything else, above riches and honour, he asked for wisdom that he would be able to wisely counsel and lead the children of Israel as their king. 2 Chron. 1:10 "Give me wisdom and knowledge to rule them properly, for who is able to govern this great nation of yours?" Because of this he was able to correctly discern whose baby belonged to which mother when he was brought this difficult situation (1 Kings 3:16-28)

### **What type of wisdom should this be?**

James 3:17 "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no partiality and is always sincere.

- Firstly, it is pure: It is living a life that is not tainted by worldliness or selfish gain, but living what is sound, right, righteous and that which comes from God. Galatians 6:1 "Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself."
- Secondly, it is peaceable: John 14:27 "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn't like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid." The peace of God is always found in His Presence. If a counselor is soaking in the Presence of God, then he will exhibit the peace of God no matter what circumstances and situation he faces in life. This same peace, demonstrated within his life will be evident in

his counseling so that a person who has been living in turmoil and bondage will be able to feel and know the peace of God within their lives.

- Thirdly, this wisdom will be gentle: A gentle person is someone who is kind and who when confronting issues of sin within the counselee's life will be careful in the manner in which they approach and confront. It is not someone who is judgmental but someone whose intentions and goal is to bring that person to a place of recognition, repentance and change. 2 Tim. 2:24 "The Lord's servants must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone. They must be able to teach effectively and be patient with difficult people."
- Fourthly, this wisdom is to be merciful: A merciful person is one who is not critical, overbearing, nor prone to judge. But is someone who is forgiving. It is someone who is compassionate and kind. A judgmental or critical attitude may stem from a strict legalistic interpretation of the Bible; a strict, overbearing conscience; or a tendency to be negative in thought, speech and actions. Often times the sin of pride is the root of this problem. The belief of "self righteousness" and "I have arrived". The Bible declares: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you" (Matthew 7:1-2). "So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7). "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye" (Luke 6:41). It is possible to develop an attitude of forgiveness and mercy, such as Jesus Himself portrayed and taught (John 8:3-11; Matthew 18:21,22). This can be done when we learn to look with spiritual eyes and see the "glory that is to be revealed" in a person. Continually remind yourself that just as God is not finished with you yet, neither is He finished with anyone else.
- Fifthly, wisdom is full of good fruits. Galatians 6:10 "Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone, especially to our Christian brothers and sisters". Galatians 5:22-23 "But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law."
- Sixthly, wisdom is without partiality: It does not take sides. When counseling it is imperative that you as a counselor do not show partiality to any person. For example taking the side of the wife against the husband, or the mother against the child, or the brother against the sister or one church member against another church member. The Bible says, "These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment." (Proverbs

24:23). "To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress." (Proverbs 28:21). "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:" (Acts 10:34).

- Seventhly, wisdom is without hypocrisy. It is free from all doubts, wavering and insincerity. It believes and hopes all things because it is based upon love.

Proverbs 4:7 "Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do! And whatever else you do, get good judgment.

#### **4. BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14)

#### **Why is the leading of the Holy Spirit necessary?**

- The Holy Spirit guides a person into all truth (John 16:13). When dealing with a person's problem it is necessary that the counselor rely on the Holy Spirit to point out scriptures of truth to the counselee that will set them free.
- The Holy Spirit places you in the right place at the right time so that you can minister to the person who is in need. Frequently throughout the book of Acts, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to the "right place" so that the people could be ministered to. Being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit leads you to the people who are in need. For example (Acts 19-20)
- The Holy Spirit enables you to be a minister of the Gospel of Christ. 2 Cor. 3:6 "He is the one who has enabled us to represent his new covenant. This is a covenant, not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old way ends in death; in the new way, the Holy Spirit gives life."
- The Holy Spirit provides you with the "gifts of the Holy Spirit". There are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. These are: words of wisdom; words of knowledge; faith, healing, miracle-working, prophecy; distinguishing of spirits; tongues and the interpretation of tongues. Although God can use all nine of these gifts within the counseling session, there are three of these gifts that are more important than the others. These are the revelational gifts:

**The Word of wisdom:** The word of wisdom is the gift that enables us to see life from God's perspective. It was used by Paul before the council (Acts 23:6), by Jesus when he answered questions regarding taxes (Matthew 22:15-22) and during the temptation (Luke 4:1-14). The gift of wisdom is the application of knowledge that God gives you and can be used to ascertain the divine means for accomplishing God's will in a given situation. It is a divinely given power to appropriate spiritual intuition in problem solving. Furthermore, this gift involves having a sense of divine direction, being led by the Holy Spirit to act appropriately in a given set of circumstances, and rightly applying knowledge.

**The Word of Knowledge:** This is the supernatural comprehension of Christ and His Word. It was used by Noah when building the Ark (Genesis 6:14-22), by Joshua in knowing about Achan's sin (Joshua 7:10-11) and by Elisha knowing that Gehazi lied to Naaman (2 Kings 5:20-27). A word of knowledge is a definite conviction, impression, or knowing that comes to you in a similitude (a mental picture), a dream, through a vision, or by a Scripture that is quickened to you. It is supernatural insight or understanding of circumstances, situations, problems, or a body of facts by revelation; that is, without assistance by any human resource but solely by divine aid. It involves moral wisdom for right living and relationships, requires objective understanding concerning divine things in human duties, and refers to knowledge of God or of the things that belong to God, as related in the Gospel.

**The gift of discernment:** The gift of discernment consists of the spiritual quality or skill of being able to see or understand, especially that which is hidden or obscure. This ability is shared in a general way by all of God's children, but "discerning of spirits" is one of the gifts of the Spirit that comes, under certain circumstances, specially from God (1 Cor. 12:10). Not only can the power of discernment distinguish good from evil, the righteous from the wicked, and false spirits from divine, but its more sensitive operation can also make known even "the thoughts and intents of the heart" of other persons (Heb. 4:12). The characteristics of the gift of discernment are:

- It is governed by love, for if it is not, it's worthless ( 1 Corinthians 13:1-3);
- It centers us onto Jesus the Christ and Lord ( 1 Cor 12:3), and His good news;
- it directs us to Scripture, not away from it ( Isaiah 8:19, 20);
- it builds up the church and its members ( Ephesians 4:11-12), giving it power, wisdom, character, boldness, and unity.
- It helps create in us a love of righteousness, a heightened sense of sin, and a turning away from known evil. For example: Acts 13:6-10, 8:23

## **CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS**

There are many character qualities that are required in order to be an effective counselor. These qualities can be seen in:

### **1. BEING AN ENCOURAGER**

#### **Definition:**

What does it mean to be an encourager? The Webster's Dictionary says to encourage means to "give courage, hope confidence, support, to help."<sup>8</sup>

#### **God was an encourager**

- "You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry" (Psalm 10:17).
- "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).
- "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus" (Romans 15:5).

#### **The Body of Christ has been called to encourage:**

- "Encourage one another and build each other up." (1 Thes 5:11)
- "Let us encourage one another..." (Heb 10:25)
- "Encourage one another daily..." (Heb 3:13)

The body of Christ is one of several pictures or analogies used to instruct us regarding the nature and function of the universal church (1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27; Eph. 1:23; 4:12). This picture portrays both the unity and the diversity of the church as an organic body, a spiritual organism, made up of many individual and diverse parts all designed to work together in a caring and functional way. In keeping with the nature of the church as a body made up of many members, numerous passages of the New Testament show us the important role the whole body has in mutual care and encouragement.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.m-w.com/>

Through its diversity of members, as Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12, the New Testament has many illustrations of encouragement through the loving care of one another. This occurs in numerous ways. Some have the gift of encouragement (Rom. 12:8), some encourage through communication of God's revelation (Acts 20:2; 1 Cor. 14:3, 31; 1 Thess. 4:18; Tit. 1:9), others by bringing good news (2 Cor. 7:6-7, 13; Eph. 6:22; Col. 4:8), others by giving various kinds of support—financial, lending a helping hand, giving a word of encouragement, supporting others in prayer, showing concern and just being there for one another (Rom. 12:13, 15; Eph. 4:29; Phil. 1:5; 4:10; 1 Thess. 5:11-12).

### **Barnabas was an encourager:**

Acts 4:36 - "Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet."

How did he bring encouragement?

- Firstly, he encouraged with his finances: Proverbs 11:24-25 "It is possible to give freely and become more wealthy, but those who are stingy will lose everything. The generous prosper and are satisfied; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed". Barnabas had sold some land that he owned and given the money to the apostles to be distributed to the needy.
- Secondly, he encouraged with fellowship: Saul of Tarsus was an enemy of the early church and had them tortured and even killed. Then he had a conversion experience. After Saul was converted to Christ, the Scripture says in Acts 9:26 "When he (Saul) came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was really a disciple." Those Christian people were afraid of Paul. They had heard of his persecution of Christians, his murderous ways. They did not believe the stories about his conversion. Acts 9:27 "But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus." Encouragers believe that people can change. Encouragers see potential in other people and take an interest in them.
- Thirdly, he encouraged those who had failed: In Acts 15:36-39, we note that when Paul refused to take John Mark (who had failed on a previous Missionary journey) with him, Barnabas took him. After a period of time of being with Barnabas, John Mark was restored in Paul's eyes. Paul wrote to

Timothy later on. “Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.” 2 Tim. 4:11

### Traits of an Encourager – 1 Thessalonians 5

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul gives an outline on what it means to be an encourager (1 Thes 5:11-14):

Verse	Action
11	Building up one another
12	Respecting leaders
13	Highly esteeming leaders
13	Living in peace
14	Admonishing the unruly
14	Encouraging the fainthearted
14	Helping the weak
14	Being patient

### Why is it necessary to be an encourager?

- Encouragement prevents us from giving up. “The apostles sent a letter to the Gentiles in Antioch: and when they read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement” (Acts 15:30). Encouragement reminds us that we have a “great cloud of witnesses” lining heaven cheering us to finish faithfully just as they have done.
- Encouragement enables us to move ahead. The Lord told Moses to “command Joshua, and encourage Joshua and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see” (Deuteronomy 3:28). There were many things Moses could have done. But God knew what Joshua needed most—encouragement. And this is true of you and me and the people around us. We all need encouragement.
- Encouragement banishes fear and promotes courageous behavior. “And Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him in God. Thus, he said to him, “Do not be afraid, because the hand of Saul my father shall not find you, and you will be king over Israel and I will be next to you; and Saul my father knows that also” (1 Samuel 23:16-17). What a blessing Jonathan was to his friend, David.

- Encouragement helps establish our vocational identity. In the book of 2 Chronicles, we read about Josiah setting the priests in their offices. But he didn't just put them in office. He "encouraged them in the service of the house of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 35:2). Each of us needs to know that our work is important and we need to be encouraged.
- Encouragement leads to good choices. People tend to make decisions based upon how they feel, rather than what they know. Therefore, if a person feels discouraged, he is likely to give up and do little, or make poor choices. But when a person feels encouraged and on top of things, he usually has better judgment. He moves ahead based on the facts and on his true God-given gifts rather than on negative or confused feelings.
- Encouraging words help us get along with one another. Notice this portion of Scripture: "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus" (Romans 15:5).
- Encouragement keeps us from destructive choices. It puts a priority on worthwhile projects rather than on useless or sinful acts. A good directive is found in the book of Hebrews: "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'today' lest anyone of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13).
- Encouragement helps us to become encouragers ourselves. Make no mistake about it. Encouragement is contagious.
- Encouragement makes a difference. "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen (Ephesians 4:29). "The tongue has the power of life and death" (Proverbs 18:21). Your words have an impact. The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life (Proverbs 10:11). Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers (Acts 15:32). "We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith" (1 Thessalonians 3:2).

## **Tips to increasing your encouragement skills:**

When you encourage someone:

- Make it personal. Tell them personally how much you believe in them.
- Be specific. Tell the person you are encouraging exactly what it is that you appreciate about them.
- Understand the importance of purpose. What goal do you have in mind when you are encouraging someone? Paul wrote "Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Cor. 14: 26). Edification refers to "building up" the Body of Christ. When individuals are built up (growing in grace) the Body of Christ is built up (Ephesians 4:16).
- Think on the "good" in a person: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if any-thing is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

## **2. BEING A GOOD LISTENER**

The Bible emphasizes the importance of being a good listener. When God tells us that we should be "quick to listen, (and) slow to speak" (James 1:19), He is alerting us to our natural aversion to listening and urging us to bring this area of our lives under his control.

Effective listening is especially important in pastoral counseling. When people come to us with spiritual and relational problems, we may know the answers to their problems, but unless we have learned the art of listening, they will probably not profit from the answers we give them. There are several reasons for this:

### **Why is listening is important?**

- Listening is a basic expression of love. There are many ways to show love, but one of the most basic expressions of love is to take the other person seriously enough to hear what they have to say. By listening, we are affirming and expressing what God says about them – "they are significant". Listening therefore is part of "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). There are times when we do not know the answers to the problem, but we can still minister to the person if we listen carefully and lovingly. This is why Job tells his friends, "Listen carefully to my words; let this be the consolation that you give to me" (Job 21:1).

- Listening is a prerequisite to discernment. Proverbs 18:13 says, "He who answers before listening--that is his folly and his shame." It is arrogant to begin to answer someone before we truly understand what he needs. If we have humility, we will realize that many times we are wrong in our initial assessment of another person's needs. Before we can properly apply God's Word, we need to understand the other person's situation, what and why he feels the way he does, and what the root issues are. The only way we can discover these things is to carefully and prayerfully listen.
- Listening promotes receptivity to your counsel. Though it may be assumed that you have credibility because the person is coming to you for counsel, your credibility will be hampered if you are a poor listener. Most people seeking counsel are confused by their problems, or they wouldn't be seeking help. They can't imagine that anyone could accurately discern the problem and the solution as quickly as you may have done by poor listening skills. Until this confidence is gained, the counselee will be reluctant to follow your counsel no matter how sound it may be. Because of this, it is not enough that you accurately understand the issues; it is also necessary that the counselee has confidence that you understand. This confidence is based largely on your willingness to listen and ask questions, sometimes even after you have discerned the issues.

### **What are some of the roadblocks to being an effective listener?**

The following types of responses indicate ineffective listening:

- judging
- diverting
- blaming
- labeling
- moralizing
- ridiculing
- distracting
- criticizing
- lecturing

### **Keys to being an effective listener**

Listening is not passive. Listening is anything but a passive, neutral activity. While it may appear that this is all that's going on, many active processes are taking place within the listener--if they're listening well, that is. Listening is more than hearing words that have been uttered, it involves not just accurately hearing what people say, but getting a sense of who they are, how they view life, what

they want to accomplish, what concerns they have, what they're afraid of, how they're feeling, what they want from you, and more. It even involves "listening" to what people aren't directly saying, or what they might be too reluctant to say, or what they definitely don't want you to do in response to their communications. Thus, in order to become a good listener, we can't just stop with hearing the words people say. We've got to attend to many other details and many other dimensions that don't meet the eye, but that are crucial nonetheless. The following reminders can improve our listening skills so that we may become better counselors:

- Be spiritually prepared. As Christians, we believe that all spiritual and relational healing is the work of God and not something we can do by our own power. The proof that we believe this is that we bathe our counseling sessions with prayer. It is important to personally express your dependence to God in prayer before the counseling session. Ask God to enable you to put aside other thoughts so that you may listen effectively. Ask Him also to grant you the ability to spiritually discern the real issues. Learn the habit of turning to God while in the counseling session to ask for these same things. Sometimes, more experienced Christian workers tend to omit this preparation because they "have had so much experience" in counseling. This attitude is fleshly self-sufficiency and should be consciously resisted.
- Lay aside your own preconceptions. Unless you know the other person well, it is important to lay aside your own preconceived ideas about what his needs are. Unless you do this, you will tend to come to a premature conclusion and will provide counsel before you understand or will be politely silent while you rehearse your response. This is not listening; this is merely waiting for the chance to make the other person listen. This is especially important when the symptoms of the problem are similar to problems you or other counselees have had. The tendency to project previous situations on to the counselee is a danger to be resisted. Of course, such previous experience may be useful once you establish by careful listening that the situations are truly similar.
- Listen with respect: One of the biggest secrets to becoming an excellent listener is to take on the job of always finding something to respect and validate about what others are saying. This is a challenging purpose you can take on. Most of the time when we're listening to others, we look for faults or weaknesses in what the other person says. We often end up disagreeing (either vocally or silently) with the other person's opinions, feelings, attitudes, or points of views. But nobody likes to have others disagree with them. We all want people to agree with our points of view, or at least we want our thoughts and feelings to be respected and considered equally valid as anyone else's. Even if our opinions or attitudes are based on erroneous

reasoning, we still want people to appreciate that our ideas and feelings have great personal meaning for us. If you don't make people feel that you respect their points of view, they won't feel "understood" and will consider you a bad listener. This can be done by realizing that your own style of thinking and reasoning is fundamentally different from the people you are interacting with. For example, parents often make the mistake of listening and communicating with their children as if they were "little adults." But a child's does not think, feel and reason like an adult. Their thought processes and reasoning processes are very, very different. Children do not respond to the same types of motivators we do. They don't relate to future goals and payoffs as we do. And they don't always want to be educated or enlightened as we might value these opportunities. If you don't remind yourself of these essential differences-- which are very, very easy to forget-- you won't be able to communicate with children successfully.

- Be non-judgmental and empathetic. Avoid the tendency to focus only on evaluating the moral and/or theological correctness of statements the counselee makes. As Christians, we know that truth is important. We know that the counselee will need to bring her thinking into conformity to God's Word in order to be healed. But our ability to apply this truth will be hindered unless we truly understand how she views this area of her life. Be willing to temporarily suspend your immediate right to judge in the interest of better overall understanding of the person. Give yourself as fully as possible to drawing out and understanding the counselee's situation. Being non-judgmental and empathetic means that you communicate acceptance to the counselee regardless of her beliefs or behavior. It also means that you communicate an understanding of the legitimate parts of the counselee's problem, even if you disagree with her response to it. For example: "I am so discouraged that I want to get a divorce!" You could reply with a mini-lecture about the biblical view of divorce. This statement may be biblically correct, but it may stifle effective interaction. On the other hand, you could say something like "I can see how his lack of sensitivity could make you feel like giving up on the relationship." This statement communicates empathy and encourages further communication without legitimizing divorce as the answer.

