



FOUNDATIONS

of Biblical Counseling





Welcome!



Thank you for taking the time to attend this year's Counseling & Discipleship Training. We recognize the sacrifice it takes to be able to participate in a conference like this and we're grateful for the opportunity to host and serve you each weekend.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 tells us, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." We have received much grace, and it is our joy to pass on what we have been freely given!

Our prayer is that your walk with the Lord is strengthened and challenged, equipping you to be able to walk with others in grace and truth—to the praise of His glory!

If you have questions or need some assistance, look for people in shirts that say "SERVE" They are servant-leaders of GFC and would be happy to assist you in any capacity.



Dr Mark Shaw

Director of Counseling

Grace Fellowship Church

Reminders



Sessions will begin promptly



Wi-Fi: GracePublic



Wear your lanyard



Bring a light jacket or sweater

**Grace Fellowship Church
CDT Foundations
September - November 2022
Upper Auditorium**

Friday, September 16

Time	Title	Speaker
5:00 - 5:05 pm	Welcome, Intro, Prayer	David Michael
5:05 - 6:05 pm	The Need for Biblical Counseling/ The Definition & Goal of Biblical Counseling and Qualifications of a Biblical Counselor	Brad Bigney
6:05-6:20 pm	BREAK	
6:20 - 7:20 pm	What Makes Biblical Counseling Biblical?	Brad Bigney
7:20 - 7:35 pm	BREAK	
7:35 - 8:35 pm	Process of Biblical Change	Mark Shaw
8:35 - 8:45 pm	BREAK	
8:45 - 9:45 pm	Progressive Sanctification	David Michael
9:45 pm	DISMISS	

Saturday, September 17

Time	Title	Speaker
8:00 - 8:05 am	Welcome & Prayer	
8:05 -9:05 am	Getting to Heart Issues	Brad Bigney
9:05-9:25 am	BREAK	
9:25-10:25 am	Anger	Peter LaRuffa
10:25-10:45 am	BREAK	
10:45-11:45 am	Psychotropic Drugs & Biblical Counseling	Mark Shaw
11:45-1:00 pm	LUNCH	*On Your Own*
1:00-2:00 pm	Communication	Peter LaRuffa
2:00-2:20 pm	BREAK	
2:20-3:20 pm	Physical Illness & Biblical Counseling	Mark Shaw
3:20-3:35 pm	BREAK	
3:35-4:35 pm	Depression	David Michael
4:35 pm	DISMISS	

Friday, October 14

Time	Title	Speaker
5:00 - 5:05 pm	Welcome & Prayer	
5:05 - 6:05 pm	Comparison of Counseling Philosophies	Brad Bigney
6:05-6:20 pm	BREAK	
6:20 - 7:20 pm	Trials & Suffering	Brad Bigney
7:20 - 7:35 pm	BREAK	
7:35 - 8:35 pm	Sexual Sin	Peter LaRuffa
8:35 - 8:45 pm	BREAK	
8:45 - 9:45 pm	A Case Study	David Michael & Peter LaRuffa
9:45 pm	DISMISS	

Saturday, October 15

Time	Title	Speaker
8:00 - 8:05 am	Welcome & Prayer	
8:05 -9:05 am	Gathering Data & Discerning Problems Biblically	Mark Shaw
9:05-9:25 am	BREAK	
9:25-10:25 am	Establishing Involvement with Counselees & Giving Hope	Brad Bigney
10:25-10:45 am	BREAK	
10:45-11:45 am	Providing Instruction & Giving Homework	David Michael
11:45-1:00 pm	LUNCH	*On Your Own*
1:00-2:00 pm	Goal of Parenting	Peter LaRuffa
2:00-2:20 pm	BREAK	
2:20-3:20 pm	Parental Instruction	Peter LaRuffa
3:20-3:35 pm	BREAK	
3:35-4:35 pm	Parental Discipline	Peter LaRuffa
4:35 pm	DISMISS	

**Grace Fellowship Church
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September - November 2022
Upper Auditorium**

Friday November, 11

Time	Title	Speaker
5:00 - 6:00 pm	God's Purpose for Marriage	Brad Bigney
6:00 pm	BREAK	
6:15-7:15 pm	Role of the Husband	Brad Bigney
7:15 pm	BREAK	
7:30-8:30 pm	Role of the Wife	Brad Bigney
8:30 pm	BREAK	
8:45 - 9:45 pm	Forgiveness	Brad Bigney
9:45 pm	DISMISS	

Saturday November, 12

Time	Title	Speaker
8:00 - 8:05 pm	Welcome & Prayer	
8:05 -9:05 am	Biblical Sexuality	Brad Bigney
9:05-9:25 am	BREAK	
9:25-10:25 am	Guilt & Repentance	Brad Bigney
10:25-10:45 am	BREAK	
10:45-11:45 am	Worry & Fear	Brad Bigney
11:45-1:00 pm	LUNCH	*On Your Own*
1:00-2:00 pm	Balancing Grace and Truth Case Study	Mark Shaw
2:00-2:20 pm	BREAK	
2:20-3:20 pm	Understanding Temptation	Mark Shaw
3:20-3:35 pm	BREAK	
3:35-4:35 pm	Understanding Temptation: Discussion	Mark Shaw
4:35 pm	DISMISS	

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The Need for Biblical Counseling & the Definition of Biblical Counseling

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

I. The Need for Counseling Started When God Created People

- A. God created us perfect but not complete
- B. From the very beginning we needed God's counsel in order to know what to do and not to do. (Gen 1:28-30; 2:16-17, 19)
- C. We were made to be dependent on God's counsel. We weren't created to be autonomous. We shouldn't raise our children to be *independent* but *dependent* upon God!

Matt. 4:4

Deut. 32:46-47

Psalm 119:11

1. Without God's Word life is absurd, as the world today has decided.

- No purpose; no future.

The philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche said a universal madness would break out when the truth of what mankind had done in killing God dawned on us. Nietzsche himself spent the last thirteen years of his life in the darkness of insanity, while his godly mother watched over him by his bedside.

2. Without God's Word life is vanity, as Solomon decided in Ecclesiastes.

II. The Need for Counseling Was Intensified When We Made Wrong Choices in The Garden of Eden. (Gen 3)

- A. We were created in a natural and moral likeness to God.

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Gen. 1:26 – In His image “Let us make man in our own image...”

Isa. 43:7 – For His glory

Rev. 4:11 – For His own pleasure

B. Adam and Eve already had what is **craved** today: health (2:7,17), a perfect environment (1:25), material needs met (1:29–30), meaningful responsibility (2:15, 19–20), companionship (2:18–25).

C. God clearly communicated the only limitations on man’s behavior and the penalty

D. But Satan tried to **overthrow** and **undermine** God’s counsel by:

1. Creating **doubt** in their minds about God’s Word (3:1)

2. **Denying** God’s Word (3:4)

3. **Denouncing / Defaming** God’s character (3:5)

E. Eve listened to ungodly **counsel** and was deceived to sin. (3:1; 2 Cor. 11:3)

F. She yielded to temptation in the same **categories** as those mentioned in...

1 John 2:16

G. Adam ate the forbidden fruit **knowingly** . (3:6; 1 Tim. 2:14)

1 Timothy 2:14

H. Their sin was **more** than merely eating forbidden fruit. It was:

1. Disobeying the **revealed** Word of God

2. **Believing** the lie of Satan

3. Placing their **own desires** above God’s command

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Get this: Most of our problems are desires gone bad... desires that morph into demands!

See book, *Gospel Treason – Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols*, to understand better how our desires turn into demands that often drive why we do what we do. Effective biblical counseling works to get after the sin beneath the sin – on a heart level – and not just a superficial, and often temporary, changing of behavior.

The disobedience that Adam and Eve thought would maximize their pleasure instead maximized their pain... and ours.

In fact, Adam magnified his restrictions (he only had one!) and minimized his blessings and freedom. That's the essence of what many times leads us into sin.

"Meaninglessness does not come from being weary of pain, but meaninglessness comes from being weary of pleasure." G.K. Chesterton

That's why John Piper says, "Sin is what we do when we're not satisfied in God."

- I. The same actions today are producing the need for biblical counseling!

Romans 1:28 "... they did not like to retain God in their knowledge..."

Psalm 10:4 "The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God. God is in none of his thoughts."

Job 21:14-15 "Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?'..."

- J. Sin or rejecting God's counsel brings terrible consequences:

- Sin brought eternal consequences:

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- a. Physical death
 - b. Eternal death
- Sin brought **immediate** consequences:
1. We gained a **knowledge** of good and evil (3:7a, 10-11, 22); but lost the **power** to effect change.
 2. Guilt (3:7b, 8, 10-11)
 3. Broken fellowship with God (3:8-13a)
 4. Pain in childbirth (3:16a)
 5. Distorted marital relationships (3:12, 16b)
 6. Exhausting labor in order to make a living (3:17-19)
 7. Physical death (3:19, 22-24)
 8. Spiritual death, eternal separation from God (Rom. 5:12; 6:23)

Sin created problems with **God**, problems with **self** and problems with **others**.

Problems with God:

Isa. 59:1-2 "But your iniquities have separated you from your God..."

Problems with self:

Jer. 17:9 "The heart is deceitfully above all things, and desperately wicked; and who can know it?"

Problems with others:

James 4:1-3 "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?"

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- K. Summary: The need for biblical counseling is rooted in our sinful choice to think and act independently, in violation of God's revealed will.
- L. Like Adam and Eve, sinners today still run, hide, try to cover themselves and blame-shift.

III. You Can See This Same Pattern Illustrated Again and Again in the Bible:

- A. Genesis 4 – Cain's sinful choices that led to murder
- B. 1 Samuel 13–31 – Saul's sinful choices that led to losing the kingdom
- C. Romans 1 – The condition of the human heart

IV. You Can See the Cumulative Result (2 Tim. 3):

- A. Rampant **iniquity** and misdirected love (vv. 2–4) "... lovers of themselves, lovers of money... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."
- B. Rampant **hypocrisy** (vv. 5–7) "having a form of godliness but denying its power... always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."
- C. Rampant **apostasy** (vv. 8–9) "... these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith... they will progress no further..."
- D. Rampant **persecution** (vv. 12–13) "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

V. What Can We Do?

We can throw up our hands and quit! Many have.

1. Some have quit but still play church
2. Some quit by living pessimistic lives. 'Woe-is-me' Christians. It's never been this bad before!
3. Some blame it all on Satan. They major on exorcisms and a demon behind every bush and every sin problem

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4. Some resort to 'Cure-All' blessings. Zap Theology. Just give me the 'zap' – the latest Christian buzz that will put me in the 'zone' and keep me in the 'zone' so that I won't have to struggle so much against sin
5. Some say "It's too late to make lasting change... I'll just evangelize."
6. Many have turned to God's enemies (Freud, Skinner, Maslow) to find out how to bring about change in lives.

Jer. 7:24 "Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward."

VI. Paul Had the Answer for The Problems and Need for Real Change (2 Tim. 3:15– 4:2)

- A. God gave us His inspired and inerrant Word.
- B. God's Word is profitable because it answers four key questions:
 1. How should I think and act? *That's doctrine*
 2. How do I know when I am wrong? *That's reproof*
 3. How do I change? *That's correction*
 4. How do I keep from repeating the same mistakes over and over again?
That's training in righteousness
- C. **Change** is God's and the church's business! His method of real and lasting change is called justification and progressive sanctification.
- D. God's Word adequately **equips** us to help people reaping the pain of sin!

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The Goal of Biblical Counseling

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

1. True biblical counseling always has the clearly defined and communicated goal of helping a counselee become God's kind of a person. (Col. 1:28)
2. The circumstances of a person's life will be used as a springboard to teach them how to think and act in a way that would please the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 5:9; Gal. 1:10)
3. Becoming God's kind of person is an on-going process of putting off wrong thinking and behavior and replacing them with biblical thinking and acting. This will happen as the individual's mind is renewed by salvation and progressive sanctification. (Ephesians, especially chapter 4; Col. 3)
4. Solving the problems that motivated people to see us will be secondary to the goal of helping them to please Christ, whether their circumstances change or not. (Rom. 8:28,29)

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Qualifications of a Biblical Counselor

Gal. 6:1-5

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

A Biblical Counselor Should Be:

1. A **spiritual** person (v. 1a) Literally – ‘you who have the Spirit’ – all saved people.
See Romans 15:14 “You are competent to counsel” Not a higher level of special people.
 - a. **Indwelt** by the Holy Spirit/saved (Rom 8:9)
 - b. **Controlled** by the Spirit (Eph. 5: 18; Gal. 5:22–23)
 - c. **Concerned** about sin’s impact on other people (Gal. 6:7–8)

2. A **gentle** person when seeking to restore someone to usefulness in the body of Christ (v. 1b)

‘Restore’ is Greek word ‘Katartizo’ = to mend a net or broken bone, to hold it in place long enough to heal.

3. A person who takes sin **seriously**

Don’t call it sickness. When you do you rob people of hope. If it’s a disease or sickness there’s nothing they can do. If it’s sin there’s something they can do – repent!

4. A **humble** person, aware of his own struggles (v. 1c) “considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”

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5. A **responsible** person, carrying his own backpack in life (vv. 4-5)

6. A **caring** person, willing to help someone carry a load too heavy for him to carry alone (v. 2)

7. A **confident** person – confident in God’s Word and His Spirit to actually work in lives.

8. A **focused** person – focused on the right goal – ‘Restore’ – to mend a net or set a broken bone

Recommended Books

Equipping Counselors for Your Church, Bob Kellemen, P&R Pub., 2011

The Pastor and Counseling: The Basics of Shepherding Members in Need, Jeremy Pierre and Deepak Reju, Crossway, 2015

Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change, Paul Tripp, P&R Pub., 2002

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“What Makes Biblical Counseling Biblical?”

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

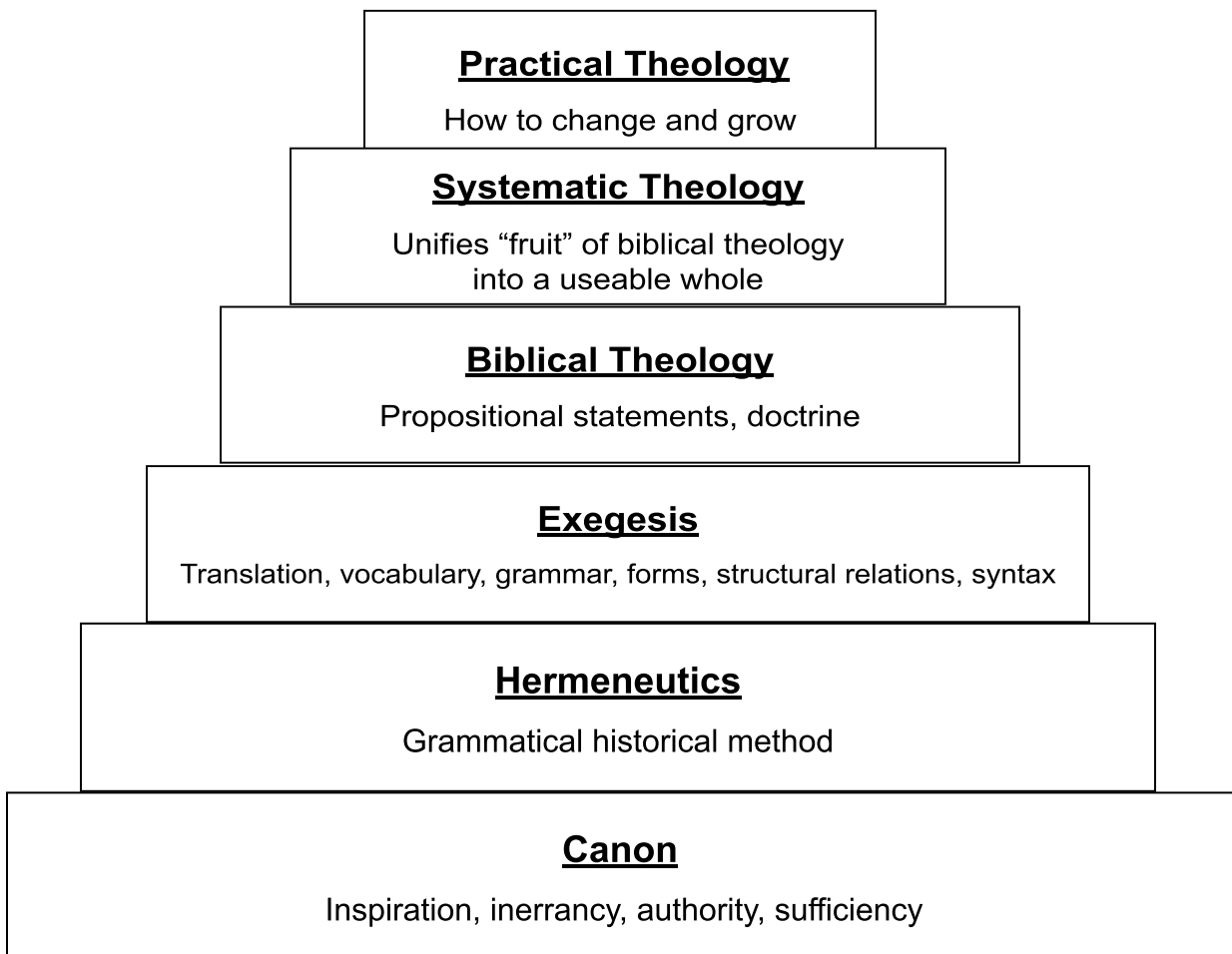
Introduction:

Why is this topic needed?

- 1) Because not all counseling that proposes to be **biblical** truly is.
- 2) Because all of us need to be **growing** as biblical counselors.
- 3) Because all of us need **caution** in our ‘cutting’ and ‘pasting’.

I. When It Recognizes The Bible As Foundational.

A. Theological Pyramid



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"I know that theology is not stylish in this generation of Christians. When our friends think of going for help for their souls, they usually think in terms of their feelings and egos – their innerness, their hearts – and quite naturally gravitate to counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists – something along the lines of the therapeutic. But in matters of the Christian life, and especially prayer, it is the theologian we want at our side, to help us start with God, not just end up with God as a court of last resort... We Christians need theologians far more than we need psychologists." *The Wisdom of Each Other*, Eugene H. Peterson, p. 49 & 50

"Few ministers and priests think theologically. Most of them have been educated in a climate in which the behavioral sciences, such as psychology and sociology, so dominated the educational milieu that no true theology was being learned. Most Christian leaders today raise psychological and sociological questions even though they frame them in scriptural terms. Real theological thinking, which is thinking with the mind of Christ, is hard to find in the practice of ministry. Without solid theological reflection, future leaders will be little more than pseudo-psychologists, pseudo-sociologists, pseudo-social workers. They will think of themselves as enablers, facilitators, role models, father or mother figures, big brothers or big sisters, and so on, and thus join the countless men and women trying to help their fellow human beings to cope with the stresses and strains of everyday living. But that has little to do with Christian leadership." Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), pp. 65-66, as quoted in *God's Passion for His Glory*, John Piper, Crossway Books, 1998, p. 25

Biblical Counseling = coming **alongside** someone with God's Word... filled with the Spirit... and giving **hope** and **help** from God's Word... staying with them long enough for them to experience **lasting** change – from the inside out.

B. Implications:

1. Level six without levels 1-5 is not biblical **counseling**.

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2. Levels 1-5 without level six is **incomplete** and ineffective.

I Timothy 4:16 "Watch your life and doctrine closely..."

Matthew 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

C. Questions I need to ask:

1. Is it possible that some of what I'm doing in level six isn't firmly grounded in Levels 1-5?
2. Is it possible that I have not put a sufficient amount of effort into developing Levels 1-5?

II. When It Recognizes the Bible As **Sufficient**.

2 Peter 1:3-4 "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire." English Standard Version

- A. Because of the Effect of a Thinker's **Presuppositions**.
- B. Therefore, the Bible must have active functional control even to the degree a concept is **Emphasized** in the Model.

III. When It Can Be Derived and Understood By Any **Growing Believer**

- A. Biblical counseling does not have a "**Gnostic Flavor**."

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B. Biblical counseling produces an increased **Confidence** on the part of qualified believers.

2 Corinthians 2:14 “But thanks be to God, who always leads us to triumph in Christ Jesus, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”

IV. When It Is “**Elastic**” Enough to Grow With The Counselor’s Understanding Of Scripture

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Presuppositions of Biblical Counseling

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

A 'presupposition' is a preceding condition that's necessary if you're going to understand what follows.

So what are some of the Presuppositions of Biblical Counseling? Or what are some of the conditions that you need to have in place in order to really understand biblical counseling?