- Pay attention to non-verbal communication and what is not said. It is helpful to notice the non-verbal communication of the counselee. His facial expressions, body movement, posture, and breathing rate are all important clues to what he is thinking or feeling. The tone, volume and tempo of speech are also important in this regard.
- Encourage self-disclosure. Being a good listener involves helping the counselee to disclose to you all that is relevant to her problem. There are a number of practical ways to do this: Maintain an appropriate amount of eye-contact. Nodding occasionally, coupled with appropriate facial gestures helps to give the other person confidence that you are sincerely interested. Your own bodily posture is also important. Sitting in an open, relaxed way will encourage self-disclosure; sitting behind a desk with arms folded will impede it. Lean forward at important statements. Take note of any distracting non-verbal habits you may have and eliminate them. Finger tapping, rocking, or staring off into space may help you to concentrate, but they communicate disinterest to the counselee and therefore discourage self-disclosure. Give appropriate verbal encouragement. An occasional "uh-huh," as well as questions like "Can you tell me more about that?" communicate interest which encourages self-disclosure.
- Check for understanding. Effective listening involves ascertaining that you have properly interpreted the counselee's statements so that you form an accurate picture of the situation. One of the most effective ways to do this is to paraphrase important parts of the counselee's communication. By putting what he just said into your own words and re-stating it, you are letting him know you are listening, and you insure a proper interpretation. If the counselee is merely reporting what happened, you may need to ask how he interpreted the event, how he feels about it, and what he intends to do about it. For example, if the counselee says, "We had an argument," you may want to inquire how he felt about the argument in order to understand its actual effect on the situation. Be careful to ask open-ended, non-threatening questions rather than "yes or no" questions. Effective understanding can come by using three techniques:

Paraphrasing: To paraphrase, one simply rewords what another individual has said. For example, the speaker might say, "She was foolish to quit her job." The listener might respond, "I hear you saying that you believe she shouldn't have quit." What has occurred is paraphrasing where the listener has clarified what the speaker has said. It simply means restating what another person has said in your own words.

Open questions: An open question explores a person's statement without requiring a simple "yes" or "no" answer. The basic difference between an open question and a closed question is what they provide the person being asked. When you are asked an open question it helps you think more about an issue. A closed question will not do that. It may force you to answer before you are ready, or require a "yes" or "no" answer that doesn't allow more thinking about the issue. Closed questions close the door on further thought, while open questions open the door. For example, the speaker might say, "I don't like my job." The listener might respond, "What about your job don't you like?" or, "Tell me more about your feelings regarding your job." Ask questions using the acronym "EACH".

- E Emotions: these result from the problem. EG. fear, anger or depression
- A Actions or responses to the problems. EG. What did he do before, during and after the event?
- C Convictions or beliefs about the problem. EG What do they believe to be true when ....
- H Habits or patterns of behaviour.

Feeling Reflection: Feeling reflection is a response in which you express a feeling or emotion you have experienced in reference to a particular statement. For example, the speaker might say, "I get sick of working so much overtime!" The listener might respond, "I hear you feeling angry and resentful at being asked to work so much overtime." Feeling reflections are perhaps the most difficult active listening responses to make. Not only do you actively listen to what is being said but also you actively listen for what is being felt. When you make a feeling reflection, you are reflecting back what you hear of another's feelings. It is similar to paraphrasing; however, you repeat what you heard them feeling instead of what you heard them saying. To understand what individuals are feeling, you must listen to their words, to their tone of voice, and watch their body signals. By observing all three you can begin to guess their feelings.

- Take written or mental notes. In the course of the session, the counselee may make a statement about something that is very important to address. Perhaps she reveals animosity toward her parents, or shows an unbiblical attitude about sexuality. These issues are important, but to address them immediately would disrupt the self-disclosure that is taking place. In this case,

it is best to make a mental or written note of the issue so you can come back to it at a more appropriate time.

- Give hope without "jumping the gun." When people come to you with pressing problems, it is important to find a way to encourage them that God can help them. However, it is also important to not be premature about offering specific solutions until you have an accurate discernment of the root issues. This may have an encouraging effect immediately, but it can be very damaging in the long run. When you are not sure about the root issues, resist the urge to "shoot from the hip." Instead, offer more general encouragement by expressing your concern for them and your confidence that God can and will help, and by praying with them for comfort and insight. This encouragement is genuinely helpful and will usually be readily received.

### **PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT - Listening Role-Play Activity**

You and a friend can practice effective listening on one another. Practice with these ten suggested topics.

**Step 1:** One partner takes a turn as speaker, the other as listener. For five minutes the speaker elaborates on one of the ten topics. The listener uses effective listening and makes appropriate responses back to the speaker.

**Step 2:** After the five-minute role play is completed, the speaker spends two minutes giving feedback to the listening partner on the effective listener skills used.

**Step 3:** After the first practice and feedback session, switch roles until all topics have been covered. Use the material on listening as a tool to make improvements in your listening and feedback skills

#### **Ten Practice Listening Topics:**

How I feel about:

- My life today.
- Being raised in my family of origin.
- All the good things that have happened to me
- My future
- My decision to participate in a support group.
- My current personal problems.
- Learning to deal with my problems.
- Listening to other people's deepest concerns and feelings.

- Showing love to those closest to me.
- The fact that I influence my life, regardless of the events, with either positive or negative outcomes.

After you have both taken time to listen to the other person, analyze your listening skill by honestly answering the following questions:

- What was I doing during this interaction?
- Where did I want to go in the conversation?
- What was my body language like?
- What pressures was I feeling in talking with this person?
- What could I have said differently?
- How could I say that so as to show I understood?
- How is her appearance affecting me?
- What “fantasy” is going on in my head in this dialogue?
- How does his behavior affect my approach in this discussion?
- How genuine am I feeling at this time?
- How does what I say reflect genuineness to her?
- How could I have made what I just said more empathetic? How did I demonstrate respect for the other?
- How is my level of communication and vocabulary affecting the dialogue?
- What different style of communication could I use to reach her better?
- How attentive am I to him at this time?
- How do I feel about her response?
- How are my values affecting what I am hearing at this time?
- How did my questions further the discussion and show I was listening?
- What can I do to improve the feedback I am giving the other?
- How well am I tuning into her feelings?

### **3. HAVING LOVE AND CONCERN FOR OTHERS**

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Ephesians 4:32 "Be ye kind one to another. . . forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

#### **What is love?**

There are four Greek words used in the New Testament that we translate "love", eros, philia, storge and agape. Of these four different expressions of love, it is the "agape" type that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 5:43-48 and whom Paul describes and characterizes in 1 Corinthians 13. "Agape" means that love which seeks only the highest good of others. It is not an uncontrolled reaction of the heart, but a concentrated exercise of the will. It is a caring love, one which becomes involved with the needs of others. It does not depend upon the one being loved having to earn such love. It is not an exclusive love that is only expressed to a few but it is an all embracing love that is shown to all regardless of who the person is or what they have done.

It never takes on the following attitudes:

- He should have known better
- If he had stayed away from the wrong crowd he would not be in trouble
- He is just a trouble maker
- He got what he deserved
- He was weak
- He is only trying to get sympathy, he doesn't really want to change
- He is the kind of person who will always be that way
- Why doesn't he just snap out of it

"Agape has to do with the mind: it is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. Agape has supremely to do with the will." 9.

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9 New Testament Words by William Barclay, page 20

## The perfect illustration of "agape":

The perfect example of love is found in the God of love for mankind. 2 Cor. 13:11 "Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Rejoice. Change your ways. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you."

- His love is a completely undeserved love (Rom 5:8).
- His love is an inseparable love (Rom 8:35-39).
- His love is seen in His willingness to save sinners (Eph 2:4-7).

The love of God is epitomized in Jesus Christ. The bible shows us many references in which instead of being condemning and judgmental, Jesus portrayed love to the people.

1 Peter 2:21 "This suffering is all part of what God has called you to. Christ, who suffered for you, is your example. Follow in his steps." Jesus left us "an example, that [we] should follow in his steps." What *did* Jesus do? In the Gospels it can be noted that there were several priorities that guided Jesus:

**He sought the Father:** Jesus demonstrated intimacy with God by seeking Him continually in prayer. Forty-five times the gospels tell us that Jesus went alone to pray. Every aspect of His life and ministry was saturated with prayer. Mark 1 gives us a glimpse of Jesus early in His ministry. His life was swirling with people, needs, and opportunities. Jesus ministered around the clock. Still, He would make time to commune with the Father and concentrate on His purposes. He might sleep less or work less, but He would find time to pray. The Bible declares that we will love our brothers when we "abide in the light" (1 John 1:10, see also John 15:1-17).

**He embraced the outcasts:** Jesus demonstrated the love of God by accepting the castaways of society. This provoked great disdain from the religious establishment however it never prohibited Him from embracing the sinful and sickly, the unseemly and unimportant. For example:

- Luke 5:27-32: Shortly after accepting Jesus' invitation to follow him, Levi (later known as Matthew) "held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them" (v. 29). On the social-ethical scale of the day, an upstanding individual would not associate with them at all, but Jesus not only talked to Levi, he asked the man to become his disciple.

- The woman who was caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). Jesus spoke the truth in love to her and called her to a place of repentance without condemning her.
- The woman who anointed Him (Luke 7:36-50)
- The woman at the well (John 4:4-26). Jesus tended to worldly needs (food, illness, disability) before addressing the eternal. He went to where the lady was in order to offer them living water.

**He restored broken lives:** By the power of God's Spirit, Jesus provided for people's physical and financial needs (Matt. 14:14-21, 17:27). He cast out demons (Luke 4:36), healed broken bodies (Luke 5:17), raised the dead (John 11:1-44), and forgave the sins of the guilty (Matt. 9:6). Jesus proved that God's power is sufficient to meet every need. The Scriptures promise us that the same power works in and through our lives today (Phil. 2:13).

**He taught God's Word:** Whether addressing curious crowds or the committed core, Jesus took advantage of every teachable moment. He was always helping people discover His Father. He lived and spoke the truth, a perfect expression of God's character (John 1:14). But even though He was the *incarnate* Word, Jesus often directed people back to the *written* Word. When a religious expert asked Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the Law?" (Luke 10:25-26). The rich young ruler asked the same question, and Jesus answered him from the Scriptures as well (Matt. 19:16-21). Jesus taught when He conversed one on one with Nicodemus and when He preached to thousands of people. His life shows us that teaching requires being so filled with God's Word that it naturally overflows from our lives into the lives of those around us.

**He served:** Service marked Jesus' life from start to finish. He served through sacrifice, putting the needs of others above his own. At the last supper, He put on a towel and washed His disciples' feet (John 13:2-17).

**He expressed His love for the disciples:** When bystanders saw Jesus' tears at the graveside of Lazarus, they observed, "See how he loved him" (Jn. 11:36). Why did Jesus cry? He wept because His friend was dead and because He felt Mary and Martha's pain. He showed empathy for others.

**He sacrificed:** When Jesus finally laid down His life, it was the pinnacle of a life characterized by sacrifice. Jesus sacrificed heaven, with all its privileges and honor. He sacrificed earthly comforts, denying Himself sleep, privacy, and family life. His example is the one we follow: This is how we know what love is: Jesus

Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers (1 Jn. 3:16). John 3:16 ""For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. John 15:13 "And here is how to measure it—the greatest love is shown when people lay down their lives for their friends.

### **A call to love:**

Love is to be the "atmosphere" in which the Christian walks. Ephes. 5:1-2 "Follow God's example in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ, who loved you and gave himself as a sacrifice to take away your sins. And God was pleased, because that sacrifice was like sweet perfume to him." Love is to be the "garment" that we "put on" (Col 3:12-14). It is to be the motives for all that we do. 1 Cor. 16:14 "And everything you do must be done with love.: It should characterize our preaching and our teaching of the truth . Ephes. 4:15 "Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. One of the fundamental doctrines of Christ was that we "love one another" (1 John 3:11, John 13:13-14).

This love is demonstrated in:

- Helping people when they are in physical need: 1 John 3:16-18 "We know what real love is because Christ gave up his life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters. But if anyone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions.
- Helping people when they are in spiritual need: 1 Peter 4:8 "Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. James 5:19-20 "My dear brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back again, you can be sure that the one who brings that person back will save that sinner from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you" (1 Th 3:12)

### **ASSIGNMENT QUESTION:**

Looking at the ministry of Christ as the Shepherd discuss how the attribute of love has been demonstrated in through His life, past and at present. In your essay you should compare the role of the shepherd towards the sheep (using Bible manners and customs) and Christ towards the believer.

#### **4. HAVING PERSONAL ETHICS**

Ethical standards are essential to all counseling sessions. What personal ethics should a counselor exhibit? Firstly he should exhibit confidentiality and secondly, he should avoid all appearances of evil.

##### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is a necessity. A counselor should never be a person who is quick to divulge the things that they hear within a session. This is gossip. The Bible condemns gossip and defends the idea of confidentiality. In Proverbs 20:19, Solomon commands us to ". . . not associate with a gossip." (See also Prov. 11:13; 16:27,28; 17:9). In Romans 1:29 and 2 Cor. 12:20, Paul condemns it as the result of a depraved mind, unfitting for Christians. Those who are involved in gossip are called "busybodies" who "speak out things" (1 Timothy 5:13, 2 Thes 3:11).

What does the Bible say about confidentiality? A person who shows personal ethics by maintaining the counselee's confidentiality ...

- Is trustworthy: Prov. 11:13 - "He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter."
- Shows love: Prov. 17:9 - "He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."
- Deals with the matter in private: Matt. 18:15 - "If your brother sins, go and reprove him in private . . ." This implies the desirability of leaving it there if the matter is satisfactorily resolved.

## Should a confidence then be broken?

In certain instances, the Bible speaks strongly about the need to tell others about someone else's problem. Some disciplinary situations require this.

- Matt. 18:16,17: The same passage that recommends resolving it in private commands making it public if necessary.
- Gal. 6:1:"Those who are spiritual" should go and restore the one "caught in a trespass." This implies they were told by the one(s) who caught them.
- 1 Tim. 5:20: The elder who "continues in sin" should be rebuked "in the presence of all."

There are times when it is best to keep divulged information to yourself, and there are times when it is important to bring it to the attention of others. One key to guidance on this issue is your *reason* for talking about someone else. Are you acting as a family member or spiritual helper, or as a busybody? The Bible condemns and prohibits gossip for the sake of tearing down. It commends and at times even commands conferral for the sake of building up.

Consider the following important distinctions between conferral and gossip.

<b>CONFERRAL</b>	<b>GOSSIP</b>
This is motivated by the desire to help the person and the local church	This is motivated by lack of concern or even the desire to hurt the person and exalt yourself
When conferral is made it is only done with responsible people who can help	Talks to whomever you please without regard for its effect on the other person
Confers only about live issues	Talks past, dead, purely personal issues
Does so in addition to talking to the person if needed	Does so instead of talking to the person if needed
Carefully explains the context of the problem to the conferee	Neglects or distorts the context of the problem
Promotes more trust, openness and less gossip in the local church	Promotes fear of openness and more gossip in the local church

When considering whether or not to confer with another Christian worker, prayerfully consider the following questions:

- Is another person or the witness of the church being injured by your silence? Many issues are of such a purely personal nature (e.g., masturbation), or have taken place so long ago (e.g., sexual sins as a non-Christian) that there is no good reason why they should be shared with others. With these matters, we should show the person acceptance and let him share this with others as he gets to know them. On the other hand, issues that can cause harm to another person should be dealt with openly. For example: abuse, legal matters
- What is the person's role in the church? Those with more authority are also more accountable. If you know that a deacon or an elder fell into temptation you should bring this to the attention of the leader. On the other hand, a similar fall by a new Christian may not need any other input if you are the person working with him. However, the person who is working most closely with them should probably know so they can help. Encourage the person to share their fall with this person, and it may be best to check to see if he did this.
- What concrete thing do you want to confer about? You should be clear on what and why you want to confer, and you should confer only with those who can help.

If you can't answer these questions clearly, more thought is probably needed before you confer.

### **Evaluating your decision: The "CLICK" Model 10**

- C Consequence: What are the consequences if I do this? Who will benefit? Who will suffer?
- L Legal: Is it legal? Are there considerations based on laws?
- I Image: Would I like to see this on the front page of the newspaper? Will this decision affect our public image?

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10 Developed for Florida Power Corporation by Lee Gardenswartz, Anita Rowe and Patricia Digh (<http://www.casenet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/ethics-today.htm>)

- C Culture: Does this decision support or damage our organization's culture and values?
- K Knot: Does it cause a knot in my stomach?

### ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

How would you handle the following counseling situations concerning personal ethics? For example:

- Would you break a confidence?
- What would be the advantages and disadvantages of doing so?
- To whom would you confer if necessary
- What would be your next steps in counseling this person?

A mother and her 15 year-old son have come to see you. The parents are divorced, the father has legal custody of the child, and the parents do not communicate with one another. The mother is concerned that her son seems to be constantly tired, lethargic and uninterested in doing anything with friends. The school reports that the boy sometimes falls asleep during classes and that his schoolwork, which has never been outstanding, is showing no signs of improvement. The boy himself says virtually nothing, mumbles inaudible comments when asked direct questions, and refuses to make eye contact. You ask the mother to leave so that you can talk to her son alone. After you make a prolonged effort to gain his confidence by explaining that you are there to help him and that anything he says will remain confidential, the boy finally admits that he goes clubbing every Friday and Saturday night, that he takes an Ecstasy tablet on weekends, and that is about all that he really enjoys in life. He is totally adamant that he does not want his parents to know any of this. The mother returns to your consulting room.

A 14 year-old girl who asks you to help her arrange an abortion as she cannot tell her parents that she is pregnant. What advice would you give her?

## AVOIDANCE OF ALL EVIL

Another issue in personal ethics, is to insure that you avoid all evil, that is personal touch. Counselors should not touch the counselee unnecessarily, especially if it is a person of the opposite sex.

### **Why?**

- People who are hurt and have emotional problems are apt to misinterpret a mere friendly gesture
- The counselee may project his feelings upon the counselor by taking a harmless act of affection as a personal advance.
- Dependency can develop between the counselor and the counselee.

Therefore avoid all personal contact other than a hand shake (for men) and a hug (for women). Ensure that you always counsel in an appropriate place (not in a secluded area or in a dark car park). Ensure that when you are counseling a person of the opposite sex that you:

- maintain an open door policy or
- bring someone into the counseling session with you
- never counsel in the private home of the person if you are going to do so by yourself.

### **PART THREE: THE TOOLS FOR COUNSELING**

Every occupation needs tools in order to effectively and efficiently complete a task. A doctor needs his medical bag, a plumber needs his wrenches, a sales person needs his price lists, a dentist needs his dental equipment etc. In the same manner a counselor needs his own counseling tools.

What is a tool? A tool is a device, such as a saw, used to perform or facilitate manual or mechanical work. A machine, such as a lathe, used to cut and shape machine parts or other objects. Something which is regarded as necessary to the carrying out of one's occupation or profession.

What is it that the counselor needs in order for him to be able to “carry out” his task? Biblical Counseling is powerful and effective. It is powerful for overcoming problems: anger, resentment, bitterness, guilt feelings, depression, sexual abuse, eating disorders, anorexia, bulimia, divorce, marriage, & parenting. It is effective in bringing change and reconciliation. However, this power and effectiveness is only evident when the Christian counselor uses powerful and effective tools. The power of biblical counseling and its effectiveness can be found in the four provisions of God:

- the plan of God to progressively sanctify believers (Rom. 8:29),
- the sufficiency of the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3),
- the power of the Holy Spirit (Phil. 1:6; 2:13),
- and the power of prayer (James 5:16).

Since the power of biblical counseling is in God and His plan for progressive sanctification of believers, the hope (confident expectation) of biblical counseling is in God, His plan for the believer, and His power to accomplish His plan. One hope of biblical counseling is that, in spite of bad situations and/or the provocations of others, God has the power to give joy (Col. 1:11). An even more important hope is the promise of God that He can work all things together to conform the counselee (in godliness) to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:28-29).

## THE WORD OF GOD

There are three different approaches to the “knowledge” that a counselor or a psychologist uses during counseling. These are expert knowledge, common knowledge and divine knowledge. Of these three approaches, two of them are insufficient and incorrect in their belief and therefore should not be used by the Christian counselor whilst the third should always be used as a tool during counseling. Which approach then is correct and which approach is incorrect for use in the counseling session?

### **TWO WRONG APPROACHES:**

The following two approaches are not sufficient in completely changing and transforming a person because the knowledge that they have is not based upon truth.

- **Expert knowledge:** In this type of counseling the emphasis is on man's inner belief. Here the counselor believes that “man” is not responsible for what he does and therefore holds the other person responsible. For example: Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3: 12-13). This type of counseling is “natural” or is according to the nature of man. The problem with this type of counseling is that it stems from a faulty relationship with God (due to the sinful nature of man). An important principle to know as a counselor is that man is responsible for his actions and therefore needs to come to a place of repentance, transformation and change.
- **Common knowledge:** In this type of counseling, the counselor does not believe in expert counseling but believes that all men have adequate knowledge to handle all their own problems. Every person is seen as having the potential to do what is right on his own without the help or involvement of any other person. This type of counseling is wrong because no man has the adequate resources to deal with the problem of sin. Man needs to be dependent upon God. All have sinned and therefore do not have the potential to only do what is right.

### **THE RIGHT APPROACH: DIVINE KNOWLEDGE**

The third approach, one which all nouthetic Christian counselors should use, is the divine knowledge approach. In this counseling, the counselor uses the Bible as the source for finding out “the problem”, “the right way” and the “way in which the person can change”.

The counselor who uses this approach believes that all counseling should have a biblical foundation. This means that all counseling should begin and end with scripture. The focus is not to be on the external data and the problems but needs to be on the inner man. The goal is to lead them to know God through the revelation of the Written Word and the revelation of the Living Bread, Jesus Christ.

Psalms 19:7-11 "The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight to life. Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to those who hear them; there is great reward for those who obey them."

### **Why is this approach more effective?**

- Because the Bible has been written for our example: Romans 15:4 "Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. They give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises." 1 Cor. 10:11 "All these events happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us, who live at the time when this age is drawing to a close."
- Because the Bible is powerful: The Word of God is powerful because it is not merely the thoughts of a person, someone who has studied psychology – it is the very thoughts of God – our Creator – the Person who knows us and has created us. He has written us a manual which can show us "how we operate". In the same way that the mechanics and engineers of Sony or LG will write appliance manuals on how their electronic equipment works, so our Creator, has provided us with the manual in helping us live and work effectively in this life. If we follow His manual we will fulfill our purpose. The Word of God is powerful because – it is a Person – it is Jesus Christ – the Living Word.
- Because the Bible is a book of behaviour. It is able to instruct us on how to live and how not to live. It shows us what type of behaviour is acceptable and what is unacceptable. It provides a framework for solving problems - family, marital and personal. There are countless examples in the Bible which shows us what God expects of us concerning our conduct and what He does not. For example: The ten commandments were given to the children of Israel as a means in which they would be able to know what is the right way to behave and relate towards man and God. In the Book of Galatians

chapter 5, we note that Paul wrote to the believers to show them what type of behaviour would be accepted, the fruits of the Spirit and which were characterized by the fruits of the flesh.

- Because the Bible is a plumbline: The Word of God is a plumbline for our lives. A plumbline is a simple tool that is used to determine whether or not something is perfectly vertical or upright. Amos 7:7-8 "Then he showed me another vision. I saw the Lord standing beside a wall that had been built using a plumb line. He was checking it with a plumb line to see if it was straight. And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" I answered, "A plumb line." And the Lord replied, "I will test my people with this plumb line. I will no longer ignore all their sins". The Word of God is the ultimate authority by which all theories and practices are to be measured. It is with this that we are able to measure our lives. When we place our lives, our attitudes, our motives, our intentions, our behaviour next to the Word of God, we are able to see whether they are aligned to the Word or not and therefore are able to make the necessary changes just as a builder of a wall would do when he notices that the wall that he is building is no longer vertical.
- Because the Bible provides us with directions to the paths of righteousness: Psalm 119:11 "I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Scripture is authoritative. It gives mandates and directives that are correct, pure and untainted with evil or error. It therefore is able to light a man's confusion and chaos, to replace his ignorance and lack of understanding and to give clear directions and insight. Psalm 16:7 "I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me". Psalm 73:24 "You will keep on guiding me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny". Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will direct your paths". Psalm 85:13 "Righteousness goes as a herald before him, preparing the way for his steps."
- Because the Bible is perfect: The words that have been written in the Bible, are perfect, whole, complete, sufficient and not lacking anything. Because of this it is able to transform, renew and restore the soul – the inner man. Within the pages of the Bible we have the precepts of God (the will of God for our lives) written down. These precepts provide us with the guidelines, principles and rules for our character and conduct.
- Because the Bible is able to produce the fear of the Lord: Through the written Word, we are able to see the very character and nature of God. It is able to enlighten our eyes and bring understanding and knowledge so that we will "fear God" (Proverbs 1:7).

- Because the Bible is able to warn and protect us: Scripture is able to warn and protect us from numerous dangers in life caused by ignorance as to what is right and what is wrong. Scripture alone is able to preserve us from temptation, evil, error, false teaching.

### **HOW CAN WE USE THE WORD OF GOD IN COUNSELING?**

Paul emphasizes the total adequacy of God's Word in 2 Tim 3:14-17 in the following manner:

*It is holy or sacred* (v.15). It is set apart from any other writing or literary production; it is unique; it is in a class all by itself. No other writing can compare with what is written in the Scriptures.

*It is able* (v.15). It has power to do things to and in people. "It is," as Jay Adams has written, "the Holy Spirit's tool for working in the minds and hearts of men and women to make them like Christ. Being peculiarly associated with the Spirit both in its composition and in its use, the Bible is powerful, able to transform our lives."<sup>11</sup>

*It is inspired by God* (v. 16). Literally, the Greek word translated "inspired" means "God-breathed." So Paul is telling us that the Bible is unique and able because its truths had their origin in God; they are not merely some man's opinions or discoveries or insights. As Peter said, "No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet 1:20-21). That is why when quoting a portion of Psalm 2—a psalm written by David—the early Christians said that the truth found in this psalm came by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David (Acts 4:24-26). To the early Christians, the words of Scripture were authoritative and sufficient because, though coming through the agency of holy men, they ultimately had their origin in God.

*It is profitable or useful* (v. 16). It has utilitarian value; it enhances life; it is profitable in every way—for time and eternity, for our relationship with God and our relationship with our fellow man, for our spiritual and emotional and mental well-being, for our marriages and families, for our goals and motivations, for guidance and direction, for comfort and challenge, for preventing and resolving our inner and interpersonal problems, for all of life.

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<sup>11</sup> Jay Adams, *How to Help People Change* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 23-24

2 Tim. 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do."

According to this scripture we note that the Word of God is to be used for:

- Doctrine: In showing the right way to live according to the Word of God
- Reproof: In revealing to the counselee the wrong behaviour, attitudes, intentions, motives etc. that they are exhibiting
- Correction: To show the counselee how to move from reacting according to the wrong behaviour, intentions, motives etc to living and acting according to God's will.
- Instructions: In revealing how a person can continue to live according to the Word of God.

There are therefore 4 important principles:

### **DOCTRINE:**

Psalm 119:130 "As your words are taught, they give light; even the simple can understand them." This teaching advises on the right path to take. Psalm 119:24 "Your decrees please me; they give me wise advice."

Whilst Jesus was ministering on earth, one of the most important functions during His early ministry was the teaching of important doctrines. For example: The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1—1), on loving your enemies (Matthew 5:38-48), on marriage etc. In the same manner, counseling should incorporate teachings of the doctrines of God.

What purpose and function does it serve in the process of changing believers so as to help them conform more closely to the Word of God? Teaching serves to accomplish two essential purposes:

- it sets parameters for counseling, including goals and practices;
- it provides the directions and information needed for counselees to know how to make changes that please God.

The Bible is the inerrant Source of truth from God concerning life and godliness, and God provided in the Bible all that one needs for life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3,4).

## **REPROOF:**

The term, "reprove" means to "rebuke: an act or expression of criticism and censure"<sup>12</sup>.

### Is Reproof Really Necessary?

Reproof must be a very important aspect of ministry for the Apostle Paul to have instructed his disciple Timothy that all Scripture is profitable for reproof. Keep in mind that Timothy was most likely a timid individual by nature and as such would have had a natural dislike for reproof. However, because of its value and necessity he would have learned how to use this skill effectively. To reprove is to "confront". Reproof is one of the key things that God has given us as a means of plowing up the fallow ground of our hearts. It is also this same tool that is used to break through the defenses of the soul so that our hearts don't become hardened and quench or grieve the Holy Spirit. As uncomfortable as many are with reproof we must realize that it is one of the most loving acts we can perform. In fact if we are unwilling to reprove and correct it is doubtful that our love and concern is really for the other person. It is much more likely that our concern is for ourselves.

### **God reproved man in the Old Testament:**

- Psalm 9:5 "You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked; you have wiped out their names forever."
- Psalm 50:21 "While you did all this, I remained silent, and you thought I didn't care. But now I will rebuke you, listing all my charges against you. "
- Psalm 105:14 "Yet he did not let anyone oppress them. He warned kings on their behalf:"
- Psalm 119:21 "You rebuke those cursed proud ones who wander from your commands."

### **The purpose of reproof:**

- To convict or show a wrong.
- To reprove rebuke or admonish.
- To expose or make manifest.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.thefreedictionary.com)

## Jesus reproved men in the New Testament:

Throughout the Gospels we can see Jesus using these different methods of reproof to bring people to a place of receiving correction and training in righteousness. With some close observation we can also see that the majority of times when Jesus used these different methods He was very loving about it. His interest was for the people and not for Himself. In other words, Jesus was compelled by His love for the people rather than fearing what He would suffer for reproofing them. The overall goal of reproof was restoration and healing.

- Luke 9:55 "But Jesus turned and rebuked them".
- Mark 8:33 "Jesus turned and looked at his disciples and then said to Peter very sternly, "Get away from me, Satan! You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."
- Mark 16:14 "Still later he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their unbelief—their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.
- Luke 9:41 ""You stubborn, faithless people," Jesus said, "how long must I be with you and put up with you? Bring him here."
- Luke 24:25 "Then Jesus said to them, "You are such foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures.
- John 6:26 "Jesus replied, "The truth is, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you saw the miraculous sign.
- John 12:7 "Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did it in preparation for my burial.
- Rev. 3:19 "I am the one who corrects and disciplines everyone I love. Be diligent and turn from your indifference.

## **We have a duty to reprove:**

For the Christian, reproofing an errant brother isn't optional—its commanded.

- Proverbs 24:25 "But blessings are showered on those who convict the guilty".
- Luke 17:3 "I am warning you! If another believer sins, rebuke him; then if he repents, forgive him."
- Ephes. 5:11 "Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, rebuke and expose them.
- 1 Tim. 5:20 "Anyone who sins should be rebuked in front of the whole church so that others will have a proper fear of God.
- 2 Tim. 4:2 "Preach the word of God. Be persistent, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.
- Titus 1:13 "This is true. So rebuke them as sternly as necessary to make them strong in the faith.
- Titus 2:15 "You must teach these things and encourage your people to do them, correcting them when necessary. You have the authority to do this, so don't let anyone ignore you or disregard what you say.

Remember that as a counselor your purpose is not to bring condemnation on the counselee by being judgmental and critical of their actions and attitudes, but rather it is through loving confrontation bring them to a place of change. We are therefore to imitate Christ whose love for the individual was the goal for rebuking a person.

## **CORRECTION:**

Correction is another word for adjustment or changing course. It means bringing correction to the sin in our lives, about moving from sin to obedience to God.

## **Correction is good for us:**

Hebrews 3:12-13 "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

The author of Hebrews said that the believers were to exhort one another so that no one would become hardened by sin's deceitfulness. The word "exhort" is often translated encourage because it has the idea of building up someone else with words. In the context of sin (as in this passage) what builds up another is to help them recognize and move away from their sin. To urge them toward holiness through correction. Correction is good for us because it is how God delivers us from our blindness to our sin and from our indifference to our sin. When other believers speak into our lives about our sin, it puts us on a path of deliverance from that sin's presence and from its damaging effects in our lives. If we are blind to our sin, we need someone who isn't blind to it to show us what they see or we'll never know there is a problem. And if we are indifferent to our sin, we need someone who is not indifferent to it to help motivate us to change. So correction is caring for one another. It means we love someone else too much to let them be deceived by sin and hardened in it. Correction is like giving someone the medicine they need to get well. Sometimes the medicine doesn't taste very good, but if it cures the disease we can bear the process.

**The counselor's attitude when bringing correction:**

2 Timothy 2:24-26 says, "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."

When bringing a word of correction, always ensure that you remember to treat the person with love, kindness, gentleness, and respect, giving them the truth of God's Word and in that way exhorting them to repentance. The attitude of your heart should not be one of pride but of humility.

Always correct with the humility of Galatians 6:1, "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted." That means we do not come with harsh condemnation or self-righteous criticism, but we come with the desire to help them out of their sin in a spirit of gentleness as a brother who is also prone to temptation.

## Guidelines when giving correction

There are five guidelines that we should use when we are giving helpful and grace-motivated correction:

- Begin by examining your own heart: Ephesians 4:29 says, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Correction must always be given so that the other person is built up by the receiving of God's grace. Before you go to someone with correction, consider why you are choosing that moment to bring your correction to this person? Is it because you are personally offended by their sin? If it is, then you are motivated more by pride than by love for that person. You're more concerned about them sinning against you than against God.
- Put to death the fear of man and say something. John 12:42-43 says this of some leaders who became believers in Jesus: "...many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God." The rulers didn't confess their faith in Jesus because they didn't want to give up the approval of the Pharisees. They were more concerned about the Pharisee's relationship with them than about the Pharisee's relationship with God. In other words, loving people's approval silences us from saying what the Lord wants said. If we see sinful attitudes and actions in a person and are afraid to draw that to their attention, then it's most likely because we want their approval more than we want their sanctification. We would rather that they continue in sin than have them think badly of us. But God calls us to love one another, and biblical correction is love because it is way for that person to become free from blindness and indifference to sin.
- Bring questions and observations, not judgments or conclusions: Psalm 139:2-4 says this about God, "... you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether." God knows our thoughts, He knows our ways, and He knows what we are going to say before we say it. And He's the only one who does! We can think a person is in sin and yet if we probed more and asked more questions we might find that we didn't see it correctly. Unless we ask questions, we don't know the thoughts and intentions of the heart, we may not have the whole story, and that's very important in understanding and identifying sin. So we ask questions and make observations.

- Remind them of the gospel: Even when Paul had much correction to bring to the Corinthians, he reminded them of the hope of the gospel and the work of God in them. He said in 1 Corinthians 1:4, "I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus." Leave them with hope. Whenever we draw attention to a person's sin, we need to leave them with the hope for sin. Sin is ugly, yes. But there is a Savior for sin. There is forgiveness. Even in this moment of correction, our hope isn't in putting this sin to death. Our hope is in the God who justifies the ungodly by faith alone in Christ alone. This isn't about your acceptance before God. This is about becoming disentangled from sin and having a life that glorifies God and brings your ultimate joy.
- Be patient if change happens slowly. 1 Thessalonians 5:14 says this, "And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all." We sometimes want the sinful behavior to be completely gone after one conversation. But we know that our own change is often slow. Persevere with that person as God has persevered with you.

## **HOW WILL THE COUNSELEE RESPOND TO CORRECTION?**

### **The wrong responses**

There are two wrong responses to correction:

- Rejection
- Despair

We resist correction or we despair when corrected whenever we hope in our own righteousness instead of in Christ's righteousness for approval before God. The person who resists correction believes he's good, and so he rejects observations of sin. The person who despairs when corrected knows they aren't good, and can't bear to be reminded of it. Both of them put their hope in being good, in meeting God's moral standards. One thinks he's met the standards and won't hear any evidence to the contrary, and the other despairs of meeting the standard and gives up hope. Both people want their own righteousness to stand on, something they can point to and say, "See, I'm doing well, therefore I have hope."

Correction is seen as a threat because it exposes their unrighteousness. Exposing sin in our lives can only be a threat if our hope is in ourselves and our own goodness rather than in Christ. That's the only reason we would fear having our sin exposed.