Dr. Stuart Scott – professor of biblical counseling at Southern Seminary – lists the following presuppositions:

- I. The God of the Bible is the Sovereign **Creator** and **Sustainer** of the universe.
 - A. God will not allow anything to come into our lives which is beyond our control that will permanently damage or hinder His best for our lives. I Cor.10:13; Phil.1:6; Rom.8:28–29; I Thess.5:18; Lam.3:37; Jas.1:2; Eph.1:11
 - B. There is a **redemptive** value in every problem. God can use it for our **good**. God is far more concerned about our **character** than He is in removing the problem. Our character has value in this life and for eternity. Phil.2:13; Jude 24; Eph.3:20; I Tim.4:7–9
- II. Man was created in God's image as a **responsible** being. One cannot make **excuses** before his Creator. Gen.1:26–27; II Cor.5:10; Rev.20:11–15; Ezk.18:2ff. * If one does not act responsibly, there will be emotional consequences.
- III. Sin is thinking or acting **independently** of God and results in both temporal and eternal misery. God's laws are not optional for Christian and non-Christian alike. Prov.14:14; Ps.14:1; II Cor.10:4–6; Prov.23:7; Prov.13:15.

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- IV. The Bible is the only **complete** and **authoritative** source which was written specifically to provide both the answers to man's behavioral problems and the means for man's behavioral changes. It is totally **sufficient** in these areas. A. Man can only change in two ways; external, and internal B. Only God can change the internal as well as the external Rom.10:14-17; II Tim.3:16-17; I Thess.5:23-24.
- V. Apart from **organically** caused factors, all of man's voluntary thought and behavior is moral, for which man is responsible before God and his neighbor. II Cor.5:10; Matt.12:33-37; Mark 7:18-23.
- VI. Every functional behavioral problem which man experiences is a result of **failure** to love God or man or both as the Bible says he should. Matt.22:37-40
- VII. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is a **prerequisite** for Biblical change and obedience on the part of the counselee. I Cor.1:18-2:16; II Cor.5:17
- VIII. The only behavioral changes in man which are **pleasing** to God and are ultimately beneficial to men are those which are effected by means of the Holy Spirit applying the Word of God in sanctifying power to the will and mind of the counselee in accordance with Biblical methods and directives. Jn.17:17; I Pt.2:2; Col.3:1-17; Rom.12:2; Eph.4:23
- * The proper motivation will be one of love and gratitude.
- IX. All **methodology** must grow out of Biblical principles and practices (thus, non-Christian content or methods have no necessary place in Biblical counseling). II Cor.6:14-18; II Tim.3:16-17; Col.2:6-10; I Pt.1:13-21
- X. The Biblical counselor should **expect** and see results from Biblical counseling. I Cor.10:13; II Tim.3:16-17; Rom.15:13; Rom.8:28-29; Phil.4:13; II Pt.1:3-4; Eph.3:20

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- XI. Biblical counseling requires and includes church **accountability** and discipline where that is Biblically necessary. Thus Biblical counseling should ultimately be done under the authority of some church. Church discipline is corrective in design and only for professing Christians. Matt.18:15-17; Gal.6:1; I Cor.5:1-13; Matt.7:1-5
- XII. God requires and equips **all believers** to counsel to one degree or another. Additionally, God holds the officers of the Churches responsible to counsel as a part of their life calling. Matt.18:15-17; I Tim.3:4-5; Rom.15:14; Titus 2:9ff; II Tim.4:1-2; Heb.13:17; Gal.6:1
- XIII. Man's basic needs are to **know** God (be forgiven and know His person) and **glorify** God. By man's meeting these needs, his other secondary needs are met as a by-product (safety, acceptance, belonging, properly evaluating himself). I Cor.10:31; II Cor.5:9; Phil.1:6; Matt.6:33; Jer.9:23-24
- XIV. The ultimate **goals** of the counselor (encourager) for the counselee (needy one) is:
- A. To allow him to acquire the biblical perspective and practical theology relative to his presenting problem(s)
 - B. To facilitate a meaningful walk with God in Christ-like behavior. Isa.55:8-9; Jer.9:23-24; Rom.8:28-29; Phil.2:1-11; 3:10

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Book Recommendations

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change, Paul Tripp, P&R Pub., 2002

Biblical Counseling and the Church: God's Care Through God's People, Bob Kellemen, ed., Zondervan, 2015

A Theology of Christian Counseling: More than Redemption, Jay E. Adams, Zondervan, 1979

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Process of Biblical Change

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction

I. Position for Change: Union with Christ

- A. Union in Christ is not a biblical phrase but it is a biblical construct.
- B. But why do we need union in Christ?
 - Adam and Eve were created without corruption. Their sinful choice to disobey brought God's righteous judgment and consequence of sin. All of mankind is now born in sin, guilty and corrupt. **Genesis 3:7-8 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Rom. 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**
 - Sin separated and alienated mankind from God. Eph. 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **Col. 1:21-23 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.**
 - Mankind cannot be saved without God's intervention and provision of a Savior. **1 Cor. 15:50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.**
 - One must be born again provided by the Holy Spirit of God. **John 3:3-8 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of**

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God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

- It is important, once in Christ, to remember that we are saved by works, but NOT our works!!! 2 Corinthians 5:14–15 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15 and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
- Salvation comes so that you can be reunited and possess union with Christ. Romans 5:6–21 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. 12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. 18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the

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more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- C. Once a person possesses eternal life (salvation), the Holy Spirit then indwells, or lives inside, a believer providing union with God. God provides communion and fellowship with Him. **2 Tim. 1:14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. Rom. 8:11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.**
- D. Sanctification, or spiritual growth in a change process, is now possible in a way that pleases and glorifies God. **2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Cor. 5:9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.**
- E. The language of union with Christ is found in the Old and New Testaments:
- Old Testament language:
 - The covenant bond with Israel and God. **Ps. 73:26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**
 - God reciprocates with Israel as His portion. **Deuteronomy 32:9 But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.**
 - One of God's Names is Emmanuel, which means "God with us."
 - New Testament language:
 - "In Christ" Rom. 3:24
 - "Belong to Christ" Rom. 1:6
 - "Christ is in you" Rom. 8:10
 - "in the Lord" 1 Cor. 4:7 (also in OT)
 - Profound Mystery of the marriage union pictures Christ and His church. Eph. 4:32
 - Vine and the branches metaphor of union. John 15
 - Head and the body metaphor of union. 1 Cor. 12
 - Union of the Holy Trinity. John 17:20-23

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- “in the Spirit” and “the Spirit in you” in Rom. 8:9–10
- Jesus taught His followers to abide in Him. **John 14:18–21** “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. **21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

F. Union with Christ is unbreakable, enduring even after death. **Rom. 8:38–39** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

II. The Power to Change: The Holy Spirit

- The Bible teaches that abiding in Christ is inseparably connected to obedience and righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. **1 John 2:26–29** I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. **27** But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him. **28** And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. **29** If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

John 15:4–11 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. **9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. **11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

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- The implanted Word and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit connect us to Christ and motivate us to do righteous deeds out of our love for Christ with a desire to glorify Him. **James 1:19–25 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.**

Eph. 6:17b and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

- Union with Christ gives you a new identity, a new family, and a new purpose. **1 Peter 2:9–12 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.**
- Redemption is immediate in salvation yet a process in sanctification:
 - What God is doing in the biblical change process (or sanctification process) is RE-MAKING us to the original format and into Christ-likeness.
 - We only experience it by understanding and embracing by faith that we are LOVED CHILDREN. We have access to our Abba Father, God, who delights to grow us into the likeness of Christ.
 - **Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

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- Suffering in this life produces sanctification opportunities. **2 Corinthians 4:16–18** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. **17** For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, **18** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.
- The basis for everything that God commands of us, is that He gave it first in Christ. **Luke 9:23–27** And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. **24** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. **25** For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? **26** For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. **27** But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”
- Then the INDICATIVES (who is God and what he has done) become the key to the IMPERATIVES (what God commands). **Ephesians 3:14–21**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

- We must consider: is there a new heart motivation in the counselee? Does your counselee’s heart follow its new condition or the flesh? **Gal. 5:16–26**
 - We attempt to determine if the counselee has been born again (or not). We cannot know the heart nor can we know for sure, but we can ask questions as we evaluate and inspect the fruit (or lack thereof) produced. **Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 1:23, 2 Corinthians 5:17**
- We should begin to see the transformational power of the Holy Spirit gradually evidenced by new desires and a new heart. **2 Corinthians 5:15** ...and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

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- The homework tasks that are assigned to a counselee reflect a new identity, not actions to be a better person. **Jeremiah 24:7 I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.**
- Your counselee's identity affects their whole perspective, motivation, and behaviors and demonstrates the power of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**

III. The Process of Change

- There are only two ways for the Christian to live.

Galatians 5:16–26 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

- Renouncing lies and unrighteousness is a mark of a transforming Christian. **Titus 2:11–15 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. 15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.**

Romans 6:1–4 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by

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baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

- The Word and the Holy Spirit work together to empower the Christ follower to obey God for His glory alone.

Psalm 119:11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

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The chart starts with Christ who is the truth. He alone provides the absolute truth (Eph. 4:20–21) and doctrine/teaching (2 Tim. 3:16a) your counselee needs to fully embrace.

	Application for Biblical Counselors	Eph 4:20–24	2 Tim 3:16–17
<p>TEACHING: (doctrine)</p> <p>Learning God’s Word & that Jesus is the truth—the standard. God’s wisdom is the starting point understood by the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Teach counselee the standard from what the Word of God says about their specific thoughts, words, and actions.</p>	<p>vv. 20–21</p> <p><i>But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,</i></p>	<p><i>All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching,</i></p>
<p>REPROOF:</p> <p>Discovering the sinful, old thinking and desires that do not line up with God’s standard. Identifying it by the conviction of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Discern thinking, speaking, and acting that do not meet God’s standard. Identifying lies and wrong desires.</p>	<p>v. 22</p> <p><i>to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,</i></p>	<p><i>for reproof,</i></p>
<p>CORRECTION:</p> <p>Renewing the mind. This is the Holy Spirit’s work in tandem with God’s Word! Heart change and repentance truly begin.</p>	<p>Replace the former, wrong attitude with a new, biblical attitude and heart desire that will produce new thinking, speaking, and acting.</p>	<p>v.23</p> <p><i>and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,</i></p>	<p><i>for correction,</i></p>
<p>TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS:</p> <p>Putting into action new, righteous thinking, speaking, and acting that reflect the new, biblical heart attitude by the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ-likeness is observed.</p>	<p>Assist in working out a practical plan of repentance. Replacement put-on behaviors are observed in the counselee’s thoughts, words, and actions. Accountability, submission.</p>	<p>v.24</p> <p><i>and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.</i></p>	<p><i>and for training in righteousness,</i></p> <p><i>¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.</i></p>

Helping People Change Chart: Eph. 4:20–24 and 2 Tim. 3:16 in the change process

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The next aspect is the Put-off (Eph. 4:22) and/or Reproof step (2 Tim. 3:16b). It is the “bad news” that tells your counselee that they are thinking, speaking, and behaving in ungodly ways. This step in the process requires:

Confession and Repentance:

- Responding to the Word often requires repentance. The Bible gives us the full understanding of Whom we sin against. **Ps. 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.**
- Understand and confess that God is right.

Daniel 9:4–8 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7 To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. 8 To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you.

- We have to be honest and call the thoughts, words, and behaviors what they are: sin (disobedience, rebellion, etc).

Daniel 9:9–11 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him 10 and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.

- Remember who God is and who He has been.

Daniel 9:9–11 reminds us of the glory of His Name

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- Our only protection.

Daniel 9:17-19 "...Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. 18 O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."

The third aspect in the process of biblical changes is a Renewal of the Mind (Eph. 4:23) or Correction (2 Tim. 3:16c).

To Renew the Mind:

- It is an attitude adjustment that comes from listening and believing God at His Word.
- In true repentance we have the certainty that God is our Lord and we return to Him in our hearts. Jeremiah 3:12-14 Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, "Return, faithless Israel, declares the Lord. I will not look on you in anger, for I am merciful, declares the Lord; I will not be angry forever. See also Jeremiah 32:38-41
- This step is about hating what you once loved (sin) and loving what you once hated (Christ and obedience to His Word).

The fourth and final aspect is the Put-on (Eph. 4:24) and/or Disciplined Training in Righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16d) step as empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

- This is the action step of walking with God in complete trust and belief in Him. Proverbs 3:5-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- Repentance, in essence, is to return to God in both heart and outward behaviors. It is a relational returning back to Him for who He is, for what Jesus did, with a desire to love Him, and a desire to surrender to Him for His glory alone. Col. 3:16
- Your counselee progresses in Christian faith by meditating on the Word and living as a servant to Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6
- Remind your counselee of the good news that they are loved, forgiven, justified, adopted, being sanctified, and will soon be glorified. Rom. 8: 28-30.

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- Our confidence is not in your counselee's ability (or your own ability as a counselor), but in God's ability to transform the desires and beliefs within the heart. Ephesians 3:20–21; Colossians 1:28; 2 Peter 1:3–9

Other Passages to Consider: 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Romans 8:13, 28–30; Colossians 1:28; 3:5; Ephesians 5:18–21; John 14–16.

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The Doctrine of Sanctification

David Michael, Grace Fellowship Church

This is the will of God, your sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

I. Introduction

A. Seeing Your Life and Doctrine Closely

B. Definitions

1. Doctrine – teaching or set of beliefs
2. Sanctification – to be set apart, holy.

From the root Greek word *hagios*; which means to make holy, purify or consecrate; to be holy, to be separate, to be set apart

a. According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism (Q. 35), sanctification is “the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”

b. J. I. Packer adds, “The concept is not of sin being totally eradicated (that is to claim too much) or merely counteracted (that is to say too little), but of divinely wrought character change freeing us from sinful habits and forming in us Christlike affections, dispositions, and virtues.”¹

c. In a phrase, GROWTH to be like Jesus!

d. Other Uses: Sanctification is spoken of as an accomplished event (1 Cor. 1:30,31; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 3:9-10) and as an ongoing process (Eph. 4:15-16,23).

¹ J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, pg. 169.

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*To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those **sanctified** in Christ Jesus, called to be **saints** together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.*

I Corinthians 1:2

So there is **positional sanctification** where we are already holy in God's eyes, but there is a "not yet" in our holiness that we call **Progressive Sanctification**. The progressive nature of becoming holy is what we're dealing with in this session.

C. False Concepts of Sanctification

1. A False Concept of Man's Responsibility

- a. Examples: Perfectionism, Self-Sufficiency and Legalism
- b. Favorite Quote: "Just Do It!"
- c. Practically: How do I respond when I sin? Do I beat myself up with guilt and condemnation, disappointed that I've failed AGAIN? I may be expecting myself to be sinless, instead of returning to the truth of the Gospel and repenting.

2. A False Concept of God's Grace

- a. Examples: Emotionalism, Mysticism, and Laziness
- b. Favorite Quote: "Let go and let God."
- c. Practically: I recognize sin, but it's not followed by genuine repentance that turns away from sin and walks in obedience. Rather, I believe that God has to do something different in my life – I need another experience or a deliverance that will change my heart and make obedience easy.

II. Key Points of Progressive Sanctification

A. The Stage of Sanctification

1. Regeneration (rebirth, new life, born again)

*He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of **regeneration** and renewal of the Holy Spirit.*

Titus 3:5

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2. Justification (legal, Just as if...)

*Yet we know that a person is not **justified** by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be **justified** by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.*

Galatians 2:16

Verb Moods: A little English Grammar that impacts theology that impacts life!

This has transformed how I read scripture!

i. Indicatives – moods of certainty, actuality

ii. Imperatives – mood of command

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:1-3

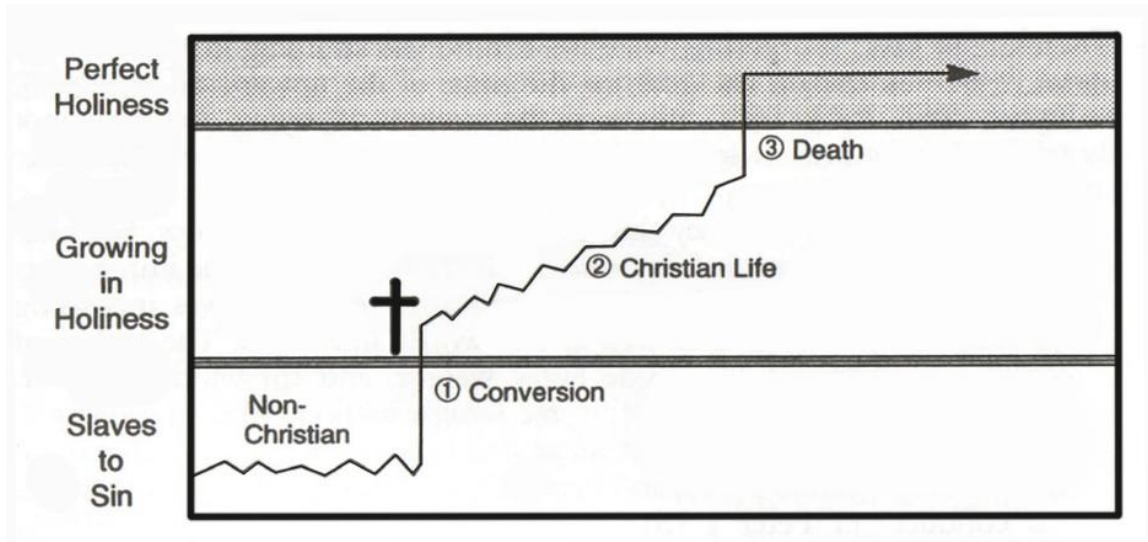
You can't Do unless it's been DONE!

3. Sanctification (growing in holiness)

*And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and **may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.*

I Thessalonians 5:14-24

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4. Glorification

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him (Ultimate Sanctification), because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure (Progressive Sanctification).

I John 3:2

5. Practical Implications

a.

b.

B. The Necessity of Sanctification

1. God is holy

² Grudem, Wayne, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 750.

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Moses said, "Please show me your glory." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."

Exodus 33:18-20

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!"

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Isaiah 6:1-5

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!
Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!

Psalms 96:7-9

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no **darkness at all**.

I John 1:5

2. We are united with Christ

What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin** that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, **just as Christ was raised** from the dead by the glory of the Father, **we too might walk in newness of life**.

Romans 6:1-4

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3. It **expresses** our salvation and true identity

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:20–23

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

James 2:14

*As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, **but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy** in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*

1 Peter 1:14–16

*If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light**, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

1 John 1:6–8

4. Without it we won't see God

*Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without **which no one will see the Lord**. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.*

Hebrews 12:14–17

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For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

Hebrews 12:26–27

C. The Spectrum of Sanctification

1. The Heart – Where Change Begins

*Keep your **heart** with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

Proverbs 4:23

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit **in your inner being**, so that Christ may dwell in your **hearts** through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, **that you may be filled** with all the fullness of God.*

Ephesians 3:14–19

You can't change your heart – that's why the next two verses are:

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20–21

2. Working out to our Hands and Feet

*Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify** you completely, and **may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.*

I Thessalonians 5:23–24

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*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in **word or deed**, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Colossians 3:16-17

*Little children, let us not love in word or talk but **in deed and in truth**. By this we shall know that we are of the truth and **reassure our heart before him**; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God.*

I John 3:18-21

D. The Goal of Sanctification

1. Destroy and Remove all Pride

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, **and you will be like God**, knowing good and evil."*

Genesis 3:1-5

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, **they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him**, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and*

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exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore **God gave them up in the lusts** of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they **exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature** rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Romans 1:18–24

We **destroy** arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, **and take every thought captive** to obey Christ...

II Cor. 10:5

2. Be transformed to be like Christ

And we know that for those who love **God, all things** work together for **good**, for those who are called according to **his purpose**. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also **called**, and those whom he called he also **justified**, and those whom he justified he also **glorified**.

Romans 8:28–30

E. Essential Participants within Sanctification

All members of the Godhead are essential, but it is especially the Holy Spirit's role in our lives.

1. The Essential Presence of the Holy Spirit

I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7

"The Holy Spirit is the prominent agent in the outworking of our progressive sanctification. It is by the Spirit that we put to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13). The Spirit ignites love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5). By the Spirit we are changed from glory to glory to become more and more like Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). And it is the fruit of the Spirit that produces in us Christ-likeness, which is the goal of sanctification (Gal. 5:22–23)."³

³ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, pg. 443.

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Do you not know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit** within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

I Cor. 6:19–20

Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from **doing the things you want to do**. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.**

Galatians 5:16–25

2. You!

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. You see that **a person is justified by works and not by faith alone**. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

James 2:21–26

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12–13

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And by this we know that **we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments**. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the **love of God is perfected**. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

I John 5:3-6

F. The Paradox of Sanctification

1. Weaker is stronger

Jesus started off his ministry in Matthew 5, rejecting those who thought they had it all together and welcoming those who recognized their desperation for help.

*"Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*"Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they shall be comforted.*

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

*"Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.*

Matthew 5:3-6

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Romans 7:24-25

J. C. Ryle in his book *Holiness* writes:

"Sanctification, again, is a thing which does not prevent a man having a great deal of inward spiritual conflict. By conflict I mean a struggle within the heart between the old nature and the new, the flesh and the spirit.... A deep sense of that struggle, and a vast amount of mental discomfort from it, are no proof that a man is not sanctified.... A true Christian is one who has not only peace of conscience, but war within."⁴

This is confirmed in testimony of godly believers:

Oswald Sanders: "The older I get, the more deeply I am aware of how sinful I am."

⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots*, pg. 26-27.
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2. Discipline is Love

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

*“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For **the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.**” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, **that we may share his holiness.** For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Hebrews 12:3-11

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:1-2

3. Suffering is Serving

*But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of **suffering** are being **accomplished** by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

I Peter 5:9-10

G. The Process of Sanctification

a. Grace Alone

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As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him

Colossians 2:6

*Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.*

b. ...in the Presence of God

*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, **beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed** into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

2 Corinthians 3:18

***Now to him who is able** to keep you from stumbling and to present you **blameless** before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

Jude 24-25

Recommended Resources

- *The Enemy Within* by Kris Lundgaard
- *Holiness: It's Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots* by J. C. Ryle
- *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan
- *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges
- *The Discipline of Grace* by Jerry Bridges

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Getting to Heart Issues

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

People by nature are **worshippers**. People are worshipping all around us every day.

The question is, "**What** or **Whom** are you worshipping?"

I. Why Is This a '**Big Deal**'?

David Powlison says "Idolatry is by far the most frequently discussed problem in the Scriptures... the relevance of massive chunks of Scripture hangs on our understanding of idolatry."

Definition: An idol is **anything** or **anyone** that begins to **capture** our **hearts** and **minds** and **affections** more than God.

Who or what you worship is 'What's on your mind.'

What you long for ~ wish for

What you have your heart set on

What's really important to you THAT'S WHAT YOU WORSHIP.

I **John 5:21** "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

Question: "Has something or someone besides Jesus Christ taken hold of the title of your heart? Is there something or someone else that holds your heart's trust... preoccupation... loyalty... service... fear... and delight?"

A. Any Idol Will Become a **Snare** in Your Life

Psa. 106:34-36 "They did not destroy the peoples, concerning whom the Lord had commanded them, but they mingled with the Gentiles

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and *learned their works*; they served their idols, which *became a snare* to them."

B. Any Idol Will Ultimately Hinder Your Walk with the Lord

Ezek. 14:5b "... they are all estranged from Me by their idols"

C. Any Idol Will Block the Grace of God in Your Life

Jonah 2:8 "Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs"

- To receive God's grace your hands need to be empty. Whatever you choose to put ahead of God and in first place in your life is an idol and will cause you to forfeit / give up the grace that could be yours.
- God is in fact committed to frustrating you to the point that you will be forced to drop those idols and turn to Him with open hands and open heart.

Jer. 2:13 "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

II. So Where Do Idols Come From? How Do We Get Into Trouble In This Area? Why Does It Happen?

Ezek. 14:3-4,7 "Son of man, these men have set up their idols *in their hearts*, and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces.... v.4 everyone of the house of Israel ...*sets up his idols in his heart*... I, the Lord, will answer him according to the *multitude of his idols*..."

James 1:14 "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed."

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Pressure causes temptation to flee to idolatry as a refuge. So 'idols' become a snare.

I Cor. 10:13-14 "There is no temptation that is overtaken you but such as is common to man, and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but will with the temptation provide the way of escape, that you may be able to bear up under it... v. 14 Therefore my beloved, flee from idolatry."

John Calvin said, "***The heart is a factory of idols.***" Our heart cranks out idols as fast as the flesh can set its sights on some new pleasure.

III. How Do You Spot an 'Idol' In Your Own Life?

A. Follow the Trail of Your Time, Money, and Affections

When there is an 'IDOL' you will:

- a. **Sacrifice** for it
- b. Spend **Time** on it
- c. Spend **Money** on it - Matt. 6:21 "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also."
- d. **Talk** about it - Matt. 12:34 "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks..."
- e. **Serve** it - Matt. 6:24 "No one can serve two masters..."
- f. **Protect** it / defend it

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- g. **Think** about it Prov. 23:7 "... as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."
 - h. **Worry** about it
 - i. Build Your **Schedule** around it
 - j. **Perfect** it
 - k. Get Angry if someone / something **blocks** you from it
 - l. Experience intense Fear / Anxiety if it is **threatened** in any way
 - m. Spiral into Despair / Depression (even suicidal) if you fail to **achieve** it
- 'IDOLS' that we worship take the throne of our heart from time to time. As you become a good listener to people, you'll hear their 'IDOLS.'
 - Idolatry is not so much wanting the wrong thing... but wanting even good things too much. You've lost sense of a biblical priority.
 - The Puritans referred to it as having an inordinate desire.

Romans 1:21-23, 25 "Because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man... they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator..."

"At the most basic level, idols are what we make out of the evidence for God within ourselves and in the world – if we do not want to face the face of God Himself in His majesty and holiness. Rather than look to the Creator and have to deal with His lordship, we orient our lives toward the creation, where we can be more free to control and shape our lives in our desired directions... However, since we were made to relate to God, but do not want to face Him, we forever inflate things in this world to religious proportions to fill the vacuum left by God's exclusion." Richard Keyes in *No God But God*, Os Guinness, p. 32

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- Paul Tripp said, "Children are a gift but they make terrible trophies."

"Joanna thought she had grown in her faith. The problem was that she had forgotten who she was, and it was not long before her identity in Christ was replaced by another identity. Joanna's children became her new identity. They gave her meaning and purpose, and they really did give her hope and joy. The problem was that they were not sent by God to do any of that. Joanna lived vicariously through them, and the more she did, the more she became obsessed with their success. Although Joanna was just as faithful in her personal devotions and public worship, God was no longer at the center of who she was. All it took was Jimmy to mess it all up. With all his inner turmoil, Jimmy didn't make a very good trophy. Being with him often meant unexpected confrontations and public embarrassment. The girls were forced to live in the wings of Jimmy's drama and they didn't turn out to be trophy children either. Now that they were adults, Joanna was lost... In their tumultuous launch into adulthood, the kids not only broke Joanna's heart, but they also robbed her of her identity. She felt like it had all been for naught. When she looked in the mirror, she felt like she didn't know the person she saw there." *Lost in the Middle*, Paul David Tripp, p. 275-276

B. Ask Heart Questions

Three Heart Diagnostic Questions

1. Am I willing to sin to Get it?
2. Am I willing to sin if I think I'm going to Lose it?
3. Do I run to it for 'Refuge' instead of turning to God?

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- shopping
- Eating
- Working on my car
- Staying late at work
- Watching movies or playing computer games

"A woman commits adultery, and repents. She and her husband rebuild the marriage, painstakingly, patiently. Eight months later the man finds himself plagued with subtle suspiciousness. The wife senses it, and feels a bit like she lives under FBI surveillance. The husband is grieved by his suspiciousness, because he has no objective reasons for suspicion. 'I've forgiven her; we've rebuilt our marriage; we've never communicated better; why do I hold onto this mistrust?' What finally emerges is that he is willing to forgive the past, but he is attempting to control the future. His craving could be stated this way:

'I want to guarantee that betrayal never, ever happens again.' The very intensity of his craving starts to poison the relationship; it places him in the stance of continually evaluating and judging his wife, rather than loving her. What he wants cannot be guaranteed this side of heaven. He sees the point, sees his inordinate desire to ensure the future. But he bursts out, 'What's wrong with wanting my wife to love me? What's wrong with wanting her to remain faithful to our marriage?' Here is where this truth is so sweet. There is nothing wrong with the object of desire; there is everything wrong when it rules his life. The process of restoring that marriage took a long step forward as he grasped a lesson his Shepherd had for him."

David Powlison, "The Sufficiency of Scripture to Diagnose and Cure Souls," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 23, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 6

C. Look for Chaos!

- We do not all respond to people and situations the same way because we do not all bring the SAME HEART to them (i.e. the talkative person that annoys you might be interesting to the person sitting next to you – the heart makes all the difference)
- James makes a huge connection between our desires, or what we want, and what makes us angry.

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- All of us are filled with competing desires – James calls it the “desires that battle within you” And they battle for control.

James 3:16 “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there.”

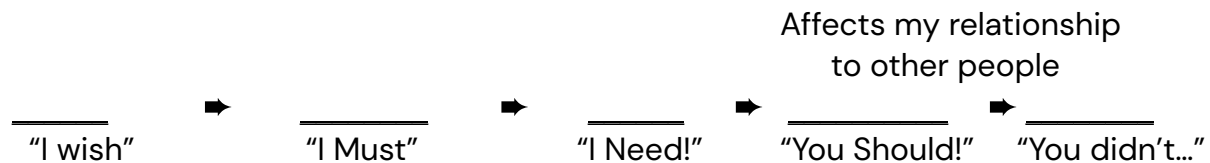
Dave Powlison “It’s a serious mistake to engage in introspective ‘idol hunts,’ attempting to dig out and weigh every kink in the human soul. The Bible calls for a more straightforward form of self-examination: an outburst of anger invites reflection on what craving ruled the heart so that our repentance can be intelligent.”

Cravings underline conflicts!

Let’s examine The Stages of the War for the heart

* Taken from Paul Tripp *

Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands



Spirals down into...



“Because you didn’t, now I will...” or “now I won’t...”

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Desire – often something legitimate. A desire is not necessarily sinful.

- o to have a godly marriage
- o to get married
- o to have children
- o to have godly children
- o to be a hard worker or to do something meaningful with our lives
- o to enjoy some relaxation
- o to save \$ for retirement

Demand – is the closing of my fists around a desire. I can longer imagine a good life without this thing. So now I enter the room with a SILENT DEMAND – “You must help me get what I want.” If you are an obstacle I will be angry and impatient with you. **But here’s the real source of confusion:** You don’t know the rules of the game. I haven’t announced my demand to you because I myself am unaware that my heart is being controlled by it.

Need – I now view this thing I want as ESSENTIAL TO LIFE. This is one more step towards SLAVERY to desire. So... envy, discouragement, bitterness, and doubting God start to grow as we become convinced that we are being DENIED things we NEED to live life as it was meant to be lived. In our culture the word ‘Need’ is used fast and loose for everything.

Expectation – If I’m convinced I need it and you say you love me, then it seems right for me to expect you to help me get it. This NEED-DRIVEN expectation is the SOURCE of 90% of the conflict in relationships today. You start to see this thing as a RIGHT.

Disappointment – Sinful and demanding expectations SET US UP for disappointment. So much of our disappointment in relationships is not because people have ACTUALLY WRONGED us, but because we think they have failed to meet our expectations.

Punishment – We are hurt and disappointment in this person who says they love us, so we STRIKE BACK in a variety of ways to punish them. Basically we are angry because we’ve decided they have BROKEN THE LAWS OF **MY kingdom**. At this point I am no longer loving GOD and OTHER people, instead I LOVE THINGS and USE PEOPLE to try and get them.

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C.S. Lewis – “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.” C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, “Hope.”

If my heart is ruled by a certain desire, there are only **TWO WAYS I can respond to you:**

1. If you are helping me get what I want, I will be happy with you
2. But if you stand in my way, I will be angry, frustrated, and discouraged when I am with you. There will be times when I wish you weren't in my life. You stand in the way of what I crave so I lash out at you.

D. Take Note of Your Heart during Suffering & Disappointment

Don't just push through the pain. Ask God to show you your own heart and the idols that are being exposed.

Suffering exposes our idols. If you'll learn to look for it God can help you see something besides the pain that you're in, so that you can actually learn a lot about your heart.

It takes heat to bring idols to the surface, so suffering is a great time to learn about your own heart.

IV. How Do You Repent of Idols in Your Life?

Identifying Personal Idols (worksheet – www.bradbigney.com)

Idolatry Repentance Plan (worksheet – www.bradbigney.com)

- Change your thinking (example worksheet – www.bradbigney.com)
- Change your actions

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Identifying your idols is a great start but that's not the end. If you don't make specific plans for overcoming those idols you'll just keep right on living with them rumbling around in your life. Most people fail to change because they don't make specific plans to change.

Final Warning – Make sure you point your counselees to the cross... and Christ... and the Gospel during this process. Yes, we want them to spend time examining their heart... but don't ever let them lose sight of the fact that they're spending time examining their heart in the presence of their Savior... they're not alone... not on their own... not in isolation...

Otherwise these times of heart EXAMINATION will turn into obsessive CONDEMNATION. Don't let them do that!

Colossians 3:1–5 *NIV* “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.”

If you simply uproot some idols and fail to “plant” the love of Christ in their place those idols will grow back, and bring some others with them because your heart is still not delighting in and satisfied with Christ.

Ed Welch, “The path of change goes through the heart and continues on to the Gospel, where God chose to most fully reveal Himself in the death and resurrection of Christ.” Ed Welch, “Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 22, no. 1 (Fall 2003): 7.

Fruit You Can Expect as You Repent of Your Own Idolatry

A. You'll Start to Really Get Free – You'll Have So Much More Freedom to Serve God & Run Unhindered Towards Godliness

Hebrews 12:1–2 “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race

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that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith..."

Idols do two things that this verse talks about: (1) Weigh us down (2) Keep us from seeing

B. You Might Start to See Yourself and Others Clearly for the Very First Time

Matthew 7: 3-5 "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck out of your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye."

C. You'll Feel More Conviction of Sin ~ You'll Have a Greater Conviction of Sin and the Ability to Forsake It

Proverbs 28:13-14 "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy... but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity."

Idols, many times, are what keep us from the 'and forsakes them' part! Idols whisper to us to just hang on a little bit longer. You'll have the conviction of sin and the ability to forsake it rather than the paralyzing and often prideful self-condemnation that leaves you just wallowing and unable to get past it.

D. Your Passion and Love for God and Your Savior Will Soar!

Blaise Pascal got it right when he said, "Knowing God without knowing our own wretchedness makes for pride. Knowing our own wretchedness without knowing God makes for despair. Knowing Jesus Christ strikes the balance because He shows us both God and our own wretchedness."

Luke 7:47 "Therefore I say to you, her sins which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

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Recommended Books

Gospel Treason – Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols,
Brad Bigney, P&R Pub., 2012

Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power,
Tim Keller, Dutton, 2009

Idol Lies: Facing the Truth about Our Deepest Desires,
Dee Brestin, Worthy Pub., 2012

Lost in the Middle: Midlife and the Grace of God,
Paul Tripp, Shepherd Press, 2004

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Anger

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

One of the most important life skills one can develop is a healthy way to handle anger.

Anger can shatter communication and tear apart relationships, oftentimes ruins joy and even the health of many.

I. Introduction: Some people believe that all anger is sinful.

- a. "Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matt 5.9).
- b. "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live **peaceably** with all." (Rom. 12.18)
- c. We are to pray "for kings and all who are in high positions, **that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life**, godly and dignified in every way. (1 Tim. 2.2)
 - i. By far & away, the vast majority of the imperatives in the NT show us that we're to be people of peace, of love, of self-control, and that we're not to be characterized by anger.
- d. Jesus Christ was not characterized by anger.
- e. God the Father is not characterized by anger.
 - i. "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, **slow to anger**, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (Ex. 34:6)
- f. The first appearance of anger in the Bible is after the Fall of Man (Genesis 4:5-8).
 - i. It's understandable why it may appear that anger is always sinful, but that's simply not the case.

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II. Anger, in and of itself, is not a sin.

a. If anger was a sin, we'd never be **commanded** to be angry.

i. **Eph. 4:26a** – Be angry, and do not sin...

b. If anger was sinful, God would never be angry.

i. **Exod. 22:24** – and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

ii. **Psa. 7:11** – God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels **indignation** every day.

iii. **2 Chron. 26:16–23** – God's anger at Uzziah

iv. **Mark. 3:5** – And [Jesus] looked around at them with **anger**, grieved at their hardness of heart...

v. **Matt. 21:12–13** – And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

III. Even though anger is not a sin, our anger probably is.

a. Anger is also a **learned** response.

i. How and what to be angry at is **displayed** to us.

1. Parents, siblings, spouses, friends, etc.

2. While anger is **innate** within us, we learn what to get upset about and how to show our displeasure. Prov. 22:24–25

3. Anger is **practiced** and can become a habit or "second nature."

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- b. Also, let's not forget the doctrine of **total depravity**. Every area of our life has been affected & infected by our sinful nature.
(Rom. 3:9–18)
- i. No one is without sin. (Rom. 3:10)
 - ii. No one seeks after God. (Rom. 3:11)
 - iii. No one is good. (Rom. 3:12)
 - iv. Our speech is corrupted by sin. (Rom. 3:13,14)
 - v. Our actions are corrupted by sin. (Rom. 3:15)
 - vi. We have no natural fear of God. (Rom. 3:18)
- c. When the Bible speaks of our anger, the vast majority of ink is dedicated to warnings and cautions of misuse.
- i. **Proverbs 12:16** – The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult.
 - ii. **Proverbs 14:17** – A man of quick temper acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.
 - iii. **Prov. 14:29** – Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.
 - iv. **Prov. 15:18** – A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.
 - v. **Prov. 16:32** – Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.
 - vi. **Prov. 29:22** – A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.
- d. Finally, just consider your own experiences with anger. Are these your fondest memories, or are they usually associated with sadness & regret?

IV. **Biblical Understanding of Emotion vs. The Emotion of Anger...So, what is anger anyway?**

- a. Concise definition: Anger is an emotional and physical **reaction** to another's irritating behavior.

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- b. Amplified definition: Anger is a strong **feeling** of displeasure or hostility caused by a real or perceived offense, injury, or unmet desire to one's self or others, usually accompanied by a **desire** to retaliate or seek revenge.
- c. Working definition: Anger is God-given **alarm** to make us aware of a problem, and drive us to do something about it. (2 Sam. 12:5; John 2:15ff)

V. When is anger sinful?

- a. ...when it is **selfishly** motivated.
- b. ...when God's **goal** in the matter is distorted. (1 Cor 10:31; Rom 8:28-29)
- c. ...when it is allowed to **linger**. (Eph 4:26-27)
- d. ...when it attacks a **person** instead of a problem. (Eph 4:29)

VI. Contrasting Righteous Anger and Unrighteous Anger

Common Manifestations of Unrighteous anger

- a. Two modes of ventilation
 - i. Blowing up at the object of anger
 - 1. Reacting violently; an outburst
 - 2. "thumos;" "wrath" in NASB in Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; Rev 15:1; and 19:15; "rage" in Luke 4:28
 - 3. Ex: employee tells the pushy, demanding boss off in an outburst of disrespect
 - ii. Attacking a substitute
 - 1. Attacking not the cause of the anger but attacking a substitute.

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2. Ex: employee who is getting pushed around at work by the boss utters not a word at the office but comes home and kicks the dog or worse yet his kids or wife.
 3. Ventilation does not even occur on the **person** who caused the anger but on someone else or something else.
 - a. This mode of anger is particularly **perverse**.
- b. Two modes of **internalization** (common among Christians who are under the misconception that all anger is wrong)
- i. **Clamming-up**
 1. They believe that all anger is sinful so whatever is happening to them emotionally when they have been crossed gets stuffed
 2. Not keeping current; “the slow burn”
 3. “orge”
 - a. “Anger” in NASB in Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; and James 1:19-20
 - b. “Wrath” in Eph 5:6
 - c. “Quick tempered” in Titus 1:7;
 - d. “Angry tempers” in 2 Cor 12:20
 - ii. **Denying** the anger
 1. Denying to yourself and others that you are angry but knowing full well that there is within you an emotion that is creating a tremendous amount of energy.

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2. God wants us to deal with the anger and the accompanying energy immediately and in a way that is pleasing to God

c. **Righteous** anger

- i. When the intense, immense emotional energy is directed toward a solution to a problem in a manner pleasing to God.
- ii. For example, a husband that has just learned that his wife has been having an affair will be angry.

How will he use the emotional energy created by the anger?

- a. Sinful ex: Even though he is emotionally and physically exhausted, he could use the energy from the anger to go shopping for a gun to kill his wife's lover.
 - b. Righteous ex: husband could use the energy to make inquiries into finding a biblical counselor to help them.
- iii. **Root causes** of unrighteous anger
- a. Sensuality
 - b. Desires of the flesh
 - c. Unforgiveness
 - d. Desire for control

VII. In light of God's many warnings and cautions concerning anger, we are wise to PAUSE in our anger in order to glorify God.

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James 1:19–21 – Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

- a. Put off knee-jerk reactions, knowing our propensity to sin with anger. (Eph. 4:26,27,29–31; Psalm 37:8)
- b. Acknowledge that our anger can be a God-given alert, but will not be the means by which a problem is solved. (James 1:20)
Anger is an alarm, not an answer. It makes us aware of a problem, but was never intended to be a solution to a problem. *If you see your anger as the answer, you're using it in a way God never intended.*
- c. Understand before seeking to be understood. (James 1:19; Prov. 18:13,15,17)
- d. Search the Scriptures for guidance. (2 Tim. 3:16,17)
- e. Evangelize yourself before admonishing another. (Eph. 4:32; 1 Tim. 1:12–17)

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Recommended Resources

The Christian Counselor's Manual, c1973 by Jay Adams, pg. 348-367.