## **The right response is**

Psalms 141:5. "Let a righteous man strike me — it is a kindness; let him rebuke me — it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it."

The fruitful and God-intended response to correction is to receive it, as in not refuse it. David knew that the correction which comes from a brother, even if it is a rebuke – a strong warning, is a kindness from God that is not to be refused. When Nathan the prophet came to David to expose his sin David did not resist the correction but received it and then did something about it (2 Samuel 12). God has good purposes for the correction that comes through others.

### **INSTRUCTION**

To give "instruction" is to provide direction: a message describing how something is to be done. To impart knowledge or skill;

Psalms 32:8 The LORD says, "I will instruct you. I will teach you the way that you should go. I will advise you as my eyes watch over you"

Proverbs 9:9 "Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning"

### **PRACTICALLY APPLICATION**

How can you practically apply the use of the Bible in counseling?

### **DURING THE SESSION**

Firstly, you should use the Bible during the counseling session. Whilst in the counseling session and after you have understood the position of the counselee through using your listening skills and asking questions that will bring clarification, present the counselee with a portion of scripture that will show clarity to the counselee concerning what they are dealing with. Use the Bible by teaching them how to change their actions, how to react, how to make the right decision, what God thinks of them etc.

## HOMEWORK

Secondly, you should use the Bible when providing homework for the counselee. Homework is essential in helping the counselee:

- Become independent upon you
- Accelerate the change process
- Learn the principle of seeking the answer for their circumstances from the Word of God
- Be led towards a Biblical action for the problem that they are facing.

One of the biggest mistakes that can be made in the counseling session is to not provide the counselee with homework. Homework must be given at the end of every situation (preferably written down) so that what has been spoken of during the session can be worked on by the counselee until the next session or appointment. It is when homework is given to the counselee that counseling changes from being just a matter of talk to that which is application.

### **Effectiveness of homework:**

In order for homework to be effective and change the lives of the counselee, it needs to have the following characteristics:

- It needs to actively use the Bible: Scriptures not only reaches the heart of man but teaches the right thinking and behaviour, convicts of wrong, shows how to make wrong right and teaches how to live righteously in the future. Therefore use it in the homework – it should be read, meditated on and memorized.
- It consistently points counselees towards Christ-likeness, the primary goal of counseling. Col. 1:28-29 “So everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ. We warn them and teach them with all the wisdom God has given us, for we want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. I work very hard at this, as I depend on Christ's mighty power that works within me.
- It addresses the inner man: Mark 7:21-23 “For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, eagerness for lustful pleasure, envy, slander, pride, and

foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you and make you unacceptable to God."

- It addresses not only patterns of thinking but also patterns of behaviour (Eph 4:22-24). It is not enough that we stop doing what is wrong, but we need to start doing what is right as well. Homework should therefore reflect ways in which the counselee should react should the situation arise again. This should be according to the Bible which help them develop good patterns and habits of behavior.
- It views spiritual growth as a process: Spiritual growth takes time so continue to encourage them to grow daily in sanctification.
- It is specific: When you are dealing with problems and issues make sure that the homework reflects these issues specifically and not merely just grazes over the problem

#### **Ideas for homework:**

- Suggest passages of Scripture to read and meditate on. Also consider suggesting one or more memory verses.
- Suggest an action plan. For example: Praise your spouse, parent or children twice each day.
- Suggest reading a specific biblical character concerning a similar problem
- Suggest reading a chapter in a Christian book. For example: The power of a praying wife by Stormie O'Martain, Battlefield of the mind by Joyce Meyers, Finding God by Larry Crabb etc. Ensure that the book that you are suggesting that they read be read by yourself first so that you know what is in the book and that it is based on the same principles that you are using during the counseling session. Christian literature should be used secondary to the Bible.
- Suggest that they write out a list of habitual practices that they have when encountering conflicts (for example – withdrawal, offensive behaviours etc). For example:

<b>Situation:</b>	<b>Reaction</b>	<b>Proposed future reaction:</b>
	When this happened I ....	In future I will ... according to ... (scripture reference)

- Suggest that they seek reconciliation with a person that they have unforgiveness for.
- Suggest that they write down when they have an angry outburst and what precipitated it.

**ASSIGNMENT:**

During a counseling session you will be faced with different problems ranging from that which is spiritual (concerning their relationship with God), personal (how they see and feel about themselves) and relational (their relationships with friends, family etc.) For this reason it may be more difficult to prepare the right scriptures for each counseling session that you will have. In order to better prepare yourself, you will need to make your own "Counselor's Help" that you will use during your session together with your Bible.

The object of this counseling "manual" is to provide you with scripture references that you will have at the tip of your fingers to use when encouraging the counselee and when providing them with homework. To begin this process, it is required of you to start your own "Counselor's Help". Your counseling manual/book should be made up of no less than 25 topics which you will encounter whilst counseling. For example: depression, death, abortion, divorce etc. To view what is required see the below example:

**Depression – Overcome with joy!**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (Galatians 5:22 NKJV)

Rejoice always, (1 Thessalonians 5:16 NKJV)

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! (Philippians 4:4 NKJV)

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:1-4 NKJV)

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 NKJV)

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13 NKJV)

"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (John 15:11 NKJV)

But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You. (Psalms 5:11 NKJV)

You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalms 16:11 NKJV)

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. (Psalms 27:6 NKJV)

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart! (Psalms 32:11 NKJV)

And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; It shall rejoice in His salvation. (Psalms 35:9 NKJV)  
Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And on the harp I will praise You, O God, my God. (Psalms 43:4 NKJV)

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. (Psalms 51:12 NKJV)

Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance. (Psalms 89:15 NKJV)

He brought out His people with joy, His chosen ones with gladness. (Psalms 105:43 NKJV)  
Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. (Psalms 126:5 NKJV)

Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; `For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.'" Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation. (Isaiah 12:2-3 NKJV)

The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellency of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, The excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, And the thirsty land springs of water; In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, There shall be grass with reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous

beast go up on it; It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35:1-10 NKJV)

For the LORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. (Isaiah 51:3 NKJV)

Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls-- Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills. (Habakkuk 3:17-19 NKJV)

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV)

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the previous lessons we have already discussed the importance of being led by the Holy Spirit. Therefore we will merely summarize what has been said to reiterate that the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, is vital in counseling as man does not know the thought, intentions and motives of man, only God does. Therefore through the leading of the Holy Spirit, the counselor will be able to speak words that will be life changing, give a scripture that will enlighten their eyes and bring revelation to their problem and discern issues that the counselee is trying to deal with.

1 Cor. 2:12-13 "And God has actually given us his Spirit (not the world's spirit) so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. When we tell you this, we do not use words of human wisdom. We speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths."

2 Cor. 3:17-18 "Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives freedom. And all of us have had that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more."

2 Cor. 3:3-6 "Clearly, you are a letter from Christ prepared by us. It is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on stone, but on human hearts. We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. It is not that we think we can do anything of lasting value by ourselves. Our only power and success come from God. He is the one who has enabled us to represent his new covenant. This is a covenant, not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old way ends in death; in the new way, the Holy Spirit gives life."

### **How does the Holy Spirit aids in counseling?**

- He is the Divine Helper: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper" (John 14:16). The role of the Holy Spirit in the believer is described in John as a spiritual attendant whose role is to offer assistance, support, relief, advocacy, and guidance. Jesus was promising to send His disciples a Helper exactly like Himself — a compassionate, loving, and totally sufficient Paraclete.

- He is the permanent Dweller: “That He may be with you forever... He dwells with you and will be in you” (John 14:16,17). The Lord also promised that the Helper from the Father would take up permanent, uninterrupted residence within His disciples. That was a New Covenant promise foretold in Ezekiel 37:14: “And I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life.” The Holy Spirit wouldn’t merely be present with them; the greater truth was that He would be resident within them permanently. According to Romans 8:9, the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the mark of all who are truly born again: “You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” Thus as a believer you enjoy the permanent, continuing presence of the Holy Spirit living within. His help — all the resources of God Himself — is always available.
- He is the truth Teacher: “The Spirit of truth: (John 14:17). It is noteworthy that Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of truth.” As God, He is the essence of truth; as a Paraclete, He is the One who guides us into truth. That’s why apart from Him, it is impossible for sinful human beings to know or understand any spiritual truth. Paul wrote, “To us God revealed [His wisdom] through the Spirit... that we might know the things freely given to us by God... [things which] a natural man does not accept... for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised”. (1 Cor. 2:10, 12, 14). Much of the Holy Spirit’s ministry to you as a believer involves teaching you (John 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 John 2:20, 27); guiding you into the truth of Christ (John 16:13-14); and illuminating the truth for you (1 Cor. 2:12). These functions are essential in the counseling session.

Nouthetic counseling recognizes the essential importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We believe that no man, no matter how godly or educated, is capable of giving God-glorifying counsel without the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God uses the Scriptures as His authority (not the counselor’s opinions, experience, or education). The Spirit of God opens the heart to comprehend the Scriptures (Jn. 16:7-11) and also convinces us that it is true (Jn. 14:16-17). He is the One who guides us in making application of the Scriptures in life (Jn. 16:13; Rom. 8:26-27). His goal is to see Jesus Christ glorified through counseling (Jn. 16:14). Without His ministry, the Bible will appear to be “ink on paper”. You will never understand it, apply it or see God’s glory without the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10-14). This is why we view the Holy Spirit as being of more importance than the counselor himself.

## **THE POWER OF PRAYER**

Prayer is to take central place during the counseling process. Prayer is the power of God which is able to transform and change a person's life. Both the counselor and the counselee should be involved in prayer during the counseling session.

### **PRAYER AND THE COUNSELOR**

#### **At the beginning of the session**

At the beginning of the session it is the responsibility of the counselor to pray. For example:

- For the Holy Spirit to work in the heart of the person being counseled.
- For the salvation of the counselee. 1 Tim. 2:1-4 "I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. As you make your requests, plead for God's mercy upon them, and give thanks. Pray this way for kings and all others who are in authority, so that we can live in peace and quietness, in godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, for he wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth."
- For the peace of God to rule and reign so that the devil will not have any influence in bringing torment, stress etc (Philippians 4:6-5).
- For the Word of God to become alive so that change can be effected. Acts 4:29 "And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give your servants great boldness in their preaching.
- For the counselee to know the power of God in their lives. For a spiritual awakening and a restoration of any broken fellowship with God.
- For the counselee to take his eyes off the counselor and to place it upon God, the healer of the broken hearted
- For the counselor to have the ability to listen and understand what the counselee is trying to say
- For the leading of the Holy Spirit and for His gifting to be operational in his life (1 Corinthians 12).

- For spiritual wisdom and understanding: Ephes. 1:17 “asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. Col. 1:9 “So we have continued praying for you ever since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you a complete understanding of what he wants to do in your lives, and we ask him to make you wise with spiritual wisdom.

**At the end of the session:**

At the end of the session, the counselor will pray for the following:

- To thank God for the work that He has begun in the heart of the counselee
- To prayer into the specific situation that has been dealt with. To prayer scripture over the counselee's life. This will mean the use of the scriptures that have discussed and taught throughout the counseling session.
- To prayer that the will of God will be done in their lives so that they will make decisions that are only based upon His will and not their own
- To prayer for the intervention of God in a particular situation. In Acts chapter 12: 1-11, we read a great story of how God changed the course of history when His people prayed. There are two things that you should notice in this passage: Firstly, the power of Satan: Jesus says in John 10:10, “The thief [Satan] comes only to steal and kill and destroy.” 1 Peter 5:8 says, “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” Secondly, the power of prayer: As Christians, we aren't helpless against Satan's attacks. We're not helpless because we have a weapon, prayer. We see in Acts 12 that the first-century Christians prayed for Peter's release and God intervened, Peter was set free, and the gospel of Christ continued to be preached. That's the power of prayer at work! Ephesians 6:12 says, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” Prayer lays hold upon God and influences Him to work. This is the meaning of prayer as it concerns God. Prayer puts God to work in all things prayed for. While man in his weakness and poverty waits, trusts and prays, God undertakes the work. The power of prayer should not be underestimated. James 5:16-18 declares, "...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops." God most definitely listens to prayers, answers prayers, and moves in response to prayers. Jesus

taught, "...I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20). 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 tells us, "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ"

- To prayer for physical and spiritual healing: In James 5:14-16, James teaches on the benefits of prayer. In these verses, James mentions two types of people who receive healing. Sick people (physical) and people who confess their sins (spiritual) can receive healing through prayer. God heals us both physically and spiritually. The story of King David provides an excellent example of how prayer can bring both physical and spiritual healing. When David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed in battle (Psalm 32:3-4) David was miserable, depressed and guilt ridden. But after he had confessed (Psalm 32:5) his guilt was removed, his burdens were lifted and he experienced both physical and spiritual healing.

### **PRAYER AND THE COUNSELEE:**

The counselee should be involved in prayer time at the end of every session. Their responsibility in prayer will be to:

- Ask God to revive their relationship with Him. Allow them to pray for comfort and for emotional cleansing. David prayed, Psalm 51:10-12 "Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a right spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me again the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you."
- Ask God for forgiveness of a specific sin. Repentance is the beginning of change and transformation. Only once repentance has taken place will positive steps of change be made possible. Only through repentance will physical signs of problems be removed. For example: stress, guilt, shame, depression etc. Psalm 51:7 "Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow."
- Ask God to help them to become dependent upon Him.
- Ask God to help them move from their own irrational reactions to certain situation towards that which is biblical
- Ask God to help them to apply the scriptures in their lives

- Repeat a prayer that the counselor prays. This may be a prayer of repentance, a prayer of encouragement or a prayer of commitment.
- To declare certain scriptures over their own life that they learnt during the counseling session
- To seek the will of God: Prayer is directly seeking and submitting to God's will. Prayer is not seeking our will. Therefore the counselee must surrender to God through prayer.
- To be an overcomer: While Jesus was awaiting His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, He asked His disciples to keep watch for His Betrayers. However, His disciples kept falling asleep. So Jesus in Matthew 26:41, told His disciples to watch and pray in order to avoid temptation. When we are tempted to sin, we focus on the pleasure of the sin. We think about how that sin is going to satisfy our physical craving. However, when we stop to pray, we begin to focus on God and not on the sin. Our desire is diverted away from sin and towards God. Prayer helps us defeat temptation by diverting our attention back towards God and His desires.
- To forgive those who have hurt them (Matthew 6:12-14, 18:21-35).

### **Teach them the principal of continual prayer: "prayer without ceasing"**

Prayer is a lifestyle. It is communication with the Father. It plays an essential part in receiving inner healing and emotional health. Therefore not only is it important that the counselor discuss the counselee's problems and a solution to these problems, but it is also necessary that the counselee teaches and encourages them to continue in prayer regardless of how they feel. Often times people do not pray because they feel that their prayers will not be answered. Encourage them in the truth. Teach them what the Bible says about prayer.

### **Christian prayer is NOT**

- to give God information (Matt. 6:8)
- telling God what to do (Rom. 11:34)
- asking God to engineer a situation to the end we desire.
- something we do to please or appease God (Jn. 19:30)
- a meritorious performance God expects of us; a duty or obligation of obedience.
- an exercise to make us better, stronger, or more "spiritual"

- for therapeutic psychological adjustment, "good feelings"
- soliciting more "blessings" or "benefits" from God
- a superstitious, mystical or magical trance
- demanding our rights before God
- persistence and shameless haranguing until we get what we want
- a mechanical ritual or rote formulas
- an external religious action, pretentious and ostentatious (Matt. 6:5,6)
- verbosity of meaningless repetition (Matt. 6:7)
- a religious activity executed "on command" - litanies, rosaries, etc.
- prescribed by place, time or procedure

### **Why then do we pray?**

- Prayer establishes a relationship with God: Prayer is recognizing who God is and offering Him glory, honor, and adoration. Examples of this are found throughout the Bible, especially in the Psalms. Jesus illustrates this in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13.
- Prayer is vital to maintaining our relationship with Him. To illustrate, two friends who are in constant communion learn about each other, do things together, and share problems with each other. Thus, the key element of prayer is that it establishes a relationship with God. Abraham experienced this in Genesis 18:16-33. Prayer is essential to fellowship with God. Not just to have our prayers answered by God, nor just because the Scriptures tell us to, though that is reason enough. God is the Father of the entire human race, and God cares for us. (1 Peter 5:7) This means the child of God can pray, ask, and cast all his care upon God, his Father. Paul states in Romans 8:15, when we are His children, adopted into His family, we can begin calling him, "Father, dear Father."
- Prayer was evidenced in the life of Jesus: Why pray? Jesus is a prime example of a life lived by prayer that offers relevance, purpose, answers, and most of all, a relationship with God the Father. Jesus prayed wholeheartedly for every move He made, asking God for guidance, leading, and direction. He prayed prayers of thanks, prayers for healing, prayers for His disciples, and prayers for believers -- present and future. He constantly went before God in prayer to determine God's will and direction, resist temptation, ask for courage, discover what His Father in heaven would do, offer thanksgiving, pray for others, etc.
- Prayer is seeking direction from God. In Matthew 7:7-11, Jesus talks about asking, seeking, and knocking, "For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks." Jesus encourages us to ask God for things. "If you sinful people know how to give

good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him?"

- The Apostles reflected Jesus' attitude toward prayer and encouraged and commended prayer in their writings. In Philippians 4:6, Paul tells believers to pray for everything with thanksgiving. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul writes, "Keep on praying." Prayer, for Paul, is the ultimate lifeline for the believer to God. James 1:5-7 says, "If you need wisdom -- if you want to know what God wants you to do -- ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord."