"What Do You Do When Anger Gets The Upper Hand?" by Jay Adams, P&R

"Angry Children: Understanding and Helping Your Child Regain Control" by Michael Emlet, CCEF

"Peacemaking Principles: Responding to Conflict Biblically" by Peacemaker Ministries

"Anger: Escaping the Maze" by David Powlison, CCEF

The Heart of Anger by Lou Priolo

Peacemaking for Families by Ken Sande

"Living with an Angry Spouse: Help for Victims of Abuse" by Edward Welch, CCEF

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Psychotropic Drugs and Biblical Counseling

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

1. The need for compassion and humility
2. Medical diagnosis vs. Psychiatric diagnosis (no identifiable pathology)
3. Chemical Imbalance Theory (definition, history, implications within current psychiatry, etc.)
4. Psychotropic Drug Information (e.g. mechanisms uncertain)

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5. Do Antidepressants work? (i.e. what do you mean by “work”)

6. Counselors and Medications

Passages to Consider: 2 Timothy 2:24; Matthew 10:16; Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 1

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Communication

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

I. Theology of the Tongue: The Power of Words

1. Our words can bring life and healing into our relationships or they can bring struggle and death in our relationships. (Proverbs 18:21)

Proverbs 18:21 *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.*

2. Our words originate in our heart and are the natural outflow of what we want and desire. (Matthew 12:34–37, James 4:1–5)

The “**Four Rules of Communication**” can be used in all our relationships. They apply all the time, but are particularly helpful in both preventing and solving communication problems.

II. Characteristics of Wise Communication

A. Be HONEST (Eph. 4:25)

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

1. We must put off FALSEHOOD.

Common examples of dishonesty:

- a. Outright deceit.
- b. Keeping a secret when it should be disclosed
- c. Exaggeration at inappropriate times
- d. Conflict between verbal and non-verbal communication.

Distinguishing the real message; innuendo.

2. We must SPEAK.

Strong, healthy marriages don't come as a result of silence:

(a) Nobody likes to play “Guess What S/He is Thinking”

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(b) People cannot read minds – 1 Cor. 2:11

1 Corinthians 2:11 *For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*

3. We must speak the TRUTH.

Speaking the truth means giving the facts as they actually are without intending to withhold information. Telling the truth does not require that one must share every detail, but it does require one to give enough facts for the message to be accurately communicated.

4. We must speak the truth in LOVE.

Ephesians 4:15 *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ...*

5. We must speak the truth because we are MEMBERS of one another.

Ephesians 5:31,32 *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

“We instinctively think about our own needs and wants. We are primarily committed to our own welfare. But as we humbly admit our selfishness, we can begin to appreciate and rely upon the enabling grace of Christ.” (Paul Tripp, *War of Words*, 209–10).

B. Keep CURRENT.

Ephesians 4:26–27 *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.*

1. Use anger to solve today's problems TODAY.

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2. Do not make **EXCUSES** for failing to communicate.

- a. Common communication cutoffs include:
 - i. Crying
 - ii. Threatening an explosion
 - iii. Using a “bottom line” statement (“All I have to say is ...”)
 - iv. Leaving the room or the home
- b. Deal with problems as soon as possible.
- c. **Matthew 6:34** *Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

3. **QUESTIONS** to ask before bringing up a problem.

- a. Do I have the **FACTS** right?

Proverbs 18:13 *He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him.*

- b. Should **LOVE** hide it? Is it sinful? Is it hindering growth? (1 Pet. 4:8)

1 Peter 4:8 *Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.*

- c. Is my **TIMING** right?

Proverbs 15:23 *To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!*

- d. Is my **MOTIVE** right? Am I trying to help the other person? Are my words **LOVING**?

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Ephesians 4:15 *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ...*

- e. Have I **PRAYED** for God's help?

Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.*

C . **ATTACK** the problem, not the person (i.e. avoiding conflict)

Ephesians 4:29–30 *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.³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

1. **Avoid “CORRUPTING TALK” that attack the person.**

- a. Words that attack a person's **character**.

Matthew 5:21–22 *You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.*

- b. Words that tear down, rip apart or hinder **growth**.
- c. Words that **confuse** the discussion or by-pass the conflict.
- d. Words that **grieve** the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

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2. Use **EDIFYING** words that encourage and build up.
"Scripture [Ephesians 4] indicates that when people have communicated effectively, they are mutually strengthened, encouraged, and enriched."
(Mack, *Your Family God's Way*, 56).

- a. Our words are supposed to encourage growth.
- b. Our words are supposed to fit the need.
- c. The result of this type of communication is a benefit (grace) to those who hear

3. When this rule is obeyed with respect to problem solving, words will be **SOLUTION-ORIENTED** and accompanied with the right tone and body language.

D. Act; don't **REACT**.

Ephesians 4:31-32 *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.* ³² *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

1. We must guard against sinful reactions in our hearts and our actions
 - a. bitterness: a state of resentment: a desire to think about and treat someone according to evil.
 - b. wrath: anger normally resulting in passionate outbursts
 - c. anger: settled indignation or hostility that frequently seeks revenge
 - d. clamor: loud screaming and shouting normally associated with quarrels and brawls
 - e. slander: profane or abusive speech
 - f. malice: wickedness in the sense of a desire to harm the other person
2. We must guard against our natural tendency to be **DEFENSIVE** about dealing with our own sins.

1 Peter 2:23 *When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*

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3. SINFUL ARGUMENTS are possible only if each person reacts.

- a. "With great boldness and clarity, [James in 4:1-3] explains that if
- b. your wishes lead to conflicts in the home, the real problem is your consuming desire for your own satisfaction." (Wayne Mack, *Your Family God's Way*, 189).

4. Developing Godly Communication Habits

a. We must seek to apply godly ACTIONS and ATTITUDES.

- i. **kind**: benevolent, helpful, courteous
- ii. **tenderhearted**: compassionate, sympathetic, affectionate
- iii. **forgiving**: a willingness to pardon the repentant guilty person from moral liability and to work toward reconciliation.

5. We are motivated by the GOSPEL (Eph. 4:32)

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Physical Illness and Biblical Counseling

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

1. Biblical principles of health and illness
2. Spectrum of Disease (spiritual to organic, emphasis on response)
3. Encouraging appropriate medical care
4. Biblical victory in the midst of no cure

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5. Ministering to the suffering

Passages to Consider: Genesis 3:15-19; Psalm 38:3-11; 1 Corinthians 11:29-30; John 9:1-3; Philippians 1:29; James 5:11; 2 Kings 20:5; 2 Corinthians 12:7; Proverbs 17:22; Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Deuteronomy 29:29; Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 4:6-9

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Depression

David Michael, Grace Fellowship Church

I. Introduction

A. My Testimony

B. Psalm 88

C. How about you?

II. Definitions

A. The DSM-5 outlines the following criterion to make a diagnosis of depression. The individual must be experiencing five or more symptoms during the same 2-week period and at least one of the symptoms should be either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

1. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day.
2. Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day.
3. Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain, or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day.
4. A slowing down of thought and a reduction of physical movement (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down).
5. Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.
6. Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt nearly every day.
7. Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day.
8. Recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide.

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B. Personal Descriptions

1. *Depression...involves a complete absence: absence of affect, absence of feeling, absence of response, absence of interest. The pain you feel in the course of a major clinical depression is an attempt on nature's part...to fill up the empty space. But for all intents and purposes, the deeply depressed are just the walking, waking dead.* Elizabeth Wurtzel, *Prozac Nation*

2. What tortures many people is that they don't die. "Exhaustion combined with sleeplessness is a rare torture." "The pain seeps into everything." The thought that they might remain in this horrible state is too much to consider. "No one knows how badly I want to die."⁵

3. Abraham Lincoln: *I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forbode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die or be better, it appears to me.*⁶

4. Even the great preacher Charles Spurgeon about his many episodes of depression: *"I could weep by the hour like a child, and yet I knew not what I wept for," "The iron bolt...mysteriously fastens the door of hope and holds our spirits in gloomy prison."*⁷

C. God's Redemptive Purposes

III. WHY?!

A. The World, Culture, and our Flesh have plenty of reason...

1. My Biology - Chemical Imbalance Theory

2. My Circumstances

⁵ Ed Welch, *Counseling Those Who Are Depressed*, JBC Vol. 18, Issue 2, p. 6.

⁶ John H. Greist and James W. Jefferson, *Depression and Its Treatment* (New York: Warner, 1992), p. 8.

⁷ Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), p. 24.

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3. My Personality

B. A Wholistic Biblical Perspective

1. Physical Contributions

2. Personality Tendencies

3. Circumstantial Factors

4. The Truth gives us Hope!

a. Psalm 34:17-18

When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

b. 2 Corinthians 7:6

But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus

c. Psalm 143:7

Answer me quickly, O Lord! My spirit fails! Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit.

d. Psalm 42:11

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?

e. Psalm 40:2

He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog

f. Proverbs 15:13

A glad heart makes a cheerful face, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed.

g. Psalm 147:3

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

h. Psalm 88

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5. Biblical Examples – Narrative Homework assignments

- a. Moses (Numbers 11: 10-16)
- b. David (Psalm 51; Psalm 32: 1-5)
- c. Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-18)
- d. Job
- e. Jonah (Jonah 4:1-11)
- f. Psalmist (Psalm 73)
- g. Judas (Matthew 27:3-5)

IV. How do we help?

A. Ask, Listen, Understand with Great Compassion

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18

1. When did this start?
- 2. What has been lost and how did they respond?**
3. Where is God in this?

B. Help them to Define and Discern Biblically

1. **2 Corinthians 10:5**

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ

- a. Guilt
- b. Shame
- c. Their sin**
- d. Other's sin**
- e. Disappointment
- f. Anger
- g. Loss
- h. Physical – is there an objectively identifiable problem?

2. What does God say?

3. Call to Believe!

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Then they said to Jesus, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." John 6:28-29

We so easily **assume** that we believe God, but the reality is that we just don't!

C. Give them Hope

1. The Gospel

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Romans 5:1-5

2. Repentance

a. Romans 2:4

God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

b. Job 42:1-6

Then Job answered the LORD and said:

*2 "I know that you can do all things,
and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.*

*3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.*

*4 'Hear, and I will speak;
I will question you, and you make it known to me.'*

*5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees you;*

*6 therefore I despise myself,
and repent^a in dust and ashes."*

c. 2 Corinthians 7:10

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

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Real repentance leads to joyful salvation!

3. Memorize and meditate on truth

a. Isaiah 26:3

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

b. Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

D. Give them Purpose

1. Glorify God

a. Nancy Leigh DeMoss "You can either whine, or worship"

b. Philippians 4:12-13

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

c. Lamentations 3:31-33

For the Lord will not cast off forever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love

d. 2 Cor. 5:9

So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

2. Be Thankful – Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

3. Serve

a. Eph. 2:11-16

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the

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shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine.... speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

b. 2 Cor. 1:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Recommended Resources

Spiral Diagram Homework

[Depression: Looking Up from the Stubborn Darkness](#) by Edward T. Welch

[Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament](#) by Mark Vroegop

[Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnoses and Medications](#) by Michael R. Emlet

[Spiritual Depression: It's Causes and Cures](#) by Martin Lloyd-Jones

Passages to Consider: Ephesians 1:3-2:10; 5:18-6:9; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 5:9; Romans 8:28-29; 1 Peter 1:3, 13; Psalm 42-43; 131; 2 Peter 1:1-11

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Comparison of Counseling Philosophies

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

Guidelines for evaluating various theories

1. What is their epistemology?

- _____ do they propose to know what they _____?

a. Intuition – What feels right?

b. Reason – What do I think?

c. Empiricism – What do tests show?

d. Revelation – What does God say or reveal to us?

2. What is their anthropology?

Behind every secular psychology is almost always an unbiblical anthropology.

3. How is the problem _____?

4. How is the problem _____?

5. What is the _____ of counseling?

6. What is the _____ of the counselor?

The purpose of this lecture is for you to know enough about other theorists to make informed decisions like:

a. Is my counseling different from so and so down the street, and if so, how?

b. Can I refer to other counselors, and if so, to whom?

c. How careful should I be when I'm "cutting and pasting?"

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Survey of Counseling Methods

Depth Psychology

LEADER	Freud
MAN	_____ animal Id Superego Ego
PROBLEM	Conflict between _____ and _____
RESPONSIBILITY	_____ man's
GUILT	False
TREATMENT	_____ the Id Side with Id Weaken the Superego
GUILT	Find source Shift _____ Label as false
COUNSELOR	Expert

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Survey of Counseling Models (continued)

Behaviorism

LEADER	Skinner
MAN	_____ animal Blank tablet
PROBLEM	_____ failure
RESPONSIBILITY	_____ man's
GUILT	Not _____
TREATMENT	_____ the environment
GUILT	Change _____
COUNSELOR	Technician

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Survey of Counseling Models (continued)

Third Force

LEADER	Rogers
MAN	Basically _____ Potential within Mature like flower
PROBLEM	_____ hinders
RESPONSIBILITY	Not man's
GUILT	Not important
TREATMENT	Help _____ potential Solution within Focus on feelings not facts
GUILT	Comfortable with _____
COUNSELOR	Mirror

FOUNDATIONS

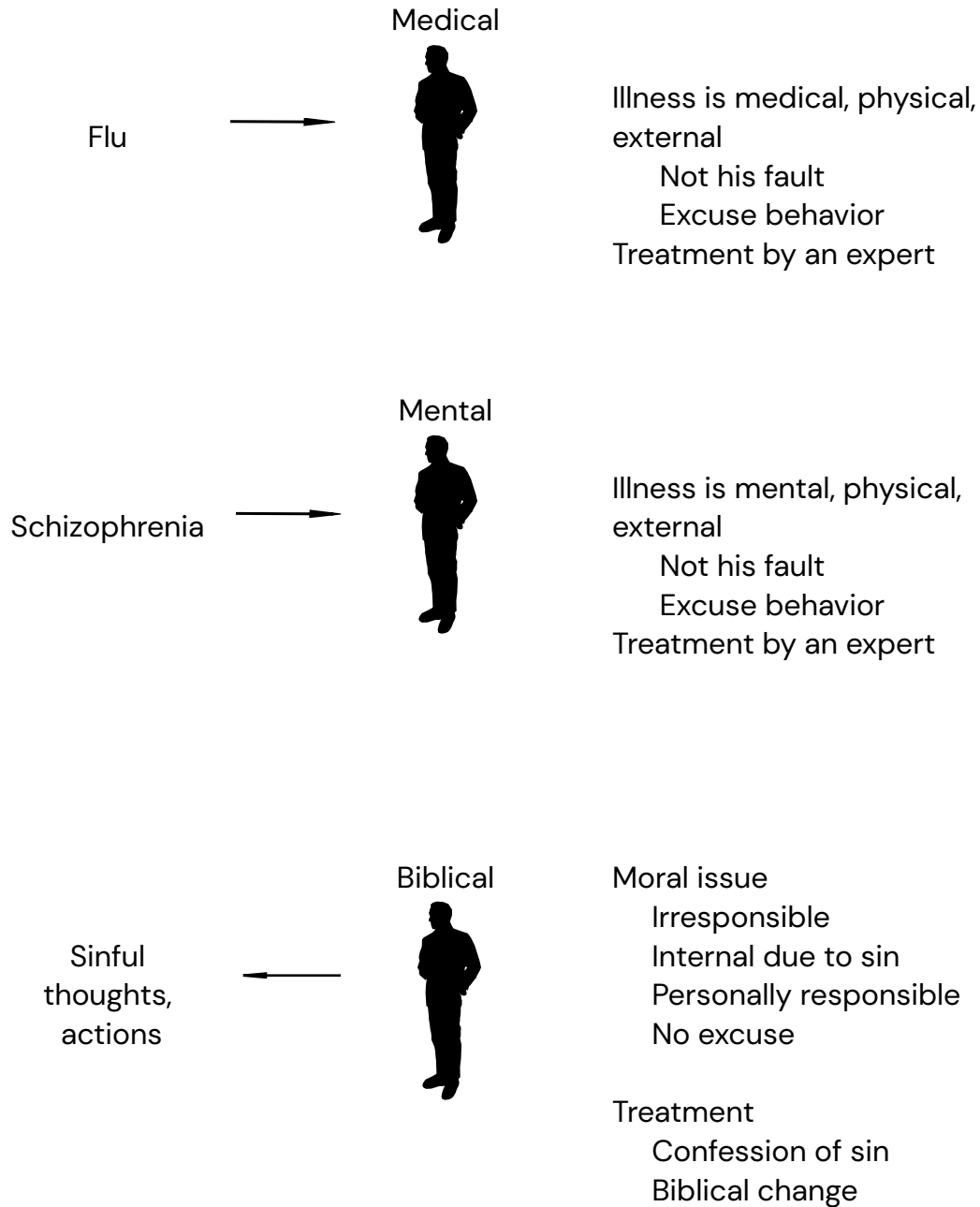
Survey of Counseling Models (continued)

Biblical

LEADER	GOD
MAN	Created by God Image of God To please God
PROBLEM	Fallen sinner By choice
RESPONSIBILITY	Man's
GUILT	Result of sin Real – not false
TREATMENT	Justification by faith Progressive sanctification Spirit and Word Focus on facts By grace
GUILT	Deal with sin Deal with their response
COUNSELOR	Nouthetic Counselor

FOUNDATIONS

Use of the Medical Model for the Concept of Mental Illness



FOUNDATIONS

Implications of Biblical Counseling

- Based on and growing out of the biblical view of man

1. All counseling is God-oriented.

Ps. 73:25; Rom. 11:36

2. Guilt is taken seriously.

Ps. 51:4,32:1,2

3. Responsibility of counselee is recognized.

(Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 14:10,12; Jer. 31:29,30)

4. Behavioral change can occur now.

(Eph. 4:22-24; II Cor. 5:17)

5. Counselee is accepted as a person God created.

(Lk. 6:27,28,32-35)

FOUNDATIONS

Similarity of Methods

Apparent similarities between biblical counseling and other methods do not justify use of those methods.

Medical causes of behavior can be proven in a laboratory. If not proven by tests, organic basis is only theory.

1. Questions about the Past

Depth psychology
Ventilation
Shift blame

Biblical
Sinful patterns
Past sins with
present effects

2. Stress

Depth Psychology
Stress is the problem

Biblical
Reaction to stress
is the problem

3. Modify Behavior

Behaviorist
No standard

Biblical
Change by standard
of God's Word
Be God's kind of person
in power of Christ

4. Habits

Behaviorist
Product of environment
No hope

Biblical
Result of sin
Hope of change

5. Listening

Third Force
Feelings
Solution within
No direction
Is the cure

Biblical
Prov. 18:13
First step
Facts

FOUNDATIONS

6. Asking Questions

Third Force

Mirror question

Biblical

Understand

Focus on problem

FOUNDATIONS

Questions to Ask in an Interview

- What is your model for counseling?
- What do you think makes your counseling distinctly Christian or biblical?
- What is your goal for the counselee in the counseling process?
- How do you think people change?
- As a counselor, what do you see as your role in the change /counseling process?
- What are your expectations for the counselee? What role do they play in the process?
- What role do the Bible, prayer, and the Holy Spirit play in your counseling?
- Describe your understanding of the relationship of the physical and spiritual nature of people – What is the basic nature of man?
- What are some of the resources / tools that you use in the counseling process?
- What do you see as the role of the church and pastors in the counseling process?
- What is your training / background in counseling?
- What is your training / background in biblical studies?
- How long does the counseling process typically take? How do you know when to stop?

FOUNDATIONS

Recommended Resources for Further Study:

Lambert, Heath. *The Biblical Counseling Movement after Jay Adams*
James MacDonald. *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling – Changing Lives with God’s Changeless Truth*
Tripp, Paul. *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands*
Adams, Jay. *Competent to Counsel*

FOUNDATIONS

Trials and Suffering

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction:

- It has been well said that if you're a Christian: you've just come out of a trial, are presently in a trial, or are being prepared to go through a trial.
- God often uses these trials and sufferings in our lives as a divine squeeze to let others, and us, see what's in our hearts. J.C. Ryle said, "What you are in the day of trial, that you are and nothing more."
- God also uses these trials to remove the dross from our lives—so like Job we can say, "When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10, NASB)

I. Unbiblical perspectives concerning the origin of trials and suffering

- A. It's always ____ fault
- B. It's always _____ people's fault ("victim")
- C. It's ____ _____ fault (Fatalism)

"In a universe of blind physical genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reasoning to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, and no good. Nothing but blind, pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is. And we dance to its music." *River Out of Eden ~ A Darwinian View of Life, Richard Dawkins, 1996.*

"God wants the righteous to live peaceful, happy lives, but sometimes even He can't bring that about. It is too difficult even for God to keep cruelty and chaos from claiming their innocent victims." *When Bad Things Happen to Good People, Harold Kushner, p. 43*

"Can you accept the idea that some things happen for no reason, that there is randomness in the universe? *When Bad Things Happen to Good People, Harold Kushner*

FOUNDATIONS

D. God is _____ in it at all (Deistic view of God)

II. Biblical perspectives of the origin of trials and suffering

A. Ultimately a result of Adam's _____ (Gen 3)

B. God is _____ the remote (distant) cause of trials and suffering

Calvin suggested that God is the "remote" cause of all that happens, while men are the "proximate" causes. God thus is presented as the One who moves on the inclinations of men so that they, the "proximate" causes, do as God has willed from eternity. According to this theory, God wills from His holy nature so that He never wills men's actions from sinful motives. He said, "For God wills for good what men will for evil." Men are still responsible for their own sin. God's "permission" of sin is an active "permission" for His own holy purposes.

1. But He is never the author of _____ (Jas 1:12-18)

2. God is _____ so everything is planned by Him and goes according to how He decrees it to go (Isa 46:9-11; Eph 1:11; Dan 4:43-35; Job 42:22; Psa 115:3)

3. This includes _____ calamity and blessing (Eccles 7:14; Lam 3:37-38; Isa 45:7; Amos 3:6)

III. Biblical purposes in trials and suffering

A. Always for God's _____ (Job 1 & 2; John 9:1-3; 1 Cor 1:26-31)

B. Always for our eternal _____ (Rom 8:28-29)

FOUNDATIONS

1. God may choose to set aside our temporary happiness to work a more grand work for our eternal good and His glory.

God L_____, O_____, and C_____ all things for His glory and our good.

2. Example: Paul in 2 Cor 12:7-10
3. Example: Joseph in Gen 50:20

See God in the trouble (use Jay Adams' book ***How to Handle Trouble***)

- a. Recognize God is in the problem.
- b. Remember God is up to something.
- c. Believe that He is up to something good.
- d. Discover where and how God is at work.
- e. Get involved in what He is doing.
- f. Expect good effects.

Use ***When God Weeps*** – Joni Ereckson Tada

Use ***Beside Still Waters*** – *Words of Comfort for the Soul* by Spurgeon

IV. Biblical responses of God's children in trials and suffering

- A. You must be responsible no matter how you _____ (2 Cor 5:9-10)

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Jerry Bridges “For many years in my own pilgrimage of seeking to come to a place of trusting God at all times—I am still far from the end of the journey—I was a prisoner to my feelings. I mistakenly thought I could not trust God unless I felt like trusting Him (which I almost never did in times of adversity). Now I am learning that trusting God is first of all a matter of the will, and is not dependent on my feelings. I choose to trust God and my feelings eventually follow.” *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges, p. 194 & 195

Psalm 56:3-4 Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?

Psalm 71:1-2 In You, O Lord, I put my trust; let me never be put to shame. Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape...

- B. Don't pray to just “hang in there” or “just get me through” the trial and suffering—but ask God to help you _____ in the midst of the difficulty to be more like Jesus (Rom 8:28-29; Jas 1:2-4)

An African Christian said this about American Christians: “You American always pray for God to remove the trial; we pray for God to strengthen our backs to bear it for His glory.”

Elisabeth Elliot “There is a philosophy of secular education which holds that the student ought to be allowed to assemble his own curriculum according to his preferences. Few students have a strong basis for making these choices, not knowing how little they know. Ideas of what they need to learn are not only greatly limited but greatly distorted. What they need is help from those who know more than they do.

Mercifully, God does not leave us to choose our own curriculum. His wisdom is perfect, His knowledge embraces not only all worlds but the individual hearts and minds of each of His loved children. With intimate understanding of our deepest needs and individual capacities, He chooses our curriculum... God's curriculum for all who sincerely want to know Him and do His will always include lessons we wish we could skip.” *Keep a Quiet Heart*, Elisabeth Elliot, p. 81-82

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C. Possible _____ why God allows trials and sufferings:

1. Unconfessed sins (1 Cor 11:30; 2 Kgs 5:15-27)

Use caution here—Job’s counselors thought this was the only reason

2. To chastise His children (Ps 119:67; Heb 12:5-11)

Rick Warren said, "God uses pain to direct us, correct us, inspect us, perfect us, and to protect us."

3. God wants to increase our usefulness (pruning process—John 15:2; 2 Cor 1:3-9; 2 Pet 1:5-8)

4. To help us realize this isn't heaven and we live in a fallen world (2 Cor 4:16-18; Rom 8:22-24)

"We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities... But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world..." C.S. Lewis, ***The Problem of Pain***, ch. 6 - quoted in Readings for Meditation and Reflection, edited by Walter Hooper, p. 71-72

5. To allow us to reap what we sow (a natural consequence to our own choices—Gal 6:7-8; Prov 5:22)
6. To teach us about our own weakness and cause us to depend on God (2 Cor 1:8-9; 12:7-10)
7. To have us realize that we have placed our hope somewhere else or have spread it out between God and self/circumstances/other people/possessions. Our hope is to be squarely fixed upon God alone and His promises (1 Pet 1:13; Heb 6:19). At times we don't even know we have "little hopes" elsewhere until God allows a trial to come and reveal them to us.

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Samuel Rutherford "If God told me some time ago that He was about to make me as happy as I could be in this world, and then had told me that He should begin by crippling me in all my limbs, and removing me from all my usual sources of enjoyment, I should have thought it a very strange mode of accomplishing His purpose. And yet, how is His wisdom manifest even in this! For if you should see a man shut up in a closed room, idolizing a set of lamps and rejoicing in their light, and you wished to make him truly happy, you would begin by blowing out all his lamps; and then throw open the shutters to let in the light of heaven."

John Piper "O how I pray that when God, in His mercy, begins to blow out my lamps, I will not curse the wind." **John Piper**, *A Godward Life*, p. 288-289

8. To enlarge our appreciation of His sufficiency (2 Cor 4:7; 12:7-10)
9. To test and strengthen our faith (1 Pet 1:6,7; 4:12)
10. To develop Christ-like character (Jas 1:2-5)
11. To drive us to God's Word (Psa 119:67, 71, 75)

Jerry Bridges "It is not that we will learn from adversity something different than what we can learn from the Scriptures. Rather, adversity enhances the teaching of God's Word and makes it more profitable to us. In some instances it clarifies our understanding or causes us to see truths we had passed over before." **Jerry Bridges**, *Trusting God*, p. 178

Martin Luther had discovered the same "method" of seeing God in his Word. He said there are three rules for understanding Scripture: praying, meditating and suffering trials. The "trials," he said, are supremely valuable: they "teach you not only to know and understand but also to experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how mighty, how comforting God's word is: it is wisdom supreme." Therefore the devil himself becomes the unwitting teacher of God's word: "the devil will afflict you [and] will make a real doctor of you, and will teach you by his temptations to seek

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and to love God's Word." *What Luther Says*, Vol. 3, Concordia Publishing House, 1959, p. 1360

V. Biblical resources available to the Christian through Christ

- A. The Father providentially is carrying out His decreed will for our lives: His will is good, perfect, and acceptable (Rom 12:2)
- B. Christ prays on our behalf (John 17:20-21; Heb 4:14-16)
- C. His Holy Spirit indwells His children (1 Cor 6:19-20)
- D. His grace is sufficient (2 Cor 12)
- E. Heaven is our home and it is sure (John 14:1-3; Heb 6:19)
- F. Christ is soon to return (1 Pet 1:13)

Recommended Books

Beside Still Waters – Comfort for the Soul – Spurgeon

How to Handle Trouble, Jay Adams, P & R Publishers, 1982.

God's Grace in Your Suffering, David Powlison, Crossway, 2018.

Trusting God Even When Life Hurts, Jerry Bridges, NavPress, 1988.

Embodied Hope: A Theological Meditation on Pain and Suffering, Kelly Kopic, IVP Press, 2017

Walking with God Through Pain and Suffering, Timothy Keller, Dutton, 2013

FOUNDATIONS

Sexual Sin

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

I. A Biblical Perspective of Sex as God's Design

Biblical definition of sex: The Bible defines sex as the sexual union of a man and a woman. There are biblical purposes for sex including:

1. Union between a husband and wife (Gen. 2:24)
2. Pleasure within a marriage union (Prov. 5:15-23)
3. Procreation of divine image bearers (Gen. 1:28)

God's plan for sex

There is a glorious openness and freedom the Bible gives for sexual relations between a husband and wife but there are God honoring boundaries (Hebrews 13:4).

God, in His wisdom has given the most generous guidelines that exist surrounding sexual union: Within marriage, monogamous, and heterosexual (Lev. 18:22-23; Song of Songs 7:1-12; 1 Cor. 6:13-16; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Jude 7). Sex outside of these generous guidelines is sin.

God's Biological Order

Biblical definition of gender: The Bible defines human gender as binary between man and woman (Genesis 1:26-28). Rejecting the Bible's definition of human gender as "Man/Woman" is a rejection of the truth of God's revealed truth through the Bible.

God's Theological Order

Sex plays a role in God's theological ordering of the world and human flourishing. Men and women fulfill the mosaic of human flourishing in at least three differences: Roles, responsibilities, and functions (Gen. 1-2).

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II. How Sex Has Been Twisted by Sin (Outside of Marriage)

Human sexuality can be distorted by humans in at least two ways: Distortion and confusion of sexual purpose and distortion and confusion of sexual nature (Rom. 1:26–27).

Sexual immorality has become the norm in our day & age.

1. Fornication (Matthew 15:8–19)
2. Adultery (Matthew 5:28)
3. Homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22)
4. Pornography (Job 31:1–4)
5. Lusting/Masturbation (1 John 2:16)
6. Child Abuse (2 Timothy 3:2)
7. Transsexuality (Deuteronomy 22:5)

Biblical counselors need to be prepared to do even more counseling in these areas.

III. Various Consequences of Sexual Immorality

A. Sexual sin is a symptom of a deeper heart issue: misdirected worship (idolatry).

8 Steps Downward Into Sexual Degradation (Rom. 1:21–32)

1. Failure to glorify God (1:21a)
2. The loss of a grateful spirit (1:21b)
3. The darkened heart (1:21c)
4. The suppression of truth (1:22,25a)
5. The exchange of glory (1:23)
6. Given to lust (vv. 24–25)
7. Given to dishonorable passions (vv. 26–27)
8. Given to an incurably sick mind (vv. 28–32)

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The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.

B. How does the sinner escape from the trap?

7 Steps in Helping Individuals Gain Moral Freedom

1. **Recognize and acknowledge that sexual sin does not satisfy.**

- a. Study John 4:7-30
 - i. How many relationships did Jesus say that the woman at the well had?
 - ii. To what did Jesus compare these multiple relationships?
 - iii. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again?"
 - iv. What did Jesus say was the difference between the water she had been drinking and the living water He offered her?
 - v. What did Jesus say the effects of drinking this water would be?
 - vi. Related Scriptures: Prov. 27:20; Jer. 2:13; Eph. 4:19.

2. **Confess to God your sin and cry out for forgiveness.**

- a. For the unsaved, this would be judicial forgiveness.
(Rom. 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9)
- b. For Christians, this would be parental forgiveness. (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2)

Take hope from God's promise of mercy, forgiveness, and a cleansed heart.

(Col. 1:21-23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11)

3. **Confess sin to appropriate people and seek forgiveness.**

(See notes entitled "Guilt and Repentance" for a more complete discussion, including suggested wording on how to confess sin.)

- a. Help counselees discern to whom confession is made and for what sins as well as the timing.
 - i. Public sins will require public confession and seeking of forgiveness.

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- ii. Such events provide opportunities to:
 - Warn others not to sin (1 Tim. 5:20).
 - Grant forgiveness and comfort the repentant sinner (2 Cor. 2:6-8).
 - Godly Christians to be energized in their faith (2 Cor. 7:8-11).

4. Repent and keep repenting.

- a. To repent means to have a change of thinking that leads to a change of behavior.

This is an ongoing process throughout the Christian life.

(Eph. 4:22-24)

- i. It involves a turning from sin and sinning to God and godliness. (1 Thess. 1:4-10; 1 Pet. 3:10-11).
- ii. As God renews our minds, we continue to become aware of where our thinking and behavior need to change. (Rom. 12:1-2)

5. Perform "radical amputation" by removing from your life what draws you into sin. (Matt. 5:29-30; Heb. 12:1)

- a. Jesus was not referring to a physical cutting off of our hands or an actual plucking out of the eyeball. Blind men still lust! (Gen. 19:10-11)
- b. He was calling us to deal radically with whatever causes us to sin: cut it off; pluck it out; hack it off.
- c. A willingness to do this is a fruit of genuine repentance. (Matt. 3:8)
- d. Mike Cleveland in Pure Freedom suggests the following questions or statements to help a person think through this matter:
 1. Please describe what things have hindered you from running this race to win.
 2. What are we commanded to do with these things that hinder us?
 3. What things will you throw off so you can run lighter? Please only list those things that you will get rid of RIGHT NOW.
 4. Please list any area where you currently still have provision for your flesh to be gratified.
 5. Are you willing to part with that which will make you fall? Will you get rid of it right now?

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6. Will you, right now, cut off and pluck out anything that is causing you to stumble?
 - ii. Remember—many people will not perform radical amputation because they want to be strong more than they want to be pure. They want to continue being around temptation and resist it.
 - iii. This approach to dealing with sexual sin is seldom successful.

6. Establish an accountability relationship. (Ecc. 4:9–10; Heb. 3:12–13)

- a. Definition: An accountability relationship is one in which a Christian asks another believer to look into his/her life for purposes of questioning, challenging, admonishing, advising, encouraging, and otherwise providing input in a way that will help the individual live according to the Christian principles that both hold.
- b. Structure:
 - i. Ideally, have weekly, scheduled face-to-face meetings.
 - ii. A small, single-sex group can work but should be kept to a maximum of four.
 - iii. Selecting an Accountability Partner:
 1. It definitely should be a trusted, godly friend.
 2. It should be someone other than your spouse.
 3. If possible, avoid starting with “mutual/peer accountability.”
 4. Seek to be accountable to someone who is not struggling with the particular failures with which you are struggling.
 - a. Not a “support group” made up of people struggling with the same issues at the same time.
 - b. The other party should be someone you like and respect.

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5. Invite the accountability partner to involve local church elders, if necessary. If the person persists in sin, church discipline may be the best next step.

iv. Ground Rules:

1. At the beginning, the counselee should offer the accountability partner a complete history of his/her sexual life, from childhood to the present. The objective is to humble oneself and to be honest about an area of life usually accompanied by deceit, and to give the accountability partner an accurate understanding of their struggles.
2. Agree to ask each other very direct, specific questions, such as:
 - a. "Have you been free from pornography since our last meeting?" is good.
 - i. "When was the last time you looked at something for the purpose of sexual pleasure?" is better, because it's harder to work around since the person is likely tempted to stretch the truth.
 - b. When was the last time you masturbated?
 - c. Have you been free from sexual immorality since our last meeting?
 - d. What have you done to encourage an illicit relationship?
 - e. What have you done to foster spiritual growth since we last met?
 - f. What do you feel guilty about?
 - g. Have you deceived me in your answers to my previous questions?

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3. Agree on how much of your conversations will be shared with his/her spouse.
4. Agree always to pray together.

7. Study the Scriptures to learn God's wisdom in the following battlefields in the war for moral purity:

- The goal of life (1 Thess. 4:3,8; 2 Cor. 5:9; Gal. 1:10; 1 Cor. 10:31).
- Self-control (1 Thess. 4:4-5; 1 Tim 4:7-8; Rom 6:12).
- Interpersonal relationships (1 Thess. 4:6-7; Rom 16:17-18; Phil 2:3-4).
- Thought life (Prov. 4:23; 23:7; Rom 12:1-2; Phil 4:8).
- Eye control (Job 31:1; Psa. 101:3a; Prov. 4:23, 25; Matt. 6:22-23).
- Influence of friends (Prov. 13:20, 21; 22:24-25; 27:17; 5:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:33).
- Circumstance control (Rom. 13:14; 1 Thess. 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:22).

IV. Active participation in the services and ministries of a Bible-believing, preaching, and practicing church is crucial to long-term spiritual growth and victory over sexual sin. (Heb. 3:12-13; 10:24-25)

FOUNDATIONS

Recommended Resources

Biblical Counseling Coalition blog has many articles. <http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/blogs/>

Wilson, D. (2016, May 06). *Seven Effective Strategies for Dealing With Lust*. Retrieved November 03, 2017, from <https://dougwils.com/s7-engaging-the-culture/seven-effective-strategies-for-dealing-with-lust.html>

Wilson, D. (2013, June 25). *Dealing with Nuisance Lust*. Retrieved November 03, 2017, from <https://dougwils.com/books/dealing-with-nuisance-lust.html>

Cleveland, Mike. *Setting Captives Free: The Way of Purity*. Bemidji: Focus Publishing, 2007. <http://settingcaptivesfree.com>

Covenant Eyes provides Internet Accountability, which monitors the websites visited, the search terms used, and videos watched, and lists them in an easy-to-read report that is designed to start a conversation about healthy online habits. <http://covenanteyes.com>

Reehm, Bob. *The War Within: Gaining Victory in the Battle for Sexual Purity*. 2014.

Accountable2You - <https://accountable2you.com/>

Lambert, Heath. *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Gallagher, Steve. *At The Altar of Sexual Idolatry and At The Altar of Sexual Idolatry Workbook*. Dry Ridge: Pure Life Ministries, 2007.

MacDonald, James. *Lord Change Me*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012.

Shaw, Mark. *Hope and Help for Sexual Temptation*, Focus Publishing, 2012.

Pure Life Ministries provides residential care, phone counseling, and biblical teaching materials for men with sexual addictions. The ministry is located in Dry Ridge, KY. <http://purelifeministries.org>

FOUNDATIONS

Case Study

David Michael & Peter LaRuffa

Grace Fellowship Church

FOUNDATIONS

Gathering Data & Discerning Problems Biblically

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction & The Importance of Gathering Data

- A. Counseling hinges on our ability and effectiveness in gathering data.
- B. You cannot help people solve problems if you don't understand the problem or how it manifests itself in this person's life.
- C. Listening well is a necessary skill for all counselors.
- D. Listening is loving to counselees. All counselees want to be heard; therefore, listening to someone is loving them. I Cor. 13:4a says Love is patient and kind... and listening demonstrates both!
- E. Many times counselees have shameful issues to talk about, but they want to know you care first. Listening demonstrates your love.
- F. Note how many times Jesus asked questions: 307.⁸

Foundational Principles to remember as you gather data and discern problems:

- A. You are relying upon the Holy Spirit as He is essential to the change process of counseling (Heb. 4:12-13; Gal. 5:16-18)
- B. You are in a spiritual battle (Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 10: 3-6)
- C. You must pray and study the Word (Heb. 4:16; Col. 3:16)
- D. You should utilize the resource God has provided your counselee: the local church (Heb. 10:24-25)
- E. Keep in mind the question: Is this counselee a believer or an unbeliever (as best as you can determine)? (I John 2:3-4; I John 4:12; John 3:16)
John 3:16 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
- F. Believers have the Spirit to work in them to repent and grow. (John 16:13)

⁸ *Jesus is the Question: The 307 Questions Jesus Asked and the 3 He Answered* by Martin B. Copenhaver (not an endorsement of the book since I have NOT read it, but simply citing the source of this information)

FOUNDATIONS

I. The Necessity of Listening Well for Data Gathering Purposes

- A. "Questions are to counseling as food is to eating." – quote first heard from Lou Priolo

Proverbs 20:5 *The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.*

- B. Do not jump to conclusions.

Proverbs 18:13 If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

Proverbs 14:15 *The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps.*

- C. Do not judge motives. Instead, ask questions. I Sam 1:12–18 (ESV)

As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. 14 And Eli said to her, "How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you." 15 But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. 16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation." 17 Then Eli answered, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him." 18 And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

- D. Where possible, hear from all parties involved. Secondary sources are helpful.

Proverbs 18:17 The one who states his case first seems right until the other comes and examines him.

- E. Sometimes Job's counselors failed to listen with love (Job 4–37).

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F. Don't assume you know what the counselee means.

1. Define terms. What did you mean when you said "I am bipolar"?
2. Ask clarifying questions which sometimes, lovingly confront discrepancies in what is said. For example:

"You said you hate your mother yet you sent her a Christmas card and went to see her in the hospital. What did you mean by your statement that you *hate your mother*?"

G. Listening in and of itself is *not* enough. You are not there for them "just to vent." They need biblical truth to correct their thinking after you have listened and that opportunity will come later.

II. Focus on fact-based questioning versus feeling-oriented questioning.

A. At the data gathering phase of the process, ask questions that give facts: find out the "who, what, when, where, how, and what else." You do not want to ask why questions now.

1. "Why" questions tend to be pressure questions. i.e. Romans 14:10—But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.
2. "Why" may not be known until you have a chance to open God's Word.
3. Facts help you to better evaluate what is truly happening rather than focusing upon misinterpretations of counselees, speculation, and the like.