## **PART FOUR: ANALYSIING THE PROBLEM**

### **THE EXISTENCE OF GOD**

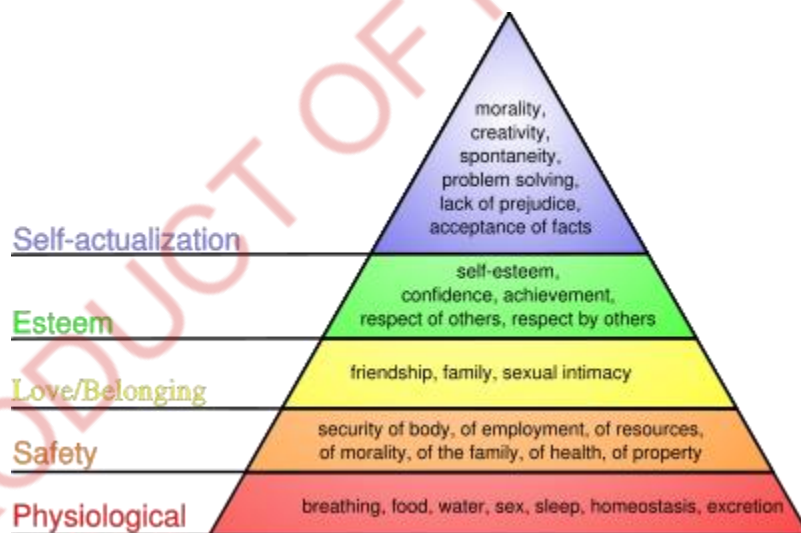
There is a God before whom we live and before whom we must give account of ourselves. God loves sinners while they are yet morally helpless, sinning, indifferent to Him and even agnostics (Rom 5:8, 10, 1 Tim 1:15, Eph 2:1-3). It is because of the undeserved love of God towards the sinners that the emotionally distressed person can find healing, peace and restoration. Divine resources have been made available to man because of the love that God has for man. God has the ability to enlighten, convict, regenerate and transform man no matter what the problem is that he is facing. Because of the free gift of Christ man can be renewed and can become a new creature in Christ (2 Cor 5:17, Eph 2:10, John 6:37, 1 John 3:1, 2 Cor 2:9)

### **MAN'S NEEDS**

Man was created in the image of God. He is a creature who is designed by a personal God. He was created both material and non material. He was created to bring pleasure to God (2 Cor 10:31, Rev 4:11). When man was created he was created in a state of innocence (Gen 1:31).

#### **Psychology viewpoint:**

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, there are five basic needs of man:



13 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow's\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow's_hierarchy_of_needs))

## Christian viewpoint:

According to the Christian counselor, the needs that are expressed in Maslow's hierarchy can be divided into two areas:

**The natural realm:** The first two needs, physiological and safety, are two needs that are fulfilled in the natural realm. They deal with having food to eat, having a home to keep you warm and dry, having a job etc.

**The emotional and soul realm:** The last three needs of love/belonging, esteem and self-actualization deal with the emotional and soul realm. These are the needs that are considered during the counseling session.

## PERSONAL WORTH

The most basic need that a person has in the soul realm is that of a sense of personal worth, an acceptance of oneself as a whole and real person. We know that we were created with personal worth because we were

- Created in the image of God
- Loved with an everlasting love
- Bought with a price

If we were not considered as having personal worth by God then Jesus would not have been willing to give His precious life for us. Therefore when we understand the magnitude of these three statements our need for personal worth will be filled and we will be a whole person through Christ.

How can we achieve personal worth in our lives? Personal worth comes from two main areas:

**Significance:** A person who feels that he has significance is a person who has purpose, importance, adequacy for a job, meaningfulness and impact. This is a person who has a purpose for living which will give a real and lasting impact on the world and a purpose which "I am completely adequate to accomplish".

When God created man in the Garden of Eden, He fulfilled their need of "significance" by giving them purpose and adequacy to fulfill the task. Genesis 1:28-30 "God blessed them and told them, "Multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters over the fish and birds and all the animals." And God said, "Look! I have given you the seed-bearing plants throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. And I have given all the grasses and other green plants to the animals and birds for their food." And so it was."

**Security:** The need for security in the soul realm is different to that which is expressed by Maslow as "safety". This security is fulfilled when an individual feels love. This love is to be expressed unconditionally and consistently. When Adam and Eve were created in the Garden of Eden, the love need that they had was fulfilled by firstly, God and secondly by their spouse. However of these two relationships, the most important fulfillment of this "security need" was fulfilled by their relationship with God. They were loved and secure because they had fellowship with God. Their love need was fulfilled because they walked with God and related with Him in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8).

The primary route to achieving personal worth for a man and a woman are different. Although both needing the same groups, significance and security, for the man the primary need route to receiving self worth will be in significance whereas for a woman this primary need route will be found in security.

Therefore before the Fall of Adam and Eve we note that they were both significant and secure. From the time of the creation, both of their needs were fully met within a relationship that they had with God. A relationship that was unmarred and undefiled by anything that was evil. As long as these two remained in this relationship, they did not experience emotional and spiritual problems. There was therefore no need for counseling, no need to "fix" areas of abuse, depression, rejection etc. So where and when did things change? Where did problems start to effect man and why did this occur?

### **THE ROOT OF ALL PROBLEMS**

Emotional, spiritual, relational and physical problems came as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3). When man lost their fellowship with God, and when he choose to sin, the feelings of personal worth, significance and security were shattered. Fulfillment which was once found as a result of fellowship with God was now marred by sin. What were the consequences of this sin?

### **IN RELATION TO GOD**

**A marred relationship with God:** Sin has its most significant result in its effect upon the sinner's relation to God. Sin is primarily against God. The lost son confessed, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." (Luke 15) Although David had committed adultery and murder, he acknowledged, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Psa. 51:4).

Sin separates man from God. God in His holiness cannot approve sin. Because of its anti-God nature, sin naturally separates the sinner from God. Sin is a barrier, a blockade, a black iron curtain thrown across the path of fellowship between man and God.

In consequence of their sin Adam and Eve were separated from the Tree of Life, their Edenic home, and God's blessed fellowship. They had no vital contact with God. They were "dead in sin." Man became antagonistic against God. Romans 8:7 "For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will." Isaiah 53:6 "All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the guilt and sins of us all." Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, man was no longer in a normal condition, in the condition that he had been created in. He had missed the mark and was now born into sin. Romans 1:21 "Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused."

**Sin results in guilt and shame:** The sinner is responsible and chargeable before God. Sin calls forth God's disapproval and condemnation. The sinner deserves punishment and must satisfy the requirements of God's justice by paying the penalty of sin. Sin results in the sinner becoming a debtor, a criminal, an enemy, a slave, defiled and unholy, dead, and a poor stranger.

Guilt is God's alarm within the mind of man telling him that something needs to be changed (Ps 32, Ps 51). Guilt is a feeling of regret about what one has done or not done. Guilt is the uncomfortable or painful feeling that results from doing something that violates or breaks a personal standard or value, or from hurting another person, or even from breaking an agreement or a law. Guilt thus concerns one's behavior, feeling bad about what one has done, or about what one didn't do that one was supposed to have done. Like most feelings, guilt can be a useful emotion. Guilt tells one that one's conscience is functioning. People who never experience guilt or remorse after transgressions are classically said to have an anti-social personality disorder. Guilt that is useful and constructive is considered to be 'healthy guilt'. Its result is to "make a change".

If this guilt does not get dealt with, it results in shame. "My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear". (Psalm 38:4) "I am troubled by my sin". (Psalm 38:18). Shame is the feeling of being unworthy, inadequate, or defective, expressed in the belief that: "There's something wrong with me." It is a feeling of remorse about one's worth as a person. The self, more than one's behavior, becomes the target of attack. Shame is often disguised as if it were

some other feeling or action and then projected onto other people. Some of these feelings and actions that may mask shame are:

- Anger
- Contempt
- Neglect
- Withdrawal
- Resentment
- Attack
- Abandonment
- Rage
- Control
- Disappointment
- Blame
- Perfectionism
- Compulsive Behavior

Shame, is the only emotion that attacks the self by making one believe that one is inherently defective and unlovable. This crippling emotion destroys self-confidence and prevents one from achieving or enjoying success. When shame pervades one's day-to-day existence, one is torn between one's need to empower and the need to preserve one's relationships.

**Spiritual death and destruction:** "The wages of sin, is death" (Rom. 6:23). Adam was warned, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Adam the sinner was told, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). Sinners deserve death. Paul said, "They which commit such things are worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32). Because all men sinned, death passed upon all men. (Rom. 5:12.) The results of sin must be death, the opposite of life, because sin is anti-God and God is life. When man sinned death was a result. Ephes. 2:1 "Once you were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins."

### **WITHIN THE SINNER**

Sin has tragic results within the sinner himself. Severed from God, the sinner exists in an abnormal state. He is incomplete. Life is filled with emptiness. Under the rule of self, the sinner's normal, God-given instincts of self-preservation, self-expression, hunger, love, and self-improvement are twisted and perverted. To sin may be natural for the sinner, but sin itself is abnormal. It is contrary to the way that man was intended to be. Man is so made that he is incomplete apart from God. Man finds heart satisfaction, life sufficiency, and completion of personality

only through his relationship with God. Therefore when sin entered the world man became:

**Selfish:** The essence of sin is selfishness. Sin equals self *versus* God and self *apart from* God. Sin is the affirmation of self in antagonism to God's authority and contrary to His law. 2 Cor. 5:15 "He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live to please themselves. Instead, they will live to please Christ, who died and was raised for them". Man sins because he is self-centered instead of God-centered. Self within man usurps God's position of authority. Man's personality is ruled by self, instead of by God. In the center of the word *sin* is the word *I*. (Count the personal pronouns (I, my me) in the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:15-21) and the parable of the elder brother (Luke 15:25-32). That which produces sin within man is the human self-existing apart from God, independent of God's authority, and in antagonism to Him.

**Man's heart became deceitful:** Jeremiah 17:9 "The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Psalm 58:3 "These wicked people are born sinners; even from birth they have lied and gone their own way."

**Man's understanding was darkened:** 1 Cor. 2:14 "But people who aren't Christians can't understand these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them because only those who have the Spirit can understand what the Spirit means." 2 Cor. 4:3-4 "If the Good News we preach is veiled from anyone, it is a sign that they are perishing. Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe, so they are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News that is shining upon them. They don't understand the message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God". Ephes. 4:18 "Their closed minds are full of darkness; they are far away from the life of God because they have shut their minds and hardened their hearts against him".

**Man's imagination became evil:** Genesis 6:5 "Now the LORD observed the extent of the people's wickedness, and he saw that all their thoughts were consistently and totally evil." An imagination is an intention, thought or plan.

**Man's conscience became defective:** Ephes. 4:19 "They don't care anymore about right and wrong, and they have given themselves over to immoral ways. Their lives are filled with all kinds of impurity and greed."

**Man's nature changed to that which was sinful:** This sinful nature became the basic cause of all emotional distress and sinful behaviour and actions (Prov 28:13, Rom 1, 2, 3)

## **THE HOPE OF COUNSELING**

We can conclude that the effect of sin is separation:

- Separation from God which resulted in spiritual problems
- Separation from others which resulted in social and inter-relational problems
- Separation from nature which resulted in ecological and physical problems
- Separation from himself which resulted in psychological problems

However we have been offered salvation!

**Salvation From the Penalty of Sin:** Through His sacrificial death, Jesus has saved us from the penalty of sin. He paid the wages of sin for us. He removed our guilt and condemnation in relation to God. When the sinner accepts the sacrifice of Christ through conversion, he is saved from the penalty of sin. He has, therefore, now no condemnation; he is justified before God.

**Salvation from the Power of Sin.** When Christ dwells in our lives through His power, He progressively saves us from the power of sin. The power of Christ counterbalances the power of self, the carnal mind. By walking in the Spirit, the believer does not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16.) Only the power of Christ can liberate from the power of sin. As one surrenders to Christ's transforming power and lives in obedience to Him as Lord, he is progressively saved from the power of sin.

## **FINDING FULFILLMENT IN GOD**

In order for a person to be well adjusted, that person must have found their true security (purpose) and love in Christ.

How does God meet each of the needs that man has:

- Physical needs: Matthew 6:33 "and he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern."
- Our needs of security for tomorrow: Matthew 6:34 ""So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today. Philip. 4:6 "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done."

Philip. 4:19 "And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus."

- Love need (security): Romans 8:35 "Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or are hungry or cold or in danger or threatened with death? Romans 8:39 "Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 5:8 "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.
- Significance needs: Philip. 1:21 "For to me, living is for Christ, and dying is even better. Ephes. 2:10 "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Where can significance be found: In knowing who you are in Christ

Where can security be found: In knowing and accepting the unconditional love of God

### FINDING FULFILLMENT APART FROM GOD

However when we choose (even as Christians) to meet our needs other than in Christ, problems will arise. No one other than God is able to meet all our needs as this is the way that we have been created. Therefore when we expect another person to fulfill our needs of significance, love, security etc, then we will be faced with a situation of "unfulfillment". When we do not feel significant and loved, we will begin to use man made techniques to defend ourselves from feelings of insignificance and insecurity and therefore will pursue irresponsible habits and living. This continuous pattern of wrong living (for example – withdrawal, rejection, anger, violence etc) will develop into a wrong philosophy of living.

**Wrong motivations → wrong behaviour → wrong feelings**

## HAVING THE WRONG MOTIVATIONS:

Motives are needs or desires that cause us to act. Motivations can be both external and internal. External; when you respond to the wants and needs of others, parents, children, friends, society, teachers. Internal; when you decide what it is that you want to have happen. Motivation is the combination of a person's desire and energy directed at achieving a goal. It is the cause of action.

"The direction which I am motivated to follow in an effort to meet my needs depends neither on the needs nor the motivational energy but rather on what I think will meet those needs" 14

If we believe that God is the One who will meet our needs then we will be motivated to act upon that belief. However when we feel that our source of satisfaction is found in other things then we will become motivated in the direction of our beliefs.

**What motivated Eve in the Garden of Eden?** Self. Eve wanted to have power and control of her life and her destiny apart from God. She believed that her satisfaction could come in her meeting her own needs by the lust of the flesh.

Motivation depends on your state of need. When you have a need, for example a need of unconditional love, you will become motivated to fulfill that need in whatever manner that you can find.

### Examples of wrong motivation:

"I will be significant if ...."

- I am rich
- I am top of the class
- I am perfect
- My children are well behaved
- I am part of an exclusive group

"I will be secure if ..."

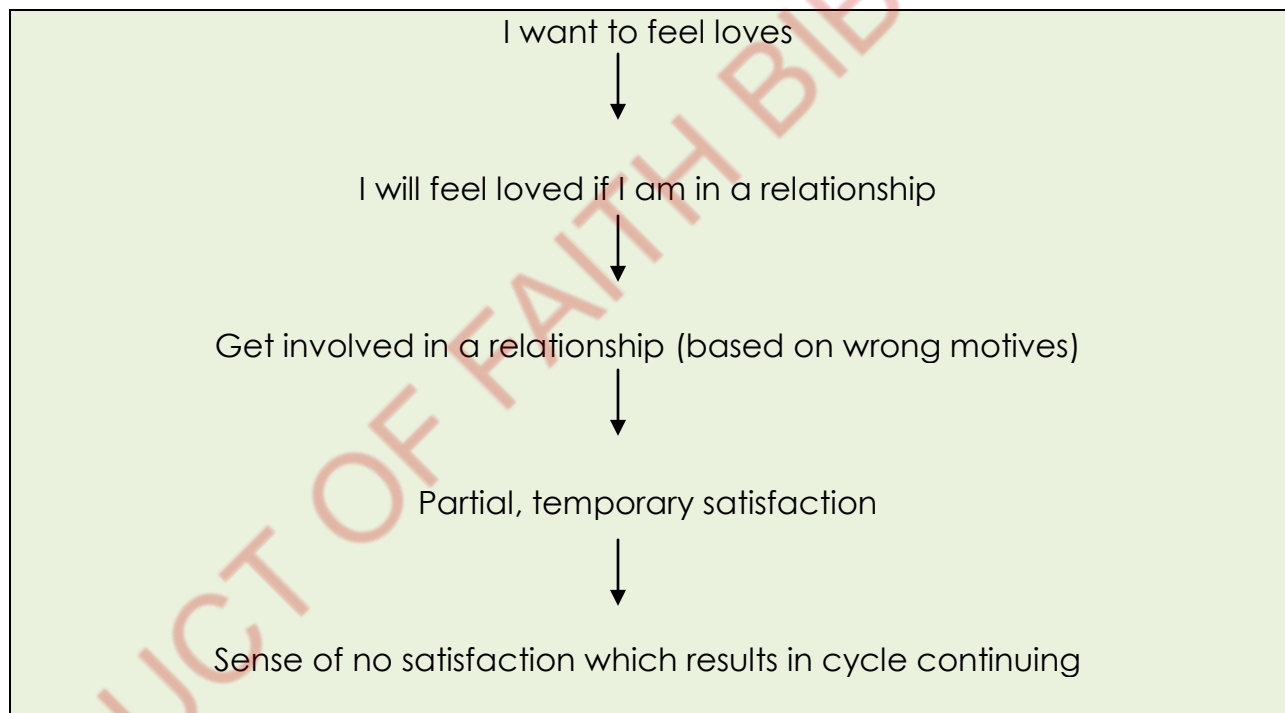
- I have a loving husband
- Everyone loves and accepts me
- I am not rejected

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## HAVING THE WRONG BEHAVIOUR:

When you do not have the right motivation, you will behave in a specific manner that will be contrary to the Bible. In order to understand any action it is vital that you begin to understand the need that is motivating the behaviour. There is a need, you believe that you know how to meet that need and therefore you take certain steps to meet that need. All behaviour that you do or do not act out is motivated. It all makes sense, even if it is a result of wrong, sinful thought patterns. For example: a woman who desires to “feel” loved might become motivated to “find” that love. She will begin to set in her minds ways in which she can satisfy this need. For example: through promiscuous relationships. Therefore when she experiences feelings of “not being loved”, she becomes motivated to satisfy this need by getting involved in wrong relationships. She therefore acts on the motivation that is in her heart. However when she is in the relationship her satisfaction of being loved is usually short lived and therefore results in wrong feelings and thoughts about herself.



## **HAVING THE WRONG FEELINGS:**

When the goal of meeting that need is not met because you have tried to meet it apart from God, you then experience negative emotions. For example: "I am not worthy to be loved", "I am not good enough" etc. These negative emotions then cause you to act in a self protecting manner. For example – withdrawal. The goal in doing this is to ensure that you will be able to minimize the negative feelings of insecurity and insignificance in the future. Therefore the mind will say, "If I do not try and pursue a relationship, I will not feel ..." It therefore becomes easier to withdraw.