B. Ask Open-Ended Questions

1. **Proverbs 18:5 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.**
2. An open-ended question example: "What did you do next?" rather than a "Did you do this next?" (that would be answered by a yes or a no)

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3. God asked open-ended questions in Genesis 3:8-13:

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

4. Ask questions that grow out of previous questions.
5. Ask questions that are prompted by the homework assignment.
6. Making statements that invite them to talk: "Tell me more about ..."
7. Summarizing their comments to indicate you understand them.
"So, what you are saying is..." or
"It sounds like you were angry..."

Note: If you summarize it just right, expect a response from them that emphatically says, "Yes, that's right!" They will react positively to being loved and heard.

III. An Introduction to Various Ways Data Can Be Gathered

- A. Ask questions intensively and extensively.
 1. Examples of:
 - a. Intensively: You focus on one area and dig deep, looking for details.
 - "Did you get into an argument?"
 - "What did you argue about?"

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- “How long did it continue?”
- “Who was involved?”
- “Did either of you get physical?”
- “Was the issue resolved?” “If so, how?”
- “Does this happen often?”

b. Extensively: You ask questions across the sky line of their life. You are searching for hot spots.

- How would you describe your relationship to God right now?
- What is happening in your relationship with your wife? Children? Parents? Friends at church?
- How would you rate your communication between you and your wife?
- Are things going well with your finances?
- Are you having any problems or disagreements in the area of intimacy?

B. Ask questions in a broad range of areas (Introduction to Biblical Counseling, by John F. MacArthur, Jr. and Wayne A. Mack, pub. by Word Publishing, p. 212–228).

The PREACHD acronym from Dr. Mack helps to remember the areas to ask about:

1. Physical Data
2. Resources
3. Emotions

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4. Actions
 5. Concepts
 6. History Listen for historical data; things that have occurred in the past may have a bearing on the current problem. For example: someone sexually abused may be excessively fearful and distrusting of their spouse. Another sad example: someone who (as a child) had a father who was a drunkard might be fearful about things most do not find fear-provoking.
 - a. Biblical counseling does encourage looking into the past when appropriate to determine if there are
 1. unconfessed suffering issues to receive counseling about OR
 2. unconfessed sin to repent for.

Prov. 28:13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
 - b. Looking at the past may identify certain patterns of responding, ungodly influences, etc. that would explain certain habits, fears, anger, etc.
 - c. Ask: "When did it start?" and "What happened then?"
 7. Desires, affections of the heart
- C. Ask questions if a case has ground to a halt:
1. Have I asked enough factual questions to get an honest picture or a full enough picture so that I know what is happening, who is involved, what are the issues, etc?
 2. Have I asked enough extensive questions to have a good overview of what is happening? Have I failed to ask questions in a totally different area of their lives that is influencing the situation?

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3. Have I allowed them to convey sensitive information that I need by my not asking enough intensive questions to pry loose embarrassing or self-incriminating information?
- D. Listen carefully to the counselee's conversation and answers to questions.
1. Never assume your counselee is like you! Again, ask clarifying questions to be sure you understood what they meant.
 2. Restate what you understood to have been said.
 3. Listen to what is not said – topics avoided
 4. Listen for the manner in which a person says what they say.
 - a. Tone – volume – inflections
 - b. Listen for sarcasm – bitterness – hopelessness – touchiness
For example: "When you laughed just now, what did that mean?"
 - c. Paying attention to tone of voice and body language. Observe their outward appearance, body language, and gestures as cues to help you understand them better, but always ask clarifying questions even about these observations. We affectionately call this "halo" data (non-verbal: i.e. body language, clothing, posture, etc.)

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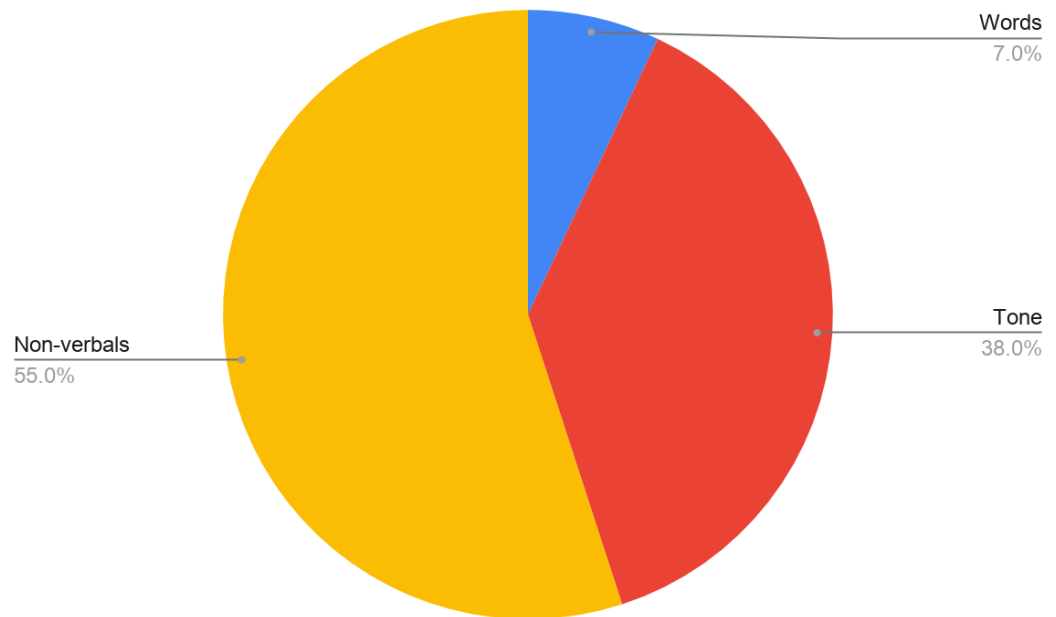
Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule of Personal Communication

Communication includes words but it is more than words:

Words = 7%

Tone of Voice = 38%;

Non-verbals like gestures, head nod, smile, etc. = 55%



5. Listen with your posture. Physically lean in.
6. Listen with your heart. Listen actively for emotive words, interpretive words, self-talk, and God-talk because they reveal the counselee's theology.
 - a. Emotive words can be adjectives (i.e. a descriptor word like "tragic" or "powerful.")

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- b. Emotive words can be nouns (i.e. “freedom” or “gratitude”).
- c. Emotive words can be verbs (i.e. “afraid” or “devastated”).
- d. Interpretive words are usually analytical words that summarize a concept or feeling. These help you know what a person believes!
- e. Self-talk is best asked: “What do you tell yourself when you look in the mirror?” These messages can be positive or negative.
- f. God-talk are the words used that reveal what they believe about God and can be direct or indirect. In *Everyday Talk* by Jay Younts, he uses the example of “stupid rain” stated by a father about his golf plans which his child overhears. It sends a message about the God of nature.

IV. Other Tools for Collecting, Evaluating, and Processing Data

- A. Use an Application for Counseling that has a Personal Data Inventory (PDI) that has a prospective counselee provide information in many areas of life from the PREACHD acronym mentioned above.
- B. Find our GFC application here:
<https://www.graceky.org/biblical-counseling/forms/>
- C. You can also use other tools to gather data like Journals, Lists, Tests, Counseling Notes, etc. Assign homework and use it to gather information. Find our GFC Counselor’s Toolbox here:
<https://www.graceky.org/biblical-counseling/counselor-toolbox/>

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V. Summary

- A. You will always gather data from the first session to the final session!
- B. Let love lead you and foster a genuine concern and interest for your counselee.
- C. Other Passages to Consider: Genesis 4:1-8; Job 19:1-3; Psalm 1:1-3; Psalm 34:12-14; Proverbs 18:15; Matthew 6:24; Mark 7:18-23; Luke 6:46-47; Luke 11:28; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:16-21; Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 4:6; 1 Timothy 5:13; James 1:19-20,25

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DISCERNING PROBLEMS BIBLICALLY

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

VI. Scripture is the Lens (not a filter) for Interpreting Data

A. Scripture is sufficient and serves as the framework for counseling.

2 Peter 1:3–4 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

- a. Scripture as a lens means that the Bible is the all-encompassing standard for what is true and right. The Word brings into focus the real problem(s).
- b. Believing the Scriptures are sufficient for counseling is an act of faith.
Rom. 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."
- c. Scripture provides an accurate description and prescription of the situation. Use biblical constructs not worldly theories.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

- d. Theories, methods, and problems are viewed through the lens of Scripture by genuine biblical counselors. Integrationists, though many times well-intended, use Scripture as a filter. Integrationists often give lip service to sufficiency by implying that the Bible serves as a framework for counseling, but in actual practice, Scripture acts like a filter/sieve tool that integrationists use to push through psychological methods/theories and bless anything that comes out of the other side.

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- e. Don't rely upon hunches or human wisdom but interpret the data based upon the Word of God. Compare all data and responses to God's Word and the example of Christ:

Isa. 8:19–20 And when they say to you, “Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter,” should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? **20** To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

- f. View the situation from God's perspective not mankind's – using God's Word. Colossians 3:2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
 - g. Address their beliefs at the heart level.
- B. Be cautious when your counselees use psychological labels (i.e. dysfunctional, damaged emotions, alcoholic, self-esteem, bipolar, etc.). Those words don't give biblical hope!
- a. I often ask counselees to explain what they mean by the psychological term they just used.
 - b. Then, I gently tell them (and sometimes ask permission when they are resistant) to use biblical terms to re-label and replace their psychological terms. This helps me to biblically diagnose heart issues.

Gal. 5:19–21 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

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- C. As biblical counselors who reject integration, we want to view both the circumstances of counselees and what the counselees say through Scriptural truth.

Hebrews 5:11-14 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. **12** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, **13** for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. **14** But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

VII. Establish a Theological Paradigm of Evaluating Problems Biblically

- A. Think biblically as you listen...and take notes!

Proverbs 18:2 A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.

Proverbs 18:13 If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

Proverbs 18:15 An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

- B. Again, take notes when collecting data. When asking questions, listen for the following (I call this "labeling lies" in my 4 L's of biblical counseling):

- a. Pride of elevating self and thereby lowering God's character
Matthew 12:35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.
- b. Facts over feelings
- c. Blameshifting; defensiveness; evasiveness leading to a victim mentality
- d. Victim specific words like can't and questions like "Why me?"
- e. Hopelessness represented in statements like "This is too difficult"
- f. Calling sin sickness

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B. Recognize that the process of change starts with Christ and the truth. Chart below is how the Holy Spirit and God’s Word work together using 2 Timothy 3:16 & Eph. 4:20–24.

Teaching	Reproof	Correction	Training in Righteousness
God’s Word	Your Old, Fleshly Thinking	New Biblical Thinking	New Biblical Actions
Standard Jesus Christ	Areas You Are Lacking	What To Do To “Fix” It	Put It Into Practice
<i>Truth</i> (Eph 4:20–21)	<i>Put-off</i> (Eph 4:22)	<i>Renew Mind</i> (Eph 4:23)	<i>Put-on</i> (Eph 4:24)

C. Behaviors/actions reflect what is going on in the heart. Interpret your data carefully and biblically to discern the heart motives you will need to gently and lovingly confront in the future.

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1. Make tentative interpretations using Scripture but be open to changing them during the course of counseling. In other words, don’t trust yourself!

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.

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2. Biblical examples of interpreting data and subsequent confrontation in grace and gentleness:

- a. Ruth 1:19–21** So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, “Is this Naomi?” 20 She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”

Naomi is thinking about the Lord incorrectly, forgetting His goodness and focusing upon her unfortunate circumstances. You would counsel her using

Psalm 34:18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

- b. Luke 10:38–41** Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” 41 But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things...”

Jesus re-interpreted Martha’s wrong-thinking using what she said because it revealed her heart’s desires.

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- c. **3 John 9–10 I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. 10 So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.**

John is interpreting the data that Diotrephes has provided in the past – putting himself first, failing to acknowledge apostolic authority, talking wicked nonsense, refusing to welcome the brothers, and putting willing persons out of the church; he is discerning the problem biblically and plans to confront this sinning brother.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

It is a gracious thing to call a sinning brother to repent!

- 3. Look for themes and patterns
 - a. Example in **James 3:16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.**
 - b. Example of Jesus in **John 4:18 “for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”**
 - c. Example of what happens to someone who is not “all in” for Christ in **James 1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**
 - d. Example of the fear when you are acting wickedly in **Proverbs 28:1 The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.**

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- e. Example of where conflict comes from (selfish heart desires) in

James 4:1-2 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

- 4. Learn to understand self-deception and outright deception
Jeremiah 17:9-10 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."
 - a. Some deceive because they are self-deceived.
Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.
 - b. Some deceive on purpose.
Proverbs 6:12-15 A worthless person, a wicked man, goes about with crooked speech, ¹³ winks with his eyes, signals with his feet, points with his finger, ¹⁴ with perverted heart devises evil, continually sowing discord; ¹⁵ therefore calamity will come upon him suddenly; in a moment he will be broken beyond healing.
 - c. Some have a mixture of seemingly contradictory emotions going on which makes it difficult to trust what they are saying.
Proverbs 14:13 Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.
 - d. Some are opposed to the message though they might attempt to hide it at times. **2 Tim. 3:1-8 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure**

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rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. 6 For among them are those

who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, 7 always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.

D. Use the data to think through questions like:

1. What is the reason the counselee has come for help at this time? (threat of divorce, pastor requiring it, etc.)
 - a. Did they feel the heat or see the light?
 - b. Did their circumstances nudge them to seek help? Or do they want to change?
2. What does the counselee expect out of counseling? (help, sympathy, etc.)
3. What is the counselee's greatest need at this time? (encouragement, admonishment, help, support, shepherding care)
4. What does the counselee understand about biblical change?
5. What is the best way to approach the counselee? (Nathan confronting David; Jesus with Samaritan woman)
6. Follow the iceberg principle. In other words, attack visible, presenting problems first because it:
 - a. Shows problems can be solved individually
 - b. Shows you can only counsel based upon what you know
 - c. Gives some hope today to the overwhelmed
 - d. Demonstrates counseling is a marathon not a sprint

VIII. Demonstrate the Connection Between Behavior and the Heart

A. Remember the heart of the problem is the flesh's desires that reside in the heart.

Proverbs 27:19 As water reflects the face, so the heart of man reflects the man.

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1. What are the ruling motives, beliefs, and choices?

Mark 7:21–23 For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

2. Who or what does he/she worship?

Luke 6:43–45 “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, 44 for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. 45 The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

3. What is the tool (Isa. 44:9–20) he/she is using to worship self?

Isaiah 44:12–13 The ironsmith takes a cutting tool and works it over the coals. He fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water and is faint. 13 The carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. He shapes it with planes and marks it with a compass. He shapes it into the figure of a man, with the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house.

4. Is it lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or pride of life ruling his heart?

John 2:15–17⁹ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

⁹ *Understanding Temptation: The War Within Your Heart* is a booklet I wrote that helps understand these 3 heart issues. Available at Focus Publishing.

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5. The prayer for all of us is found in

Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

6. Is your counselee deceptive or presenting information with an intent to lead you in a different direction? Proverbs 23:7 for he is like one who is inwardly calculating. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, but his heart is not with you.

1 Samuel 21:10–15 And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath. 11 And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?" 12 And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard. 14 Then Achish said to his servants, "Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? 15 Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

- B. What organic issues are involved that might be confusing or complicating factors?

1. You are not a medical doctor so do not encourage or discourage medication consumption.
2. Learn about the medical issue so you can understand the plight of your counselee better.¹⁰
3. What tests were run to prove the particular issue exists? Was the cause of the issue identified?
4. Is the current medication effective?
5. Storing medical information might make you subject to HIPAA laws (for health information privacy).

¹⁰ *Hope and Help for Chronic Illness* is a booklet I wrote to help counsel the chronically ill well. Also available through Focus Publishing.

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6. Are there somato-psychic issues to consider (i.e. a real physical disease like cancer that might be contributing to depression/sadness)?
7. Are there psycho-somatic issues to consider (i.e. an excessive and sinful worrier might find ulcers in his mouth when anxious about work circumstances)?

C. Interpreting the data by discerning it biblically is key for counselors who seek to help their counselees do the following:

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 119:11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

1 Cor. 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 5:9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

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Other Passages to Consider for Discerning the Problem Biblically: Genesis 18:1-15; Proverbs 14:19; Ezekiel 14:3-7; Daniel 4:28-37; 1 Corinthians 10:6-7, 13, 31; 2 Corinthians 12:9-11; Philippians 4:13; John 9:13-23; Gal. 4:30

Recommended Resources for Gathering Data & Discerning the Problem Biblically:

Curing the Heart by Howard Eyrich and William Hines

Committed to Craftsmanship by Jay Adams

How to Counsel Biblically by John MacArthur

Seeing with New Eyes by David Powlison

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by Paul David Tripp

Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling by Robert Kellemen, Steve Viars, and others

Gospel Centered Counseling by Robert Kellemen

Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling by Mark E. Shaw

Understanding Temptation: The War Within Your Heart by Mark E. Shaw

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Build Involvement

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

1. Build Involvement

Galatians 6:1-2 "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

- A. Establish the kind of relationship with the individual that will lead to them not only telling you their concerns but also being willing to accept your counsel. Building involvement creates an opportunity to meet the counselee's need.

- B. You build involvement when you:

- 1) Demonstrate Compassion

Matthew 9:35-36 "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."

The Message "When he looked out over the crowds, His heart broke. So confused and aimless they were, like sheep with no shepherd."

If you just hate sin... and love the Bible... you're not ready to be a biblical counselor.
You need more. You need compassion.

- a. Consider what it would be like to be in the counselee's position

Philippians 2:20-21 "I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

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- b. Consider what it would be like for you if the counselee were one of your family members

I Thessalonians 2:7-9 "But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us."

- c. Think about how you can practically show them compassion – in the way that you pray for them... in the way that you rejoice and weep with them... and by the fact that you keep telling them how you care for them, and love them, etc.

Acts 20:31 "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn (noutheteo) everyone night and day with tears."

Galatians 4:19 "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you."

The Message "Do you know how I feel right now, and will feel until Christ's life becomes visible in your lives? Like a mother in the pain of childbirth."

Effective biblical counseling is like child-birth as we stand by them and groan with them... and pray for them until Christ's life becomes more visible in their lives.

John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease."

- 2) Be Careful and Cautious whenever you're counseling the opposite sex
- 3) Show respect for the counselee.

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- a. Use proper verbal communication

2 Timothy 2:24-25 “And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth”

1 Thessalonians 5:14 “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”

“Only when we begin to see that theology is not merely about repeating back answers but instead more like caring for a garden can we care well for others. Good gardeners have been trained to pay attention to the soil in their hands and not just the instructions in a book.

From the book they have learned about soil, what is needed, what is needed, what to add, and how to care for it. But in the end, nothing can replace examining the dirt itself, for no two patches of the land are the same.

Each person is coming from a different circumstance, with specific challenges the needs, with individual strengths and temptations. Part of loving well is figuring out what response is needed and appropriate in a given circumstance...” *Embodied Hope*, Kelly Kopic, p. 25

- b. Use proper nonverbal communication (position, eye contact, voice, etc.)
- c. Take the counselee seriously
- d. Express appropriate confidence in him
- e. Welcome his input
- f. Continually thank them for coming – and tell them how well they’re doing

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g. Maintain biblical confidentiality

But this will look very different than the secular model of what 'confidentiality' means.

Here's what we have spelled out in the initial paperwork that everyone reads and signs before they begin counseling with us:

Confidentiality- Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process, and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. However, because we are continually training others to be effective counselors we ask that you agree to allow counselors in training to be present during your sessions. There are four other situations when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others: (1) When a counselor is uncertain of how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice from another pastor or elder in this church; (2) when a counselee attends another church and it is necessary to talk with his or her pastor or elders; (3) when there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless we otherwise intervene; or (4) when a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (see Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20). Please be assured that our counselors strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and they will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible.

4) Be sincere

a. Be real

b. Be honest about your skill, qualifications, strengths, weaknesses, goals, and agenda

"I'm not a medical doctor."

"I'm not an attorney or legal expert."

"I'm not a financial planner."

FOUNDATIONS

- 5) Provide loving, firm control of the session

- 6) Gather data thoroughly before giving advice (Prov 18:13, 15, 17)

Recommended Resources:

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change, Paul Tripp, P&R Pub., 2002

The Christian Counselor's Manual, Jay Adams, Zondervan Pub., 1973

Embodied Hope: A Theological Meditation on Pain and Suffering, Kelly Kopic, IVP, 2017

FOUNDATIONS

Key Element #5: Providing Instruction

David Michael, Grace Fellowship Church

I. Introduction

A. We can fall into pitfalls in counseling

1. All Listening and Reflecting back – this is based on the foundational belief and worldview that the truth is inside the person and we can't impose our own truth on them! Non-directive/authoritative methods of secular psychology are not based on a biblical understanding of the true nature of our hearts or how we change.

a. Romans 8:7 says, "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot."

b. Ephesians 4

2. All Instruction

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. James 1:19-20

B. The Unseen Truths to remember when preparing for Instruction

1. These Key Elements that we're going through are not a list that you just check off and you're done, but they are ingredients to wise counsel that we keep coming back to. So, to this point we've covered:

Gathering Data

Discerning Problems Biblically

Establishing Involvement with the Counselee

Giving Hope

And this Key Element is #5, Providing Instruction

FOUNDATIONS

2. 1 Cor. 2:1-14

Success from our perspective is to be faithful to God, not that our counselee is fixed! We do our very best to listen, Spiritually discern and instruct biblically...but the counselee has to be surrendered to the Spirit as well to understand and grow.