We are the sum of what we encountered in life and our reactions to these events. Being conditioned by life's experiences, we are prone to react to life impulsively and instinctively rather than to respond on the basis of considered judgment. Such actions reveal a man's inner life - his focus - and who and what determines his peace and joy (1 John 2:3-6 ; Matt. 5:44 ; Gal. 5:19-21 ; Col. 3:5-9). Our usual focus is on what others have done or failed to do. As we maintain a self defensive and self protective posture, we are inclined to judge, to condemn, to criticize, to blame shift, and similar reactions. This self focus is a breeding ground for anger, frustration, despair, bitterness, self-pity, and the like - a life of feelings. A feeling-oriented life is a fertile area in which Satan operates and upon which he feeds (Gen. 4:7).

## **PART FIVE: PRESENTING THE SOLUTION**

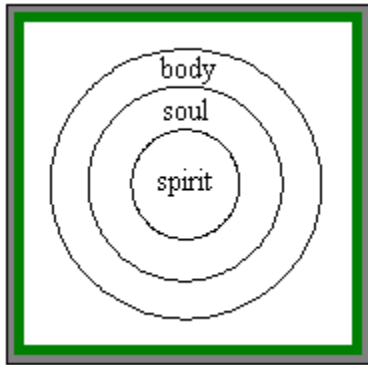
There is no means by which we are able to escape the pain and the problems that are found within this world. Therefore the solution to any problem faced in counseling is not in escape but rather it is how to deal with the situation so that the counselee becomes a better person. The solution then is to present biblical principles which the individual will be able to use that will enable them to cope with the problem that they are facing with victory! Not being defeated but rather standing upon the promises of God and in His victory. Being more than a conqueror in Christ.

If we are to experience true happiness (needs being met), we must desire above all else to become more like the Lord, to live in subjection to the Father's will as He did. Many people when they are going through a problem do not place too much emphasis on being more Christ like, but rather their focus is on how they can remove the problem that they are experiencing. However, the overriding goal in counseling is always to ensure that the person is going to respond biblically to each and every problem. The Bible teaches us that if we are willing to abide obediently in the truth and become more like God, the by product will be eventual happiness.

When we are trying to deal with our problems, we usually find that we react in one of two ways (natural reaction):

- We will move around our problems: This means that we will try and detach ourselves from the painful realities that we are facing both within the world and within us. We deny that they exist. This is usually done by filling each moment with tasks so that we do not feel the pain. For example a work alcoholic, drug addict, drink etc.
- We will become absorbed in our problems: When we try and do this we become so bogged down with our problems that we find ourselves in depression, loneliness, low self esteem etc. This causes a person to become too self absorbed.

Through counseling it is therefore imperative that the counselor teaches a third means of dealing with problems. A method that is not natural to us, as in that it comes easy to us, but it is a method that is based on the Bible. This model looks at the whole person.



The Bible speaks of the whole person as being spirit, soul, and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The spirit pertains to the spiritual part of man and involves a relationship with God. The soul pertains to the psychological and social aspects and involves the mind, will, and emotions. The body pertains to the physical part and involves the senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling.

Whole Person Counseling is based upon the concept that these three parts of man (spirit, soul, and body) have a profound influence, one upon the other. What we believe and what we think has an enormous effect upon our mental and emotional stability, our physical health, our relationships with others, and our overall degree of success in life. Therefore in counseling we need to look at the relationship between each of the parts of man, recognizing that counseling must deal with the Whole Person in order to have a positive, lasting effect upon one's life.

In counseling it is therefore important that changes occur as follows:

**Previously:**

Wrong motivations → wrong behaviour → wrong feelings

**Goal of counseling:**

Biblical motivations → Biblical behaviour → Biblical feelings

This method is the biblical model that follows the following three steps:

1. Changing motivation by finding God (spiritual aspect)
2. Changing behaviour by living by Biblical principles
3. Implementing change in their lives

The result of which will be - biblical feelings. Feelings of joy instead of depression. A feeling of being loved instead of being rejected. Feelings of hope instead of despair etc.

## **STEP ONE: HELP THE COUNSELEE TO FIND GOD**

Hebrews 11:6 "So, you see, it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that there is a God and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him."

Matthew 11:28 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

As we noted before in part 4, we see that we can either meet our needs (physical, emotional and spiritual) with God or without him. Most times, even as Christians, we choose control of a situation (like Eve) rather than allow God to meet our needs in the manner in which He has designed. Why? Because God's way always seems more unnatural than man's. Therefore, we need to realize that before we can offer any emotional solution to a person who is suffering emotionally, we need to bring them to a place where they need to analyze their relationship with God.

### **Questions to ask counselee:**

- Are you a Christian? Ask them about their conversion experience.
- How is your relationship with God? If you were to score your relationship from 0 – 10 what would you score be? Why?
- How is your prayer life? Do you enjoy spending time with God?
- What five words would you use to describe God in your life right now?
- Do you believe that you have a good "image" of God in your life?
- Is your image of God biblical?

Our priority in finding solutions for our problems should be in finding God. It is when we find God, that we will find every other solution. This means that we lay aside our problems and we focus on His character and we begin to learn about Him. We need to pursue God in our lives first and then all other things that we require and desire will be added to us (Matthew 6:33). This means that I need to lay aside "me focused" and become God focused. Instead of trying to find answers to all the questions that I have and the pain that I am suffering I need to grasp a hold of Him.

Larry Crabb said, "Finding God in this life does not mean building a house in a land of no storms; rather it means building a house that no storm can destroy" 15.

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**Habakkuk 3:17-19** "Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation. The Sovereign LORD is my strength! He will make me as surefooted as a deer and bring me safely over the mountains."

How do we come to God? We need to come on His terms. Jeremiah 29:13-14 "If you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you," says the LORD. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and bring you home again to your own land." Learn from the example of Enoch. Enoch walked with God (Gen 5:18-24). Amos 3:3 "Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?"

## **REPENTANCE**

We need to walk in the same direction that He is walking in. Usually during counseling you will find that the counselee is not walking in the same direction as God therefore in order to do a 180 degree turn, the person will need to repent. Repentance is an essential theme in Scripture. The words "repent", "repents", "repented", and "repentance" appear over 70 times in the Bible.

- Repentance was the message that Jesus went about proclaiming: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 3:2).
- Repentance was the message that the apostles preached on the first day of Pentecost: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

### **Definition:**

#### **What biblical repentance is not ...**

- Repentance is not mere human reformation: Men have the ability to reform their own lives in some sense. It is not uncommon for men who have gotten into trouble to come to their senses and to change their ways. Drunkards have stopped drinking; wife beaters have ceased from their violence; thieves have become honest citizens; harlots have turned from a life of infamy. This in itself is not biblical repentance. First of all, reformation is man-centered and this-world-centered; whereas repentance is God-centered and eternity-centered. The man who merely reforms has his eyes on the people he has offended and the consequences of his actions in his present life. The gospel,

on the other hand, calls for “repentance toward God...” (Acts 20:21). The Prodigal Son’s repentance was demonstrated by his change of attitude toward God as well as toward his father. “I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee” (Luke 15:18). Furthermore, reformation is problem-centered, whereas repentance is sin-centered. The man who reforms his life looks upon his actions as problems and faults, but not as wicked sin against a holy God. Those who repent, on the other hand, confess that they have sinned against God. They do not soft-peddle their sin. This is why it is crucial that people be taught plainly what sin is from the Bible. To tell people that they have sinned is not enough, because the sinner does not naturally think of himself as truly evil. He will admit that he has faults, problems, weaknesses, lack of self-esteem, etc., but this is not the same as admitting that he is a wicked and undone sinner before God.

- Repentance is not mere remorse for wrong actions: The Bible tells us that men can be remorseful about their actions without exercising genuine repentance unto salvation. This is described as the “sorrow of the world” in 2 Cor. 7:10. King Saul is the prime Old Testament example. He was sorry that he got caught in various sinful acts, but he did not demonstrate repentance because his actions did not change (1 Sam. 15:24; 24:17; 26:21). Judas is the New Testament example of a man who was remorseful but did not repent toward God (Matt. 27:3-4). Like reformation, remorse is man-centered rather than God-centered. Those who repent change their mind about their relationship with God and this results in a change in the way they live. Judas regretted his actions, but he did not turn to God.
- Repentance is not mere confession of or acknowledgement of sin: Repentance is also not mere acknowledgement of sin. Pharaoh did this, but he did not repent toward God and his actions did not change (Exodus 9:27).
- Repentance is not merely changing from unbelief to belief: Biblical repentance as preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostles, involved a change of mind toward God and sin. Note the following summary of Paul’s gospel message: “But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.” (Acts 26:20). The gospel message preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost and by Paul after Pentecost required repentance and defined that as a turning to God from evil works. Biblical repentance is a change of mind toward God and sin that results in a change of life.

## What Is Repentance?

Repentance is the process by which humans set aside or overcome sins by changing hearts, attitudes, and actions that are out of harmony with God's teachings, thereby conforming their lives more completely to His will.

A Survey of the Bible's teaching on repentance provides us with a definition of repentance:

- Repentance is turning: Exodus 13:17. "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." God led Israel through the wilderness rather than through the land of the Philistines 'lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.' God knew that their change of mind would result in a change of action. In this instance, a change of mind without the resulting change of action would have been meaningless.
- Repentance is acknowledging wickedness and turning to God with a whole heart: 1 Kings 8:47-48. "Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, we have sinned and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And so return unto thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name."
- Repentance is a change in attitude, action and life: Matthew 9:13. "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus defined repentance as a sinner changing his attitude to sin. Matthew 11:20-21. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Christ defined repentance as a dramatic change in one's attitude toward God and His Word. He said this change of mind is evidenced by a change in action. Matthew 21:28-29. "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went." The son's repentance was witnessed by his change of mind and his obedience. A

mere change of mind without a change in action would not have satisfied the father's command. Luke 19:1-10. "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Zacchaeus's repentance was a change of mind that resulted in a dramatic change of life. The evidence of his repentance was that he gave half his goods to the poor and restored five-fold that which he had stolen through his tax collecting business.

"Repentance has been described as 'a change of mind God ward that leads to a judgment of self and one's acts' (1 Kings 8:47; Ezekiel 14:6; Matt. 3:2; 9:13; Luke 15:7; Ac. 20:21; 2 Co. 7:9,10). This would not be possible but for the thought of mercy in God. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Ro. 2:4)" <sup>16</sup>

"Repentance means a return to obedience and to the performance of God's will after a period of rebellion or neglect of duty; fear for the terrible consequences of sin, and the love of God for His mercy and goodness, being the constraining causes; perfect love in the end 'casting out fear'" <sup>17</sup>

"Repentance is essentially a change of mind, taking the word in a broad sense. It has, however, three aspects, an intellectual, an emotional, and a volitional aspect. ... The volitional element implies a change of will and disposition. This is the inward turning from sin" <sup>18</sup>

### **ILLUSTRATIONS OF REPENTANCE IN THE BIBLE**

- The Prodigal Son coming to himself, confessing his sin against God and his father, and returning home. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (Luke. 15:17-20).

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<sup>16</sup> Concise Bible Dictionary, circa 1900

<sup>17</sup> John Henry Blunt, Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology, 1903.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Thiessen, Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology, 1949.

- The Thessalonians turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God. “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thess. 1:9).
- Zaccheus turning from corruption to uprightness. “And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham” (Luke. 19:8,9).
- Nebuchadnezzar humbling himself before God. “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (Dan. 4:37).
- The Philippian Jailer running from his sin to Jesus Christ and becoming a kind helper of Christians. “And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house” (Acts 16:33-34).
- The Christ-rejecting Jews at Pentecost turning to Christ and His church. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:38-42).

### **Why is repentance necessary?**

Repentance is necessary for God to forgive us (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22). Forgiveness will not happen until this has taken place. If we do not repent we will perish (Luke 13:1-5).

## The steps of repentance:

The whole life of a Christian should be one of repentance. It is not only an action that we do in order to receive salvation, but it is a lifestyle. What are the steps to repentance:

- Desire to repent: Before true repentance can take place, you must truly want to repent. You must avoid that caricature of repentance that is merely a cover for sorrow over consequences. This is called "worldly sorrow" and "it leads only to death" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Esau is given as an example of false repentance. He was rejected because he did not really want to change his mind (Hebrews 12:15-17).
- Ask God to search your heart: The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins however we need to be willing to listen to His whisper. Be willing to call issues in your life "sin" so that it can be dealt with. For example even though your spouse might be having an affair, there might be issues in your heart that need to be dealt with for example, withdrawing from the relationship, bitterness, anger, resentment etc. All of these reactions are not godly and therefore are to be called sin. 1 John 1:8 "If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. 1 John 1:10 "If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts.
- Be broken before God: Psalm 51:17 "The sacrifice you want is a broken spirit. A broken and repentant heart, O God, you will not despise." Isaiah 57:15 "The high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in that high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I refresh the humble and give new courage to those with repentant hearts." 2 Cor. 7:9 "Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to have remorse and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way.
- Confessing your sin: We must put our sin into words and agree with God that what we did was wrong. Psalm 51:4 "Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just." Hosea 14:1-3 "Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for your sins have brought you down. Bring your petitions, and return to the LORD. Say to him, "Forgive all our sins and graciously receive us, so that we may offer you the sacrifice of praise. Assyria cannot save us, nor can our strength in battle. Never again will we call the idols we have made 'our gods.' No, in you alone do the orphans find mercy."

1 John 1:9 "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.

- Turning from your sin: Matthew 3:7-8 "But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming judgment? Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God." Acts 26:20 "I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must turn from their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do." At the very least, this means removing yourself as much as possible from places of temptation (Proverbs 4:14-17). If your sin was against other people, then you must go to them and ask their forgiveness (Matthew 5:23-24). If the sin involves stealing, then restitution must be made (Luke 19:8).
- Focus on Christ: Be careful to remember that though you are dealing with sin, that your focus is not on your sins but on your Savior, on what your sins cost Him and with what love He paid for them. Don't focus on the grime, but on the gospel. When you constantly see sin in your life you will feel shame and will feel as if your sins are too great for forgiveness.

## **STEP TWO: TEACH THE COUNSELEE TO LIVE BY BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES**

Isaiah 55:8-9 ""My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."

Proverbs 14:12 "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.

Once we have encouraged the counselee to repent and to recommit their hearts and their lives to Christ through a renewed relationship with Him, the next steps is to show them how to no longer view circumstances through their own eyes but to gain God's perspective on things. Therefore they are to look at life from God's perspective (viewpoint), not from their way, experiences, ideas, opinions, what others say, the world's philosophy or its psychology. The basic problem and the supreme challenge in making Christ-honoring changes is dying to self. The biblical perspective concerning 'self' is exactly opposite to what the wisdom of this world proclaims ( Luke 9:23-24 ). Accordingly, to live biblically is to respond to life's challenges in a manner that pleases and honors God, no longer pleasing and gratifying self

How can we live lives that are pleasing to God and are not based on our own perceptions but on God? We need to learn to live a life that is in obedience to the Word of God. Look consistently to the Word of God to find out the right reaction, attitudes, motives and intentions that we should have. Jesus said, ""You are truly my disciples if you keep obeying my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32) Paul wrote, "I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me". (Gal 2:20)

There are two different ways for Christians live their lives. One is to walk by means of the Spirit, and the other is to walk by the flesh. Both are systems that are complete in themselves. To understand one is to also understand the other. If one has to walk by the Spirit, then of necessity one has to avoid the other. To walk means to organize one's life around some governing principle. For walking by means of the Spirit, the governing principle is the ministry of the Spirit of God in one's life. To walk by the flesh is to succumb to the moods and appetites of the flesh. When that is done, the flesh will produce very predictable habits or works.

## WALKING ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

In the book of Romans chapter 7, Paul wrote concerning the believer walking according to the flesh. He wrote that it was:

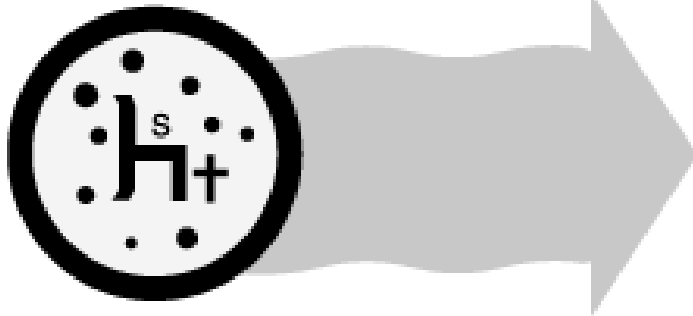
- **A Fleshly Struggle:** Romans 7:14-16 "The law is good, then. The trouble is not with the law but with me, because I am sold into slavery, with sin as my master. I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience shows that I agree that the law is good."
- **Sin Indwelling Our Flesh:** Romans 7:17-20 "But I can't help myself, because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things. I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. I want to, but I can't. When I want to do good, I don't. And when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. But if I am doing what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing it; the sin within me is doing it."
- **Flesh Defeated by the law of Sin:** Romans 7:21-23 "It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me".

Because of this constant struggle with the "flesh" he went on to say that there was a need for a deliverer. Romans 7:24-25 "Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin." Philip. 2:13 "For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him."

### **What is the flesh?**

Paul uses the word "flesh" to mean something that is totally human, with no special grace attached. It is the un-renewed carnal mindsets that we have. In Paul's use of the term "flesh" in Galatians 5, he does not simply mean being possessed of a physical body; but rather, he means limited to only a physical body and the physical strength it contains. So the flesh is what you do in your own power, in your own strength, what you can do yourself - which is legalism.

Legalism is anything that I think I can do in order to make myself more righteous before God. It is human achievement; it's a form of self-righteousness.



### **SELF-DIRECTED LIFE**

**S - Self is on the throne**

**† - Christ Dethroned and not allowed to direct life**

**• - Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration**

### **How do we walk in the flesh?**

To walk after the flesh is to seek life in terms of what man can accomplish of himself. It is to find fulfillment of the needs that we have apart from God. Walking in the flesh takes no effort on our part - it comes quite naturally.

The flesh is manifested in the following ways in our life: Galatians 5:19-21 "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

- **Sexual sins:**

The first three mentioned here are those which are sexual in nature:

**Immorality:** This is from the Greek word *porneia* (19), which is often translated as fornication. Word studies find that *porneia* in Old Testament times had strong associations with harlotry. The term is rooted in a word meaning: "to sell" and referred originally to prostitutes and prostitution. Over time, it came to mean the one who visits a prostitute and then began to be applied to adultery. In the Bible we note that this word is related to four specific things:

- Voluntary sexual intercourse of an unmarried person with someone of the opposite sex (1 Cor. 7:2; 1 Thess. 4:3).

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- A synonym for adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9), which is sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse.
- Harlotry and prostitution (Rev. 2:14,20).
- Various forms of sexual sin such as homosexuality and bestiality.

**Impurity:** This comes from the Greek word *akatharsia* <sup>(20)</sup> from which the word catharsis or "cleansing" comes. The alpha privitive (a) makes it a negative, meaning: "filthiness," or "uncleanness." It is a more general term than immorality, going beyond the act to the evil thoughts and intentions of the mind.

**Sensuality:** The Greek word *aselgeia* <sup>(20)</sup> originally referred to any excess or lack of restraint, but came to be primarily associated with sexual excess. The same Greek word appears in: Ephesians 4:19 "and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness." It speaks of someone who flaunts their immorality, throwing off all restraint and having no sense of shame, propriety, or embarrassment.

- **Religious Sins:**

The next category of sins is that which is associated with "religion".

**Idolatry:** This is a broad term that refers to anything good that becomes more important than God. It could refer to an inordinate love of money or possessions or of your career or even of another person who becomes more important than God to you.

**Sorcery:** This is from the Greek word *pharmakeia* <sup>(20)</sup> from which the English word "pharmaceutical" comes. And the word "pharmaceutical" has to do with drugs and various potions. In the ancient world, the taking of drugs (especially hallucinogens) was always associated with the occult. The word "sorceries" could also be translated "enchantment with drugs."

- **People sins:**

“Enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing”, and things like these are each “people” sins. They are sins that primarily express themselves in how we treat others. God cares about our sexual and moral purity, and He cares about the purity of our religion and worship. But He also passionately cares about how we treat one another. The fact that Paul uses more words to describe these *interpersonal* sins shows how important our treatment of each other is to God. All of these “natural” feelings and actions flow from us like water from a spring, and all of them will destroy our relationships with others. Underlying each of these deadly acts is a preoccupation with self. “I will care for others as long as I get what I want. I will be kind, act civil, and have a winsome attitude about me as long as I am happy and nobody disturbs my happiness or the happiness of those I love”.

**Enmities** is from the Greek word *echthra* <sup>(21)</sup>, which is hatred - an attitude of heart which expresses itself in actions such as contentions, outbursts of wrath, or many other works of the flesh. But hatred is the inner motivation for the ill treatment of others. Just as love is the inner motivation for the kind and good treatment of others, hatred is an inner motivation.

**Strife** is the Greek word *eris* <sup>(21)</sup>, which conveys the idea of quarreling.

**Jealousies** uses a Greek word *Zelos* <sup>21</sup> that is sometimes used in a positive sense - as for being zealous for something good. But here, clearly, the connotation is wrong. Jealousy refers to someone who wants what other people have. It was this spirit which characterized Joseph's brothers so that they sold him into slavery.

**Outbursts of anger** speaks of a sudden flash of anger, not a settled state of anger. It means to lose your temper, being unable to control your anger.

**Disputes** is the Greek word *eritheia* <sup>21</sup>, and the word has an interesting history. It started out as a perfectly respectable word meaning: “to work for pay.” Over time, it began to mean the kind of work that is done for money and for no other reason. Then it was used to describe politicians who campaign for election, not for what service they can give to the government and the people, but only for their own glory and benefit. It ended up meaning: “selfish ambition”, the ambition which has no conception of service, and whose only aims are profit and power. It is the heart of a person whose first question is always, “What’s in it for me?”

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**Dissensions** literally means "standing apart." Romans 16:17 and 1 Corinthians 3:3 translate this word as *divisions*.

**Factious** translates a Greek word *hairesis* <sup>22</sup>, which originally simply meant: "to choose." Over time, it came to mean someone who divisively expressed their "choices" or opinions. The emphasis in the word is actually the wrongful dividing over opinions.

**Envy** is the Greek word *phthonos* <sup>22</sup>. One doesn't so much want what someone else has (as in jealousies), but one is bitter just because someone else has something and we don't.

- **Social sin:**

Drunkenness and carousing can be thought of as *social sins*, sins that are often committed in the company of other people.

**Drunkenness** is clearly described as one of the works of the flesh. While Christians may differ as to whether a Christian can drink alcohol, the Scriptures *precisely* forbid drunkenness. Ephesians 5:18 (NASB) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, Here Paul describes drunkenness as *dissipation*, which means: "wastefulness." Getting drunk is a waste.

**Carousing** is the Greek word *komos* <sup>22</sup>, which doesn't mean simply having a party or a good time. It means *unrestrained* partying.

### **Common Characteristics of Flesh**

**Flesh is a controller.** It controls to keep God at a distance, to keep the world or circumstances from overwhelming us, to control others, to protect us from control, to control our emotions and not to show weakness. The methods of control that could be used are varied such as a critical attitude ("you never could do anything right"), body language (scowls, frowns), silent treatment, hostility (temper, violence, abuse), seductive behavior, blackmail, intimidation, parental favoritism, passivity, manipulation (false guilt, self-pity, flattery), overt laws and punishment, religion, and overprotection. Control can be exercised out of strength or weakness.

**Flesh is self-protective**, physically, emotionally and mentally. Self-protection can take the form of excuse making, justifying behavior, shifting blame, withdrawing, inability to make decisions or take responsibility, and lying.

**Flesh is multi-faceted.** It is one problem with many tentacles, or symptoms. Paul describes this very well in Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissension, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. . ."

**Flesh is a captive and a victim.** If man lives by his natural resources (flesh), the Bible says he will self-destruct. "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12 ).

**Flesh is deceptive.** Flesh is like a chameleon which disguises itself by assuming the color of its environment. Jacob demonstrated this by wearing animal skins in order to trick his father into giving him what he wanted.

**Flesh builds an identity around itself.** Our identity, who we think we are, is very important in determining our actions – what we do. If our flesh develops an identity around some manifestation of itself and convinces us to believe it is our own identity, then our flesh has built a fertile background in which its own characteristics (control, protect itself, etc.) can flourish.

**Flesh is proud.** Man operating according to the flesh has a tremendous drive to exalt himself to meet his needs for acceptance, value and recognition. Characteristics emulating from pride and self-exaltation are the "need" to be right, to blame others, and to be superior. The flesh brags and rebels. Pride is one of the chief obstacles to the cross and grace because it is so subtle. I Peter 5:5-6, however, says that "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time."

**Flesh is an idolater.** We can usually determine what our false god is by what causes us to fall apart when it is removed. Is it our health, our possessions, job, spouse, family? The question is: Who or what is meeting your deepest needs? This could be your god and is a manifestation of your flesh.

**Flesh is a rejecter.** It will try to protect itself even at others' expense. This results in all kinds of damaging rejection. When we are already struggling to get our needs met in our own effort and then are rejected by another, we will inevitably retaliate or manipulate. This helps explain why abused children often grow up to imitate their abusive parents. As one person struggles in an unending quest to get his needs met (even legitimate needs for love, acceptance, significance,

security, and meaning), others will be attempting to get their needs met also. Turning to other self-centered people to meet our needs ultimately results in someone being used and/or rejected and their needs going unmet. This results in anger, jealousy, frustration, anxiety, suppression of feelings, denial, etc. These, in turn, create more rejection for the person and for those with whom they interact in a widening circle. Over time, we develop a fear of losing control of our world and a new flesh cycle begins.

### **God's Solution – Death**

What is God's method of dealing with the flesh? Death! "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24 ). The flesh can only be dealt with through our union with Christ in the full work of the cross. The flesh cannot be improved upon, trained or modified in any significant long-term way. Through struggle and failure, the Christian is carefully and lovingly taken through the experience of self-revelation and finally into an appropriation of his death with Christ to his old life in Adam. This is the only basis upon which we can "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:10 , 11).

Is it possible to walk totally free of the flesh? Not this side of heaven, but we don't have to be under its control. We now have a choice. Walking after the flesh can become the exception, not the rule. Well-adjusted people can appear to have the flesh under control, but it is simply more subtle. If a person's life has not been exchanged, the true fruit of the Spirit will not be manifested. Once the source of the flesh has been cut off, the works or symptoms of the flesh can be dealt with by the putting off and putting on of Colossians 3:1-17. By faith, the power of the flesh is replaced with the life of the Spirit – Christ Himself!

## WALKING ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT

Walking in the Spirit of God results when we are walking a life that is Christ directed. Where He is placed on the throne of our lives and where we choose to be yielded to Him. Our interests, our actions and our motives are directed by Him through the Word.



### **FRUITFULNESS ABUNDANCE**

#### **CHRIST DIRECTED LIFE**

- † - Christ is in the life and on the throne**
- s - Self is yielding to Christ**
- - Interests are directed by Christ, resulting in harmony with God's plan**

#### **How do we walk by the Spirit?**

**Acknowledge:** First, we must acknowledge from our hearts that we are helpless to do good apart from the enablement of the Holy Spirit. As Paul says in Romans 7:18, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing." What did Jesus mean when he said in John 15:5, "Without me you can do nothing"?

**Walk in total dependence of the Holy Spirit:** To live by the flesh is depending upon the resources and abilities of the physical body or humanness. To live by the Spirit is depending upon the resources and abilities of the Spirit whom God gives by grace through faith. In both cases, the fundamental issue is "depending." The critical difference is the object of the dependence. What does the Spirit of God use to speak to you and lead you in making the right decisions? The Word of God. Isaiah 30:21 "and you will hear a voice say, "This is the way; turn around and walk here."

**Pray:** Therefore, let us pray like Paul did in 1 Thessalonians 3:12 for that chief fruit of the Spirit: "Now may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all men." And let's pray like the writer to the Hebrews did in Hebrews 13:21, "And now may the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ. If it is God alone who works in us what is pleasing in His sight, then above all, we must pray". "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

**Trust:** The third step involved in walking by the Spirit is faith. We must believe that since we have come under the leading of God's Spirit, "sin will no longer have dominion over us" (Romans 6:14). This confidence is what Paul meant by "reckoning ourselves dead to sin and alive to God" (Romans 6:11). We simply count on it that the Spirit who made us alive when we were dead in sin wills our holiness and has the power to achieve what he wills. We must walk by faith. Do not walk according to your feelings. Tied as they are to your ever-changing circumstances, feelings are unreliable in evaluating your relationship with God. The unchanging promises of God's Word, not your feelings, are your authority. The Christian is to live by faith, trusting in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word. A train is a good illustration of the relationship between fact, faith and feeling.



Fact : the fact of God's promises found in His Word.

Faith: The fuel car we will call "faith". Your trust in God and His Word.

Feelings: The caboose is called "feelings."

As fuel flows into the engine, the train runs. It would be futile and, of course, ridiculous to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way you, as a Christian, should not depend upon feelings or emotions to live a Spirit-filled life. Rather, God wants you to simply place your faith in his trustworthiness and the promises of His Word. Feelings are like the caboose - they are important but are designed to follow a life of faith and obedience.

**Abide in Christ:** Colossians, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." (Col 3:1). Walking is the walking in the fellowship—in Him, with Him. The way Jesus spoke about walking was by another illustration—that of abiding. (John 15) John 15: 4, 7 "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." Verse 5. "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for apart from Me ye can do nothing." " "If ye abide in Me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

**Act:** Act the way you know is right. 1 Corinthians 15:10 "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me." Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (see also Romans 15:18, 19). A person who has acknowledged his helplessness, prayed for God's enablement to do right, and yielded himself confidently to the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit has this astonishing incentive to do righteousness, namely, the confidence that, whatever righteous act he does, it is God who is at work in him giving him the will and the power to do it. Philippians 2:12 and 13 says, "Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling because God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

**Take up your cross daily:** Scripture says that you have to take up your cross daily, not fight your flesh daily and that is because the flesh tries to resurrect itself. Luke 9:23 "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." What is your cross? Your cross is where your will, your desire, your thoughts are contrary to the thoughts, will and desire of God for your life. It is where your will and the will of God come into conflict and you have to do as Jesus when He walked as a man and pray, "Father... not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." So when we are following our ways, our thoughts, that is walking in the flesh because it is contrary to God's ways and God's thoughts which are given to us through His Word.

## **FOUR TRUTHS**

Romans 6:6-14 "Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also share his new life. We are sure of this because Christ rose from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. He died once to defeat sin, and now he lives for the glory of God. So you should consider yourselves dead to sin and able to live for the glory of God through Christ Jesus. Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to its lustful desires. Do not let any part of your body become a tool of wickedness, to be used for sinning. Instead, give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God. Sin is no longer your master, for you are no longer subject to the law, which enslaves you to sin. Instead, you are free by God's grace."

- We are no longer under sin's control
- We are alive to God
- We must give ourselves completely to God
- We must obey God

### **ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:**

How do the accounts of the following people demonstrate their walk in the Spirit?

- Paul (Acts 18:4-11),
- Peter (Acts 3:1-26) and
- Stephen (Acts 6:8-15, 7:51-60)

What does it mean to you to cast your cares upon the Lord? How can this be done in your life?

What does the example of the vine and the branches in John 15:1-8 mean to the Christian?

How would you describe the effects of spiritual fitness as expressed in Romans 14:23, 1 John 1:9, 1 Cor 10:13, Eph 5:18 and 1 John 4:14-15

What promises has God given us in 1 John 2:1-6

List any areas in your life where "self" is on the throne. List the areas in which Jesus is not on the throne. What practical steps will you be able to take this

week to give Jesus His throne back?

What armour used to defend yourself against the world, the flesh and the devil does Ephesians 6:11-18 describe?

What do these verses teach the role of prayer in the life of the believer?

- Hebrews 4:15-16
- James 5:16
- 1 Sam 12:23
- James 1:5

What place do feelings have in a life of faith? What will result if you seek feelings over and above walking by faith?

### **STEP THREE: ENCOURAGE THE COUNSELEE TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE**

Change is to be central in counseling because it is the goal of both the process and the counselor. The Christian life is a life of transformation and change. The Christian life is not static. Each stage of our walk with God involves us with constant moving change, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little. 2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." Active response to God's will involves constant change because His will is progressive. This means we must constantly adapt to changes in our lives where the will of God is leading us.

#### **Why is change not always embraced?**

Many Christians fail to respond to change as God directs because of two primary reasons:

- Firstly, they lack the motivation to change.
- Secondly, they desire to, but they are not quite sure how to appropriate the changes. It is therefore for this reason that the counselor should guide them through this process so that they will be able to appropriate the changes in their lives.

#### **MOTIVATIONAL KEYS TO CHANGE**

What motivational keys are needed in order to help the counselee initiate change in their lives? Before the counselee will change, there are motivation keys that need to be evident in their lives. These are that they ...

- **Desire change** as this is something that pleases the Lord. In order to effect change the counselee needs to desire to have a walk that is worthy of the calling. Col. 1:10-11 "Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and you will continually do good, kind things for others. All the while, you will learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with his glorious power so that you will have all the patience and endurance you need. May you be filled with joy," To have a walk that encompasses these attitudes involves submitting to the changing process that God has ordained for our lives.
- **Decide to change:** The changes that are made by the counselee through the working of the Holy Spirit are not to be superficial but substantial. This change process is not about changing others (those who are perceived as being the problem) but in seeking to change self. This is to be stressed by the

counselor. The counselee is not taking part in the counseling sessions in an endeavor to change another person, but they are there for themselves. They have come to take responsibility for themselves and therefore desire to make changes that will be necessary to be the person whom Christ has called them to be. Change is a choice that the counselee needs to make in order to leave the counseling session different than the way in which they came in. Change is an act of obedience.

## **THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE**

**Maintain a Proper Attitude Towards Change:** We do this by keeping in mind that God is the Potter and we are the clay. *Isaiah 64:8* "But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand". We must allow God to do with us whatever He desires. Biblical change will not come until we place ourselves in God's hands in this manner.

**Learn to Recognize the Symptoms That Represent a Need for Change:** If you have any one of these feelings, it's probably a good indication that you have a need for Biblical change in your life. For example:

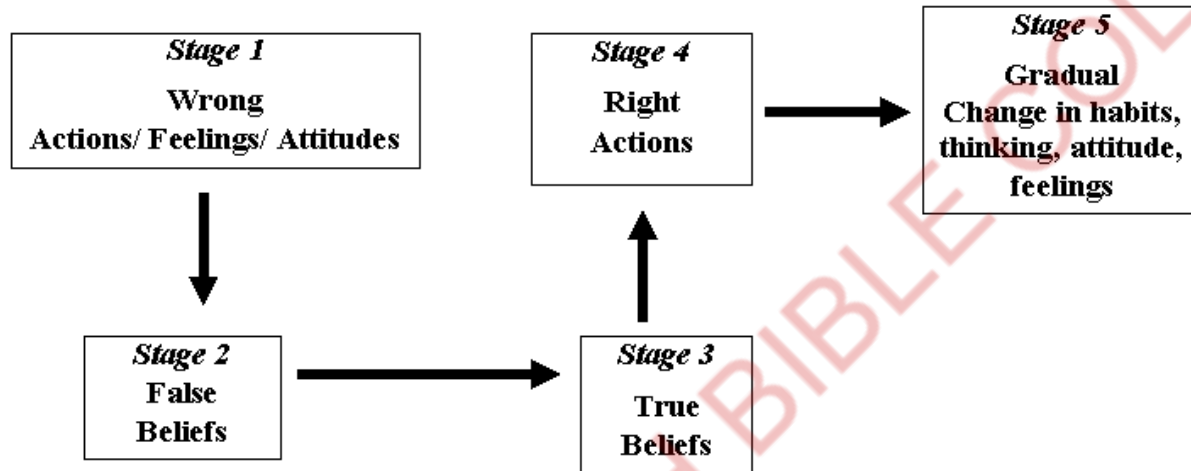
- Having a feeling of being unsatisfied
- Having a feeling of being resisted
- Having a feeling of uselessness
- Having a feeling of "lack" in your relationship with God

**Understand What True Godly Sorrow Is and How it Works to Your Benefit:** There must be a godly sorrow for your sinful condition, realizing that failure to respond to Biblical change is sin.