II. Qualities of Biblical Instruction for Counseling

A. Clearly Biblical

1. It's not your opinion or just something that worked for you
2. It's not from a survey, social experiment or really smart dead guy
3. It's not from secular psychology or even a popular Christian book
4. The truth's that we're asking people to believe and live their lives according to come from God's Word, and we need to show counselees where the Bible says such things. We need to know and use the Bible to show what God thinks about them, their situation and what He expects of them. It's very clearly not just our opinion, but they need to feel the weight that God is speaking to them!

B. Christocentric

1. Ultimately, Christianity comes back to Jesus—who do you say He is? Do you have a relationship with Him? Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me."
2. We want to help people in their anxiety, depression, marital messes, heartbreak with their children, grief from a tragedy....and the greatest help we can give them is to be sure they know Jesus—the way, truth and life!
3. The truth of everyone you'll ever meet with is that THEY NEED JESUS, because He's the greatest expression of love that God has ever or will ever give.

1 John 4:9-10 says:

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

FOUNDATIONS

Biblical Instruction is Clearly Biblical, Christ Centered, and

C. Gospel Saturated

1. The Gospel is the good news that is the bottom line that changes everything! It is the summary of who Jesus is, what our biggest problem is, and how no matter the situation, we have hope!
2. No matter what a person thinks their problem is...an unloving spouse, a depressing life, a disappointing relational status...it pales in comparison to who we are before a perfectly holy God.

Romans 2 tells us:

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.

It’s not that a person’s problems are insignificant, but what they need most of all is to see them in the context of the greater reality of where they stand before God. And the key to that is to know and love the good news of the Gospel!

3. 1 Peter 2:24 says

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

D. Differentiating the Indicatives from the Imperatives

FOUNDATIONS

1. Explanation: the indicatives are what God has done for us, while the imperatives come as a result of what God has done. Our nature is to focus on the commands—here’s all the things that I have to do to be right with God... but the truth is that God has done what we cannot do and we are set free to live as we were created! It is because of the work of God that we are transformed to be His instruments of righteousness.

2. Eph. 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

3. Imperatives are not optional! While we show the distinction between what God has done for us and what we’re to do, it doesn’t mean they’re not important! Our instruction needs to point people to OBEY! This is covered more in the session on Homework, but it is vital that we emphasize that we are not to be hearers only, but doers of the Word!

E. Biblical Instruction is spoken in love

1. As I read earlier in Eph 4 – *speaking the truth in love we are to grow up...*

2. 1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

FOUNDATIONS

IV. Practical Tips for Instruction

- A. Remember how Jesus taught
 - 1. Ask good questions!
 - 2. Jesus also told a lot of stories

- B. Humbly Use your Testimony
 - 1. How did God use His Word to change your life?
 - 2. We're still growing and needing to walk out the same truths

- C. Be Creative
 - 1. Illustrations
 - 2. Diagrams and Pictures
 - 3. Refer to the sermon, current events or an experience
 - 4. Use everyday activities and tie to eternal truths

- D. Connect Instruction to Homework
 - 1. Instruction is not just about information, but leads us to OBEY
 - 2. James 1:22

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves.

Passages to Consider: Psalm 19:9; 119:9-11,89,105, 128, 160; Isaiah 40:14; 46:9-10; Matthew 5:1-2; 7:6; 16:13-20; 21:19-21; 28:20; Luke 1:3-4; John 17:17; Acts 20:31; Romans 1:18-32; 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Ephesians 4; Colossians 1:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:10-17; Titus 3:9-10; Hebrews 5:12-14; 12:1; 2 Peter 1:3

FOUNDATIONS

Goal of Parenting

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction

1. Every child is a **blessing** of the Lord.

Psalm 127:3 *"Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward."*

2. Every parent is a **steward** of their child(ren).

Psalm 24:1 *"The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein..."*

- (a) Each parent is **under** the **headship of Christ** as our creator, redeemer and king.

- (b) Parents are not the **ultimate** authority of their children.

"If authority best describes the parent's relationship to the child, the best description of the activity of the parents is the child's guide.

This shepherding process helps a child to understand himself and the world in which he lives.

The parent shepherds a child to assess himself and his responses.

He shepherds the child to understand not just the 'what' of the child's actions, but also the 'why.' As the shepherd, you want to help your child understand himself as a creature made by and for God."

(Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding Your Child's Heart*, xx-xxi)

- (c) A steward is one who has been given, for a time, the care of something that is owned by **another** .

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(d) Stewardship can be defined as faithful and efficient management of something belonging to another in order to achieve the owner's **objectives**.

(e) Stewards always act in the best interest of the **owner**.

Matt. 25:14–30 (*Parable of the Talents*)

3. Parenting is a great opportunity for **evangelism** and **discipleship** of wayward souls. (Deut. 6; Matt. 10:28)

“The first generation of children who grew up in Palestine did not know who God was and did not know about the amazing things He did to deliver and sustain His people...The fundamental failure was a failure of the family to do what God intended it to do.”

(Paul Tripp, *The Age of Opportunity*, 40–41)

- I. Parents face common **struggles**: having a “parent-centered” or a “child-centered” home.

- a. Defining a “Parent-Centered home:

“When they fail to live up to our expectations, we find ourselves not grieving for them and fighting for them, but angry at them, fighting against them, and, in fact, grieving for ourselves and our loss.”

(Paul Tripp, *The Age of Opportunity*, 35)

- b. Elements of a “Parent-Centered” home (major areas):

- i. **PRIDE** -- The parent is always right or is very slow to admit fault and seek forgiveness.

Prov. 16:25 “*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*”

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“Pride blinds us not only to our own sins but also to the true struggles of others. And just as you wouldn’t entrust your eyes into the hands of a blind ophthalmologist (regardless of his experience), our kids won’t feel comfortable trusting our correction of them when we’re blind to our own sin, inconsistencies and failures.”

(Jim Newheiser and Elyse Fitzpatrick, *You Never Stop Being a Parent*, 85)

- ii. **CONTROL** -- expecting children to obey them, but the parent disobeys authority (God’s etc.)
- iii. **HYPOCRISY** -- expecting children to behave one way, but justifying one’s own contrary behavior.
- iv. **BUSY** -- neglecting to get time with each child.
- v. **INCONSISTENCY** -- enforcing rules and corrections one day, but not the next.
- vi. **SELF-CENTERED** -- all decisions and choices are totally based on the parent and his/her wishes.
- vii. **IMPATIENT** -- the idea that I want my child to do _____ RIGHT NOW!

“Nagging will always damage a relationship because it is not the fruit of humble respect. It is the fruit of pride and impatience.”

(Jim Newheiser and Elyse Fitzpatrick, *You Never Stop Being a Parent*, 88)

- viii. **EXPECTATIONS** -- the child has to be, do, and become everything the parents expect of them.
- ix. **IDOLATRY** -- parents making the desires of their heart more important than pleasing God

FOUNDATIONS

2 Cor. 5:9 "So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him."

2 Cor. 4:16 "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self[a] is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

Q: What are some possible "idols of the heart" for parents?

(Paul Tripp, *The Age of Opportunity*, 29–38)

- Comfort
- Respect
- Appreciation
- Success (spiritual, educational, occupational, etc.)
- Control

Q: How do you know when something is an idol in your heart?

- 1) How do you **respond** when you don't get what you want?
- 2) Are you willing to **sin** in order to get what you want?

c. Defining a "Child-Centered home:

"A child-centered home is one in which a child believes and is allowed to behave as though the entire household, parents, siblings and even pets exist for one purpose—to please him."

(Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger*, 24)

d. Elements of a "Child-Centered home:

- i. No **consequences** – a child clearly sins and the parents allow him to get away with it.
- ii. **manipulation** – a child reacts in anger, clams up, or cries to get what he wants.
- iii. **selfishness** – the child gets whatever he wants (it's all about the child, not others).

FOUNDATIONS

- iv. **demanding** – the child insists that things be done his/her way and when he/she wants it.
 - v. **priorities** – the child becomes more important than the spouse.
 - vi. **responsibilities** – a child has no responsibilities (parents do everything for the child).
 - vii. **communication** – the child tells the parent what to do as if the child is an equal or in charge.
 - viii. Never **offended** – the parents do anything they can to not offend their child.
- e. Elements of more **severe** “Parent-Centered” and/or “Child-Centered” homes:
- i. Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, mental)
 - ii. Substance abuse by the child
 - iii. Suicidal children
 - iv. Sexual sin
- II. **Instructors of young hearts and minds: The characteristics of a God-centered home.**

a. Definition of a “God-centered” home:

“The concept of a God-centered home is derived from the biblical principle that the purpose of every Christian is to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Cor. 6:20). In contrast to a child-centered home, where pleasing and serving the child is the dominant theme, the God-centered home is one in which everyone is committed to pleasing and serving God. God’s desires are exalted over everyone else’s.

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Everyone in the family may be expected to sacrifice personal pleasure if God's will requires it. This philosophy teaches children to serve rather than to be served, to honor rather than be honored, to give (be loving) rather than take (be selfish)."

(Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger*, 26–27)

b. Shepherding in Sanctification: Elements of a "God-centered" home.

i. **TRUTH** – the source of truth is the inspired & sufficient Word of God.

Psalms 51:6, 10 "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom...Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

2 Tim. 3:15–16 "...and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

ii. **WORSHIP** – loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and loving others

Matt. 22:37–39 "And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

1 John 2:15–17 "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life[a]—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

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iii. GLORIFYING GOD by thinking and acting like Christ

1 Cor. 10:31 *"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*

Phil. 2:5 *"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,..."*

James 1:13-15 *"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."*

iv. GOSPEL – who Christ is and who you are in Christ

Rom. 1:16 *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."*

"The cross was the centerpiece of Paul's theology. It wasn't merely one of Paul's messages; it was the message. He taught about other things as well, but whatever he taught was always derived from, and related to, the foundational reality that Jesus Christ died so the sinner would be reconciled to God and forgiven by God."

(CJ Mahaney, *The Cross Centered Life*, 11)

v. HEART – dealing with issues of the heart, not simply outward behavior

Matt. 12:34 *"You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."*

Matt. 15:19 *"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone." (cf. Mk. 7:14-23)*

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Lk. 6:43–45 “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

1 Sam. 16:7 “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.’”

Jas 4:1–3 “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”

c. Goals of a God-centered home:

- i. Right view of **God**.
- ii. Right view of **self**.
- iii. Right view of **others**.
 1. **Love** them.
 2. **Serve** them.

FOUNDATIONS

Recommended Resources

Farley, William. *Gospel Centered Parenting*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009.

Tripp, Paul. *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

Tripp, Paul. *Age of Opportunity*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2001.

Sande, Ken. *Peacemaking for Families*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2002.

MacDonald, James. *Seven Words to Change Your Family...While There's Still Time*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2002.

Mack, Wayne. *Your Family, God's Way*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1991.

Murdoch, Mark Ruth. *Raising a Christian Daughter in an MTV World*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2000.

FOUNDATIONS

Parental Instruction

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction

"But the truth is, the only real *values* that can save the family are rooted in Scripture—they are *biblical values*, not just *family values*. Therefore, the future of the family in our society hinges on the success of those who are committed to the truth of Scriptures."

(John MacArthur, *Successful Christian Parenting*, 9)

1. There is **HOPE** for parents because God has revealed many truths about parenting.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."*

2. Parents should seek to bring glory to God by fulfilling the **MISSION** to which God has called them.

Deuteronomy 6:6–8 *"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead."* (cf. Psalm 78:1–8)

Ephesians 6:4 *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*

"Your task is to help your children know God and the true nature of reality."

(Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, 148)

FOUNDATIONS

- I. Parents face common struggles: Having a “Parent-Centered” or a “Child-Centered” home
- II. Parents have a common solution: The characteristics of a “God-Centered” home
- III. Parents have common STEPS to accomplish the goal – Eph. 6:4

Ephesians 6:4 *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”*

A. God has given the **RESPONSIBILITY** particularly to the “fathers”

1. The Discipline of a father should reflect the heart of our heavenly Father (Hebrews 12:5-11)

“The purpose for your authority in the lives of your children is not to hold them under your power, but to empower them to be self-controlled people living freely under the authority of God.”

*(Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding Your Child's Heart*, 13)*

2. A **WIFE** and **MOTHER** play an integral part in the process of parenting.

Proverbs 1:8 “Hear, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.”

Proverbs 6:20 “My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother.”

3. We should be particularly **SENSITIVE** to single moms or single dads who do this on their own.
 - a. **PRAYING** for them and their children.
 - b. **MENTORING** the children (individual men/women connected to each child).
 - c. **ENCOURAGING** them and the children on a regular basis.

FOUNDATIONS

B. OBEY God's command of "...do not provoke your children to anger"

1. This command **DOES NOT** mean a parent is to never oppose, deny, cross, or upset the child.

1 Kings 1:6 *"His father had never crossed him at any time by asking, 'Why have you done so?..."*

1 Samuel 3:13 *"For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves, and he did not rebuke them."*

2. This command **DOES** imply a child is not to be brought up to an angry, impulsive lifestyle.

Proverbs 25:28 *"Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit."*

"To provoke...to anger suggests a repeated, ongoing pattern of treatment that gradually builds up a deep-seated anger and resentment that boils over in outward hostility."

(John MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 317)

3. There are examples of how a child's sinful anger might be expressed.
 - a. Anger can take the form of open **REBELLION** against any authority.
 - b. Anger can take the form of **STUBBORNNESS**, passive **RESENTMENT**, apathy, indifference, half-hearted performance and/or silence.
4. There are several ways a parent can **AVOID** provoking their children to anger.

FOUNDATIONS

“In contrast to the norms of the day, Paul wants Christian fathers to be gentle, patient educators of their children, whose chief ‘weapon’ is Christian instruction focused on loyalty to Christ as Lord.”

(Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 447)

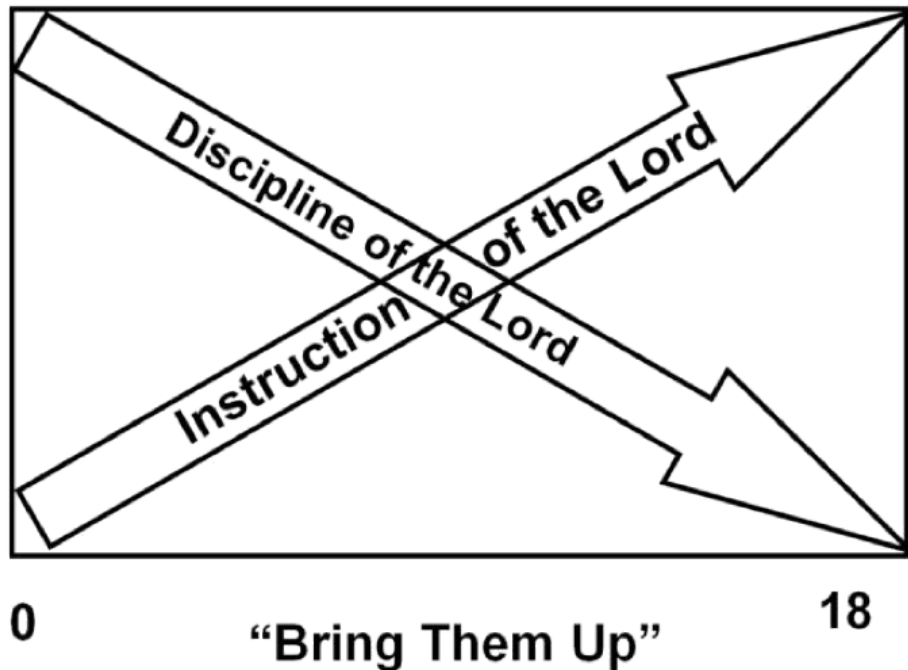
- a. Make sure there is no ongoing **TENSION** between the parents (solve problems biblically).
- b. Control your **ANGER** and avoid abusive words, tones, and abusive correction.
- c. Build **INVOLVEMENT** with and give **ATTENTION** to the child (develop godly relationships).
- d. **EDIFY** (build up) the child (avoid being overly critical).
- e. Be a good **LISTENER** (don’t answer a matter before you hear it) and **COMMUNICATOR**.
- f. Understand that not every thought or action is sin, or a major issue in life.
- g. Help the child understand the **DIFFERENCE** between the scripture and house rules.
- h. Avoid having **TOO MANY** rules and always **CHANGING** the rules.

C. OBEY God’s command to “. . . bring them up in the TEACHING of the Lord”

“Ultimately, the concern of parents is not simply that their sons and daughters will be obedient to their authority, but that through this godly training and admonition their children will come to know and obey the Lord himself.”

(Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 447)

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1. Parents need to realize that if they don't **TEACH** their children, then somebody will!

Proverbs 1:1-4 *“The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel: to know wisdom and instruction, to discern the sayings of understanding, to receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity; to give prudence to the naive, to the youth knowledge and discretion.”*

2. Parents need to provide biblical, **THEOCENTRIC INSTRUCTION** to their children.

Psalms 119:9-11 *“How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”*

- a. To value **TRUTH**

1 Timothy 2:4 *“Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

1) **COMMANDS**

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1 John 2:15-17 *"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever."*

"Clear-boundary issues are situations that involve the plain commands of Scripture. The call to speak the truth, to honor father and mother, to not steal or commit adultery or fornication, are all examples."

(Paul Tripp, Age of Opportunity, 131)

2) WISDOM vs. FOOLISHNESS

Proverbs 2:6-13 "For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, Guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones. Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course. For wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of Darkness."

Proverbs 20:5 "The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out."

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"As important as biblical conviction is, and as important as it is to pay attention to the boundary issues, a believer spends most of his time grappling with wisdom issues...He lives a basically obedient life, but a life in which there are myriad situations where he needs wisdom, that is, he needs to apply the principles, perspectives, and themes of Scriptures so that his practical everyday decisions express God's will for his life. In these situations, he needs wisdom because there is no clear 'thus says the Lord.'"

(Paul Tripp, *Age of Opportunity*, 133)

3) BOUNDARIES

Romans 13:14 *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."*

1 Corinthians 8:13 *"Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble."*

4) Nature and Characteristics of Godly Counsel

Psalms 1:1-3 *"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers."*

Matthew 6:33 *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*

Galatians 6:8 *"For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."*

b. To LOVE the Lord

Deuteronomy 6:5 *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*

FOUNDATIONS

John 14:15 *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*

c. To WORSHIP the Lord

"When your life is shaped by the worship of God, you live with his plans and purposes in view."

(Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect?*, 270)

Psalm 96:9 *"Worship the LORD in holy attire; tremble before Him, all the Earth."*

"Part of the parent's task is to shepherd him as a creature who worships, pointing him to the One who alone is worthy of his worship. The question is not 'will he worship?' It is always 'whom will he worship?'"

(Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, 21)

d. To GLORIFY God

1 Corinthians 10:31 *"Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*

e. To accept, appreciate, and proclaim the GOSPEL

Judges 2:10 *"All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel."*

Romans 1:16 *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."*

"The gospel is simple and should be presented simply. Parents have the best years of the child's life to explain, clarify, stress, and reemphasize gospel truths. The key is to be faithful and consistent in both teaching and exemplifying the gospel."

(John MacArthur, *Successful Christian Parenting*, 47)

f. To understand the **HEART** of man

FOUNDATIONS

Psalm 139:23 *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way."*

Jeremiah 17:9 *"The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; who can understand it?"*

Matthew 15:19 *"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders."*

3. Parents need to take advantage of the many OCCASIONS for teaching a child.

"It is of paramount importance that we do not think for our children, but teach them how to think about life, employing the symphony of perspectives God has given us in His Word."

(Paul Tripp, Age of Opportunity, 137)

- a. **SPECIAL** circumstances, events, and times

Joshua 4:5-7 "And Joshua said to them, "Cross again to the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel. Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever."

- b. **DAILY** life situations:

- 1) Response to **AUTHORITY**

- 2) Being a **SERVANT** versus being selfish

- 3) Handling **TEMPTATIONS**

- 4) Developing a **WORK** ethic (avoid being lazy)

FOUNDATIONS

- 5) Controlling the **TONGUE**
- 6) Controlling one's **THOUGHTS**
- 7) Learning to **LOVE** others (developing godly relationships)
- 8) Committed to a **LOCAL CHURCH**
- 9) Using one's **SPIRITUAL GIFTS**
- 10) Living and proclaiming the **GOSPEL**

4. Types of Discipleship

1) **QUESTION** and **ANSWER**

Joshua 4:6-7 "Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever."

2) **Formative** teaching during your "Family Time"

3) **Exemplary** times

Deuteronomy 6:6-8 "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead."