**Seek to Walk in the Spirit:** *Galatians 5:16* I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." It is when we are walking in the Spirit; praying, reading & meditating in the word, worship, keeping our mind stayed on the Lord, that we are more sensitive to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. As we experience the conviction of the Holy Spirit we are more motivated towards the changes the Lord is requiring of us.

## **THE BIBLICAL MODEL FOR CHANGE**

In order to understand the process of change, we must not only understand the need, motivation and desire for Biblical change, we must also understand the practical steps that are involved in the transformation God desires for each one of us. As the counselor you will help the counselee by effecting this change through teaching the Biblical Model for change.



Wrong attitudes, actions and feelings are a result of false beliefs that have taken root in the mind of an individual. Therefore in order to change "stage 1", it is vital that the counselee recognizes the false beliefs that they have and change these beliefs to that which is true, based upon the Word of God. Only once these beliefs have been changed will right actions, attitudes and feelings be seen in the counselee. Therefore as a counselor, you will take the counselee through three steps towards biblical change. There are two areas where change needs to take place. Firstly in the inner life of man through thoughts and secondly, through the outer life of man, his actions. Therefore to effect change teaching is required. There are six steps which can aid in change:

- a. Identify negative and sinful feelings
- b. Identify negative and sinful behavior
- c. Identify wrong thinking
- d. Change this through teaching
- e. Promote right thinking
- f. Plan right behavior
- g. Identify satisfying feelings

## **STEP ONE & TWO: GATHERING INFORMATION**

The first two steps of identifying the negative and sinful feelings and behaviour will take place as the counselor begins to gather information from the counselee through asking questions and listening attentively. As the counselee speaks about the situation that he/she is facing, the counselor must ask questions that will probe into what and why the counselor feels and behaves in the manner that they do.

In order to ensure that the counselor has gathered enough information before the next step takes place, ensure that the following areas have been questioned:

- Physical aspects for example their sleep patterns, diet, activity level, illness.
- Resources and Relationships for example what is happening in their job situation, school. What is happening in their social relationships eg between their spouse, children etc.
- Emotions, for example what extremes have they been feeling. How have they been making decisions (feelings-oriented)?
- Actions, for example their behavior, sins
- Conceptual thinking: What are their goals? What are their values, desires, motives? "What do you want?" "Well, I want my husband/I want my wife to change". Find out what their motive is for coming in? What is their thinking?
- Historical background: How did they handle things in the past compared to the present context? Their failures, their school/their job problems...

## **STEP THREE: CHANGE THEIR BELIEFS – GET A NEW MINDSET**

A belief system provides a person with the framework that helps them interpret and understand the experiences faced in life. A belief is something that is accepted as true, without question. These beliefs are deeply embedded in the mind of the person and eventually become "strongholds" which you live by without thinking about them, questioning them or even being aware of them.

You base your reactions to situations around your core beliefs never for one moment stopping to question whether the core belief itself might no longer be accurate. For example, if, a small child is constantly ignored or neglected, one of his or her beliefs might become *'I am not really good enough for people to bother with me. I am not worthwhile'*. If such a belief helped that child fit into a negative and unbalanced family situation then it was what the child needed to believe, even if it was not true. Without false beliefs like these, the child may well have been neglected even more. However, once the child takes on the false negative belief they find they adapt by setting up inner personality patterns

(known as inner protector characters) that match the belief. For example they may stop expecting or wanting to have their needs met. These patterns seem as though they help that child because they now appear to 'fit in' better in their family. The result reinforces the original belief and makes it seem even more 'true'. The more the patterns do this the more true the belief will seem. The core beliefs as they took root in our childhood years become a kind of summary of the most basic convictions we make up about our self-worth, the kind of person we are, or the kind of person we are not, what will become of us as a result, our place in the family and the world and how we can expect others to treat us all our life.

Core beliefs like these are supported by your primary inner protection system. This means they grow stronger rather than weaker. One of the ways they often grow is by helping make sense of our worst childhood experiences in the only way a small child can, by telling us that *what went wrong was essentially our fault*. Even though this assumption was based on the false beliefs or false understandings set up in early childhood, it becomes more firmly established as you grow up. In the present they still shape and guide much of life and the way you react to those around you. It also provides you with an unusual 'gift' in the way it motivates you to move away from your natural personality and continue to change and adapt to become more like the person others want you to be.

Almost every unbalanced or negative belief seems to be connected in some way with your deepest thoughts or feelings about being:

- not good enough (incompetent)
- unlovable
- unwanted, different
- defective, imperfect, bad
- powerless, one-below

Wrong thinking always involves the sinful belief that something more than God is necessary to meet my needs. God expects that we as Christian change our thinking patterns. Paul wrote: Ephes. 4:23 "Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes." Romans 12:2 "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is." Therefore in order to change your behaviour and the reactions that you will have towards

circumstances, you need to change your core beliefs. Change always starts first within your mind. Proverbs 23:7 "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..."

2 Cor. 10:4-5 "We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ."

### **How to make changes in the thought patterns:**

- Recognize the importance of your thoughts. Thoughts include our beliefs, attitudes, opinions values, ideas.
- Recognize any false beliefs that you think about God, yourself, others, your relationships etc.
- Renew the mind through teaching of the Word of God. Psalm 119:15 "I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways." This step is used to help the counselee replace the lie of their false belief with God's truth. If the counselee is ignorant, this will involve basic biblical instruction. If he is biblically informed in this area, it will involve reminder. Only the truth of God destroys the strongholds that have been set up in the mind. The psalmist wrote, Psalm 1:1-2 "Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with scoffers. But they delight in doing everything the LORD wants; day and night they think about his law."

According to the Webster's Dictionary the word "meditate" <sup>23</sup> means two things:

- To reflect on or ponder
- To plan or intend in the mind. To engage in contemplation.

The Vine's Expository Dictionary of Bible Words says that "meditate" <sup>24</sup> means "to care for, to attend to, practice, be diligent in, to ponder, to premeditate".

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<sup>23</sup> Webster's II Riverside University Dictionary, s.v. "meditate"

<sup>24</sup> Vine's expository Dictionary of Bible Words, W.E. Vine, Merrill Unger, William White Jr, p400

Meditation is therefore spending time thinking of the Word of God. Joshua 1:8 "Study this Book of the Law continually. Meditate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that is written in it. Only then will you succeed". As we meditate on the things of God through the Word we will no longer think the thoughts of the devil or the thoughts that are carnal, but we will have the mind of Christ. We will know the thoughts (feelings and purposes) that Christ has for us. 1 Cor. 2:16 "How could they? For, "Who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who can give him counsel?" But we can understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ."

Teach the counselee to think of a truth for every wrong belief that he / she has concerning self, God and others. For example:

- If they believe that they are unloved, teach them concerning the love of God for them.
- If they feel that they are rejected, teach them concerning their acceptance into the beloved.
- If they feel that they "can't do anything", teach them that they can "do all things through Christ ..." (Philippians 4:13).

Start to think right: Philip. 4:8 "And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

#### **ASSIGNMENT:**

Through teaching of the word, wrong belief patterns can be changed. If you were to encounter the following wrong beliefs in a counseling session, what scriptures would you use in order to set their thinking straight?

- I am incompetent
- I am unlovable
- I am unwanted, different
- I am too bad to accept Christ's forgiveness
- I am a failure

## **STEP FOUR: CHANGE YOUR ACTIONS - ACT ACCORDING TO THE WORD**

The purpose of counseling is not to eliminate the problems and the situation that the counselee finds themselves in but rather to result in the person being conformed to Christ so that they act in the way Christ would have acted in the same situation. You cannot change the past and therefore the focus of counseling is to show them how to create a better future. The Bible tells us to forget the past. Philip. 3:13-14 "No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven."

### **How is change made?**

There are two ways that changes are made according to the Biblical model of change. Firstly as noted in the previous step it is through teaching in order to change wrong thinking patterns. Secondly, through discipline by changing your reactions and actions.

- Proverbs 25:28 "A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls."
- 1 Tim. 4:7 "Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness."
- Hebrews 5:14 "Solid food is for those who are mature, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right."

### **PUT OFF – PUT ON PRINCIPLE**

"That you put off concerning the former conversation the OLD man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the NEW man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Ephesians 4:22-24

Romans 13:12-14 "The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So don't live in darkness. Get rid of your evil deeds. Shed them like dirty clothes. Clothe yourselves with the armor of right living, as those who live in the light. We should be decent and true in everything we do, so that everyone can approve of our behavior. Don't participate in wild parties and getting drunk, or

in adultery and immoral living, or in fighting and jealousy. But let the Lord Jesus Christ take control of you, and don't think of ways to indulge your evil desires.”

Col. 3:5-10 “So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don't be greedy for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry. God's terrible anger will come upon those who do such things. You used to do them when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old evil nature and all its wicked deeds. In its place you have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.”

### **PUT OFF THE “OLD MAN”**

When Paul exhorted the putting off of the old nature, he was not addressing sinners but Christians. Those who have been made near by the blood of Christ and who are being built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. What then is this “old man” in the believer? The old man is descriptive of our corrupt nature. It is that part of us that is part of the old nature, before we were in Christ, which is antithesis of Christ.

### **How can we put off the old man and put to death the things that are against God and part of this world?**

- Firstly, we need to identify with the risen and enthroned Lord Jesus mentioned in (Colossians 3:1-4).
- Secondly, we put to death this old nature. It is because we understand the power of the resurrection of Christ that we are able to put to death the things in our life that are contrary to our identity with Jesus. The verb, “put to death” literally means ‘to make dead’. It suggests that we are not simply to suppress or control evil acts and attitudes. We are to wipe them out. We put to death in the sense of denying these things and considering them dead to us and us dead to them. Putting off the old man with his deeds means that in Jesus Christ, we are *different people*. The old man is to be put off much in the same way as we put off a dirty garment. An old shirt full of grime and dirt is pulled off and thrown away with disgust. It is worn unwillingly and therefore put off gladly.

## PUT ON THE "NEW MAN"

The old man, is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" the new man "is after God created in righteousness and true holiness." What a contrast, what an antithesis between them. As we put off the old man, we must put on the new man.

### How do we place these new clothes on?

We are able to place these new clothes on through being renewed in knowledge of God. Because the new man is renewed in knowledge, he is hungry to know what God says in His Word (Col 3:10). We put on new garments when we discover the alternative behaviour that is based on scripture.

### What are we to "put on"?

Col. 3:12-14 "Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony."

Each one of the qualities mentioned in this passage express themselves in *relationships*. A significant measure of our Christian life is found simply in how we treat people and the quality of our relationships with them.

- **Tender mercies:** If something is tender, it is sensitive to touch. Therefore when we put on tender mercies we are learning to *feel* the *slightest touch* of another's misery and therefore be more "others" minded that "me" minded". Therefore if someone reacts in anger when we have done something wrong, if we choose to put on tender mercies we will not react in a similar nature but will choose to say, "what is happening in their hearts that has caused them to react like this" instead of "what is it about me that causes people to want to hurt me".
- **Kindness:** This is the virtue of the man whose neighbor's good is as dear to him as his own.

- **Humility:** Humility is the “parent” of both meekness and longsuffering. Meekness shows how humility will affect my *actions* towards others; “I will not dominate, manipulate, or coerce for my own ends, even if I have the power and the ability”. Longsuffering shows how humility will affect my *reaction* towards others;” I will not become impatient, short, or filled with resentment towards the weaknesses and sins of others”.
- **Forgiving one another:** We are told to live forgiving one another, after the pattern of Jesus’ forgiveness towards us. Understanding the way Jesus forgave us will always make us *more* generous with forgiveness, and never less generous. When we consider the staggering debt Jesus forgave for us, and the comparative smallness of the debts others have toward us, it is base ingratitude for us to not forgive them (as in the parable Jesus spoke in Matthew 18:21-35). We note that
  - God holds back His anger a very long time when we sin against Him. He bears with us a long time, even when we sorely provoke Him.
  - God reaches out to *bad people* to bring forgiveness to them; the habit of men is to not reconcile if the offending person is a person of bad character.
  - God makes the first move towards us in forgiveness; the habit of men is to only be reconciled if the offending party craves forgiveness and makes the first move.
  - God forgives often knowing that we will sin again, sometimes in the exact same way. It is the habit of men to forgive only if the offending party solemnly promises to never do the wrong again.
  - God’s forgiveness is so complete and glorious that He grants adoption to those former offenders. In the habit of man, even when forgiveness is offered, he will not lift again the former offender to a place of high status and partnership.
  - God bore *all* the penalty for the wrong we did against Him. In the habit of man, when he is wronged, he will not forgive unless the offender agrees to bear all the penalty for the wrong done.
  - God keeps reaching out to man for reconciliation even when man refuses Him again and again. In the habit of men, one will not continue to offer reconciliation if it is rejected once.

- God requires no probationary period to receive His forgiveness; in the habit of men, one will not restore an offender without a period of probation.
- God's forgiveness offers complete restoration and honor; in the habit of men, we feel we should be complimented when we merely *tolerate* those who sin against us.
- Once having forgiven, God puts His trust in us and invites us back to work with Him as co-laborers. In the habit of men, one will not trust someone who has formerly wronged them.
- **Love:** "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection" Love is the summary of all the things described in this passage. Love perfectly fulfills what God requires of us in relationships.

## ASSIGNMENT

Using this list below, find a scripture for each of the "put on" behaviour that we are to live in our lives.

Put-Off	Put-On	Scripture
Adultery	Marital fidelity	
Anger	Self-control	
Argumentative/Quarrelsome	Gentle Answer/Peace & Accord	
Bad Companions	Godly Associations	
Bitterness	Tender hearted, forgiving	
Blame shifting	Responsibility	
Bodily harm	Glorify God in body	
Burying talents	Developing abilities	
Boasting (conceit)	Esteeming others	
Careless Talk	Edifying Words	
Carnal Entertainment	Please God	
Cheating	Honesty	
Covetousness	Contentment	

Critical spirit	Kindness	
Complacency	Zeal	
Complaining	Gratefulness	
Depression	Hope in God	
Discontent	Contentment	
Disobedience	Obedience	
Disrespect for authority	Honor authority	
Dissatisfaction	Satisfaction	
Divisive	Peacemaker	
Drunkenness	Abstinence, self-control	
Easily irritated	Not easily provoked	
Envious	Rejoice with Others	
Evil speaking	Good report	
Evil thoughts	Pure thoughts	
Favoritism	Fairness	
Faultfinding	Patience	
Feeling Oriented	Commandment Oriented	
Flirtation	Gentle, quiet spirit	
Fleshly music	Edifying music	
Following the crowd	God-fearing	
Fornication	Abstinence	
Gambling	Good stewardship	
Gluttony	Discipline	
Gossip	Edifying speech	
Greed	Contentment	
Guilt	Confession	
Hatred	Love	
Homosexuality	Moral purity	
Hypocrisy	Sincerity	
Idle words	Bridle tongue	

Idolatry	Worship God only	
Immodest dress	Modesty	
Impatience	Patience	
Impulsive	Thoughtfulness	
Inferiority	Position in Christ	
Incest	Moral purity	
Irritation to others	Preferring in love	
Irresponsibility (family/work)	Responsibility	
Irreverence in church	Reverence	
Inhospitable	Hospitable	
Insensitive	Compassion	
Jealousy	Trust	
Judging	Let God search my heart	
Left first Love	Fervent devotion	
Lack of rejoicing	Rejoice	
Lack of moderation	Temperance	
Laziness	Diligence	
Losing temper	Self-control	
Love of money/greed	Love God	
Lust	Pure desires	
Lying	Speak truth	
Masturbation	Sanctification	
Men pleasing	Please God	
Moral impurity	Moral purity	
Murder	Love	
Murmuring/complaining	Praise	
Neglect of Bible study	Bible study/meditation	
No burden for the lost	Compassion/witnessing	
Opinionated	Slow to Speak	
Pleasure Seeker	Enjoy God's Pleasures	

Pornography	Pure thoughts	
Prayerlessness	Praying	
Pride	Humility	
Procrastination	Diligence	
Profanity	Pure speech	
Preferential treatment	Love neighbor as self	
Presumption on the future	Trust God's will	
Rebellion	Submission	
Retaliation	Return good for evil	
Selfishness	Self denial	
Self Pity	Faith	
Slothfulness	Wholeheartedness	
Smoking	God's Temple	
Status Seeker	Servants Heart	
Stealing	Work/giving	
Stinginess	Generosity	
Strife/contention	Peace	
Stubbornness	Brokenness	
Temporal values	Eternal value	
Unbelief	Faith	
Undisciplined	Self-Control	
Unfaithfulness	Faithfulness	
Unforgiving spirit	Heart Forgiveness	
Ungratefulness	Gratefulness	
Undependable	Trustworthy	
Unloving	Serve Others	
Vindictive	Bless Your Enemy	
Witchcraft/Horoscopes	Worship of God	
Worldly entertainment	Spiritual pursuits	
Worry/fear	Trust	

Wrath	Soft answer	
Wrong friends	Godly friends	
Wrong motives	Spiritual motives	

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## STEP 5: CHANGE YOUR HABITS

Gradual change in habits, thinking, attitude, feelings will take place over time. As the counselee is taught how to "put off" and "put on" and practices these principles through discipline, there should be a gradual cessation of both the harmful behaviors and painful feelings, and a corresponding increase of healthy behavior and emotions.

Breaking habits require regular, structured, endurance in putting off and putting on. Jay Adams calls this process "dehabituation/rehabilitation." The elements involved in this process are:

1. Becoming aware of the practice (pattern) that must be put off (dehabituation)
2. Discovering the biblical alternative
3. Structuring the situation for change
4. Breaking links in the chain of sin
5. Getting help from others
6. Learning to see how particular sin habits affect our entire relationship to Christ
7. Practicing the new pattern (rehabilitation)

The goal is biblical action, not sinful reaction; control by the Scriptures, not by the situation.

Once you have taken the counselee through the steps of acknowledging, teaching, confronting, repentance and discipline, your responsibility as their counselor will come to an end and they will now need to continue on the journey of change with the Holy Spirit. Throughout the sessions you have taught them to become less independent upon you and more dependent upon God and therefore this transitional stage will not be difficult. Because of the discipleship and training that you have offered throughout the counseling sessions the counselee will be able to continue in the spiritual growth and the habitual behavioural changes.

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