4) Corrective

5) Parents need to be an **EXAMPLE** of Christ to each child.

Philippians 4:9 "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

FOUNDATIONS

“As a parent, you cannot give what you don’t have yourself. We can only teach our children to be practically obedient to the Word, exercising decisive biblical conviction, if we are doing the same. We can only teach our children to wisely apply the principles of the Word to the issues of life if that is what we are seeking to do. Obedient students of the Word tend to produce the same kind of children.”

(Paul Tripp, *Age of Opportunity*, 131)

Passages to Consider

Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 20:5; Hebrews 12:5–11; Psalm 78:1–8; Proverbs 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10; 19:18.

Recommended Resources

Coriell, Ron. *A Child’s Book of Character Building 1 & 2*, Ada, MI: Revell, 1995.

Forster, Pam. *For Instruction in Righteousness*, Gaston, OR: Doorposts Publishing, 1995.

Forster, Pam. *Plants Grown Up*, Gaston, OR: Doorposts Publishing, 1995.

Forster, Pam. *Polished Cornerstones*, Gaston, OR: Doorposts Publishing, 1997.

Priolo, Lou. *Teach Them Diligently*, Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2009.

Ray, Bruce. *Withhold Not Correction*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1978.

Tripp, Paul. *Age of Opportunity*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2001.

Tripp, Tedd. *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995.

Weidmann, Jim & Hering, Marianne. *The Power of Teachable Moments*, Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Publishing, 2004.

FOUNDATIONS

Parental Discipline

Pastor Peter LaRuffa, Grace Fellowship Church

Introduction

- Are there really any failsafe methods of child-rearing?
 - Discipline alone will not bring a child to maturity.
- A. Obey God's command to "bring them up in the discipline of the Lord"
- a. Develop a biblical mindset to discipline.
 - i. There is a biblical foundation for disciplining children.

Biblical Foundation: Heart vs Behavioral Change

The Bible explains that discipline is about heart change not only behavioral change by showing four purposes of discipline and how they address the understanding of the heart.

1. It's redemptive

- Deuteronomy 8:5-6 "Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him."
- Proverbs 4:23 "Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."
- Psalm 51:6 "Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart."

FOUNDATIONS

2. **It's loving - Eli**

- 1 Samuel 3:13 "For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them."
- 1 Samuel 4:17 "Then the one who brought the news replied, 'Israel has fled before the Philistines and there has also been a great slaughter among the people, and your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken.'"
- Ephesians 6:4 "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- 2 Corinthians 4:16 "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self[d] is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

3. **It's helpful - Proverbs**

- Proverbs 22:15 "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him."
- Proverbs 23:13-14 "Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol."
- Matthew 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

4. **It's modeled by the Lord as He corrects those He loves for their benefit - Heb. 12:5-15**

- Proverbs 22:15 "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him."

FOUNDATIONS

- Proverbs 23:13–14 “Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol.”

- B. Popular psychology and secular approaches to parenting present false notions on a child discipline that directly contradict what the Bible says.
 - i. It doesn’t work—it’s only punitive
 - ii. Children turn out badly—it’s not productive
 - iii. It promotes violence—it’s unloving
 - iv. It warps their personality—it hinders their potential

- C. There are some reasons efforts for discipline are ineffective.
 - i. The child was disciplined in uncontrolled anger.

- James 1:20 “For the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.”
 - ii. The child was disciplined with wrong goals.

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

- 2 Corinthians 5:9 “Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.”
 - iii. The child was disciplined without love—1 Cor. 13

 - iv. The child was disciplined without teaching.

- Deuteronomy 6:6 “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

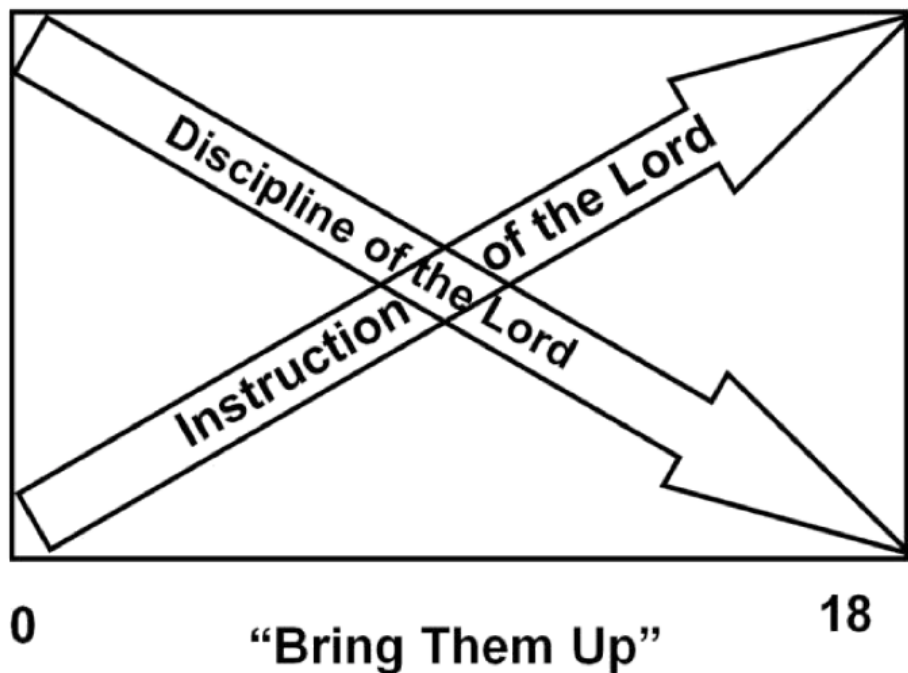
FOUNDATIONS

D. God intends for there to be a relationship between discipline and teaching because discipline is **addressing the heart**.

a. Levels of understanding the heart

- i. Desires
- ii. Thoughts
- iii. Beliefs

b. Where there's a why there's a will and where there's a will there's a way.



E. Heart of the parent when disciplining your children

i. Accept the responsibility personally.

- It will take time.
- It will be challenging.
- It will require dependence on the Lord (the place of prayer for wisdom).

FOUNDATIONS

- ii. Communicate your expectations clearly.
- Process Principle: Teach first, discipline second!
- iii. Make appropriate rules that are:
 - Reasonable
 - Definable
 - Enforceable
 - Biblical (guard against rules that cannot be validated by Scriptures)
- iv. Ensure the discipline fits the offense.
- v. Establish appropriate rewards and correction as part of the discipline process.
 - 1. More immediate for small child
 - 2. Focus on a daily habit that needs changing
 - 3. Recognize that each child will respond differently

F. Review the Behavior Contract.

G. Guidelines for spanking a child:

- i. **Privacy** is an important element.
- ii. **Pray** first.
- iii. Ask a series of questions:
 - a. What did you do?
 - b. Was it right?

FOUNDATIONS

c. What should you have done?

d. What will you do next time?

e. What does God expect me to do?

iv. **Communicate** the details of the discipline process.

v. Follow through in **love** with ALL discipline.

H. Expect **pressure** from the child.

FOUNDATIONS

God's Purpose for Marriage

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

- I. **God Designed Marriage (Gen. 2:18)**
 - a. Marriage was established in the **creation** account
 - b. Marriage appears **before** the fall of man in Genesis 3.
 - c. God said it was "**very** good."
 - d. Nowhere in the Bible is marriage ever depicted as being between two members of the **same** sex.

- II. **Marriage Was Designed to Be a Picture of the Relationship Between Christ and His Bride – the Church. (Eph. 5:22-33)**

6x in 8 verses he uses the word "as" or "just as"

- v. 22 – Wives should submit to their husbands "**as to the Lord**"
- v. 23 – For the husband is head of the wife, "**as also Christ is head of the church**"
- v. 24 –Therefore "**just as**" the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands
- v. 25 – Husbands love your wives "**just as**" Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it"
- v. 29 – Husbands should nourish and cherish wives, "**just as**" Christ does the church"

God never designed for marriage to work well without Jesus Christ at the center of it.

FOUNDATIONS

That's why this marriage passage is surrounded by some other critical information.

5:18 – Be filled with the Spirit ‘... be filled with the Spirit’

5:20 – Be thankful ‘... giving thanks’

5:21 – Be ready to lay down your ‘rights’ ‘... submitting to one another’

6:12 – Be alert to who the real enemy is that wants to destroy your marriage – Satan ‘For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities...’

6:13 – Be armed for spiritual battle ‘Therefore take up the whole armor of God...’

6:16 – Be full of faith ‘Above all, taking the shield of faith’

6:18 – Be praying constantly ‘Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit’

III. **Marriage is a Great Blessing that was Designed for Our Good.**

a. Marriage provides companionship. (Gen. 2:18)

- i. It solves the “aleness” problem.
- ii. It provides a “helper fit” for man.

b. Marriage facilitates sexual expression, purity and duty.
(1 Cor. 7:1-5)

c. Marriage facilitates the gift of procreating children.
(Gen. 1:28; Psa. 127:3ff)

IV. **Marriage was Ultimately Designed for God's Glory (I Cor. 10:31; Colossians 3:17-23; Eph. 5:32)**

Ephesians 5:32 “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

FOUNDATIONS

Paul says there's something at the very heart of marriage that preaches a sermon about Christ and the glory of God! That means a strong Christian marriage is a billboard for Jesus Christ and the gospel!

It also means that an ugly Christian marriage is like graffiti, because it defaces and devalues something precious. It misrepresents the glory of God and our Savior because it represents selfishness, chaos, and twisting, while a strong marriage can adorn the gospel.

Titus 2:10 "... that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."

V. **Marriage was Designed to Expose Us and Help Us Grow Spiritually to Become More Like Christ (Eph. 5:1; Prov. 27:17; Rom. 8; 1 Pet. 3)**

Marriage is not a stopping point. It's a starting point. The wedding ceremony is not the closing chapter; it's the beginning of the real work of becoming more like Christ.

a. Marriage is designed to allow each person to grow in holiness.

"To spiritually benefit from marriage, we have to be honest. We have to look at our disappointments, own up to our ugly attitudes, and confront our selfishness. We also have to rid ourselves of the notion that the difficulties of marriage can be overcome if we simply pray harder or learn a few simple principles... Why is this? Because there's a deeper question that needs to be addressed beyond, 'How we can 'improve' our marriage?' What if God didn't design marriage to be 'easier'? What if God had an end in mind that went beyond our happiness, our comfort... What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy?"
Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More than to Make Us Happy? Gary Thomas, p. 13

b. Although marriage is designed to be the norm for life on earth, it is not required to glorify God, grow spiritually, or impact others. (1 Cor. 7:7-8, 1 Cor. 7:32-34)

FOUNDATIONS

1 Cor. 7:32–34 ³²I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. ³³ But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, ³⁴ and his interests are divided.

“Christianity was the first religion that held up single adulthood as a viable way of life. He writes, ‘Christianity’s founder, Jesus Christ, and its leading theologian, St. Paul, were both single their entire lives. Single adults cannot be seen as somehow less fully formed or realized human beings... Paul’s assessment in I Corinthians 7 is that singleness is a good condition blessed by God, and in many circumstances, it is actually better than marriage. As a result of this revolutionary attitude, the early church did not pressure people to marry (as we see in Paul’s letter)” *The Meaning of Marriage*, Tim Keller, p. 194

I don’t think Paul intended to communicate that the life of a single person cannot be a billboard that puts on display the glory of Christ and His love for the Church; He simply wanted married couples to *not* get so caught up in their own marriage, and each other, that they forget that marriage was always designed to be about something bigger than the two of them.

2 Cor. 11:2–3...is a passage that speaks to every believer – whether single or married.

2 Corinthians 11:2–3 “... I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that... your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”

VI. **God Never Designed Marriage to Fully Satisfy Us**

- a. There’s a measure of futility that’s still present in the best Christian marriage

Romans 8:20 “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope.”

- b. And so we groan and long for something better that will fully satisfy

FOUNDATIONS

Romans 8:23, 26 “And not only they, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body... Likewise, the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.” C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

You will love your spouse best when you love God most. You don't want your spouse to make you the #1 thing in their life. Love for God always has to be ultimate, and your marriage secondary.

The power and motivation to keep loving and sacrificing, year after year, for a sinful, imperfect husband or imperfect wife *has* to come from being so satisfied in something *outside* of that marriage!

VII. God Designed Marriage to Be a Covenant Relationship

- a. Marriage is a covenant relationship for life between one man and one woman. (Mal. 2:10-17; Matt. 19:1-6; Eph. 5:32)

Matt 19:6 ⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

“Staying married is not mainly about staying in love, but about keeping covenant... By this unwavering covenant-keeping, the possibility of being profoundly in love in forty years is much greater than if you think the task of marriage is first staying in love... Staying in love isn't the first task of marriage. It is a happy overflow of covenant-keeping for Christ's sake.” John Piper, *This Momentary Marriage*, 74

FOUNDATIONS

- b. Marriage involves one man and one woman “leaving” father and mother.

Matt 19:5 ⁵ ...‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’

- i. “Leaving” is more than geographical in nature.
- ii. “Leaving” means both individuals understand the “S.P.S.” Principle
 - a. The parent-child relationship is secondary to the parents’ marriage. [temporary]
 - b. When a child grows and marries, the husband-wife relationship becomes their primary earthly relationship. [permanent]
 - c. The [now] parents’ relationship to their married child is a secondary relationship. [temporary]
- iii. “Leaving” means a commitment to prioritizing their spouse’s concerns above those of their parents.

- c. Marriage involves “cleaving” (“being joined”).

Matt 19:5 ⁵ ...‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’

- d. Marriage involves “weaving” (“become one flesh”).

Matt 19:5 ⁵ ...‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’

- i. Positional oneness comes as a result of two people getting married.
- ii. Physical oneness comes as a result of a husband and wife engaging in sexual intercourse.
- iii. Functional oneness happens over the course of a lifetime as the two continue to become one.

FOUNDATIONS

Recommended Resources

- Harvey, Dave. *When Sinners Say 'I Do.'* Shepherd Press, 2007.
- Piper, John. *This Momentary Marriage.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2009.
- Keller, Timothy. *The Meaning of Marriage.* Penguin Books. 2013.
- Thomas, Gary. *Sacred Marriage.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

FOUNDATIONS

The Role of the Husband

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney

I. LEADER: The Husband Is to Lead His Wife – Gen. 1:26, 2:18–25; Eph. 5:23; Matt. 20:25–28

A. The biblical foundation for the husband's leadership

1. The order of creation establishes his leadership – Gen. 1-2

1 Timothy 2:13 *For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.*

2. God declared the husband to be the leader – Eph. 5:23

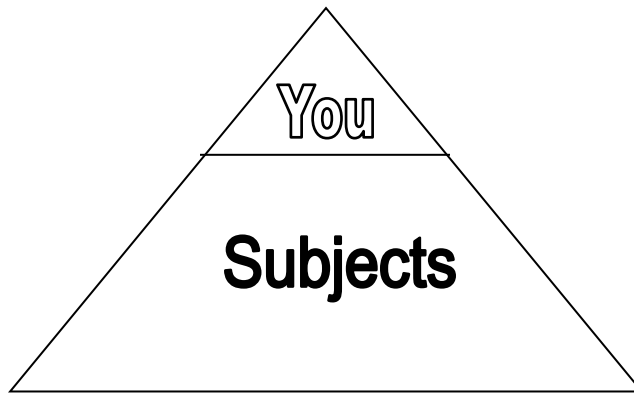
Ephesians 5:23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.*

B. The biblical view of the husband's leadership – Matt. 20:25–28

Matthew 20:25–28 *But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them." It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. "*

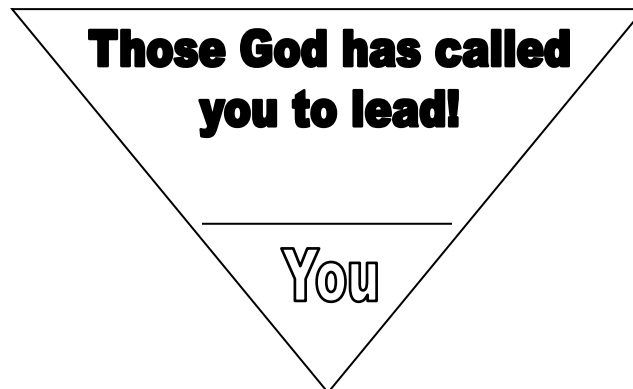
1. What leadership is NOT: "lord it over them" (Gentile view) = a dictator!
Example: The focus is more on position and authority and demanding submission!

FOUNDATIONS



2. What leadership IS: *Leadership* = **Servitude** (v. 26-27)

Example: The focus is on helping those God has placed around you to grow



The real test of whether or not someone's a servant is how you respond when you are treated like one.

FOUNDATIONS

Q: *What is the difference between a dictator and a godly leader?*

Dictator	Godly Leader
● Proud	● Humble
● No accountability	● Welcomes accountability
● Makes all the decisions w/o counsel	● Seeks counsel before making decisions
● Expects others to serve him	● Serves others
● Sinful communication (lies, anger, etc.)	● Biblical communication
● Selfish focus – what’s best for me?	● Focus on others – what’s best for her?
● Wrong motive: Pleasing self	● Right Motive: Pleasing God
● Expects others to change 1 st	● Willing to change 1 st (good example)
● No spiritual leadership	● Provides spiritual leadership

The greatest example of a leader is **Jesus!**

John 13:3-5 “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.”

II. LOVER: The Husband Is to Love His Wife – Ephesians 5:25-33

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her. . . . 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies . . . 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself.

FOUNDATIONS

2 important observations:

1. This is a **command** – it's not an option or something you can take or leave
2. Paul **repeats** the command 3 times for a husband to love his wife!

John 13:1 "... having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."

"Divorce represents our inability to hold to Jesus' command. It's giving up on what Jesus calls us to do. If I can't love my wife, how can I love the homeless man in the library? How can I love the drug addict or the alcoholic? Yes, this spouse might be difficult to love at times, but that's what marriage is for – to teach us how to love. Allow your marriage relationship to stretch your love and to enlarge your capacity for love – to teach you to be a Christian. Use marriage as a practice court, where you learn to accept another person and serve him or her." *Sacred Marriage*, Gary Thomas, p. 42

"Jesus even washed the feet of Judas, who was just hours away from betraying him. God doesn't tell us to love only those who deserve it or to serve only those who serve us back. If you are in a one-sided marriage where you feel like you're giving and giving and never receiving, my heart goes out to you. You can partially redeem such a situation by becoming more God-oriented. Remind yourself that you are also in a situation where you can grow spiritually by leaps and bounds. If the heart of Christianity is service, any situation that shapes the spirit of a servant in you is worthwhile – even a lopsided marriage." Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage*, p. 189

A. What are some wrong views of love?

1. Love is a feeling.
2. Love is sex.
3. Love is weak

FOUNDATIONS

B. What is the biblical definition of love?

Love is **GIVING** for the **NEEDS** of another without the ulterior motive of **EXPECTING** anything in return.

Galatians 2:20 "...the life I now live...I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and *gave Himself* for me."

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He *gave* His only begotten Son..."

Ephesians 5:25 "...Christ also loved the church and *gave Himself* for it"

Real men think and act like Jesus Christ!

D. What degrees of love are we to show?

1. **First** – I John 4:19

1 John 4:19 *We love, because He first loved us.*

2. **Most** – John 15:13 "Greater love has no man than this . . ."

3. **Sacrificially** – Eph. 5:25

- a. Give up your personal desires for her needs and desires.
- b. When is the last time you sacrificed something for your wife?
- c. What priority does she and her desires have in your life?

4. **Unmistakably** – I John 3:18

"Love must be demonstrated in ways that can be interpreted."

5. **In spite of faults** – Rom. 5:8

FOUNDATIONS

III. LEARNER: The Husband Is to Learn His Wife – 1 Peter 3:7

1 Peter 3:7 *You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*

A. Learning is a Command

1. A command that requires time.
2. A command that requires study.
3. A command that includes being mindful of her weakness

<p>L – look her in the eye when she’s talking I – inquire by asking, ‘Tell me more’ S – stop interrupting with your solutions T – tell her what you think you heard and see if you’re right E – express sympathy: ‘I’m sorry. That must be hard.’ N – never look at your watch</p>
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1 Peter 3:7 *“You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman...”*

Weaker = lit. without strength

Also – fine china, fragile, valuable

a. What this does **not** mean:

1) Weaker **positionally**

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

2) Weaker **intellectually**

3) Weaker in **endurance**

FOUNDATIONS

B. Honoring is a **Command!**

1 Peter 3:7 You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, . . . and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. Honoring her is more than just “respect” (NIV “treat her with respect”)

You can actually treat someone with “detached, formal respect and yet give no special honor to the person at all” – Hiebert, 1 Peter, quoting Grudem

The same word translated “honor” in 1 Peter 3:7 is translated “precious” in 1 Peter 2:7

2. This is because she shares the same inheritance as the husband

C. Both these commands impact the husband’s **Prayer** life!

‘prayers’ = not just one’s prayer life, but also implies one’s relationship to God – the idea of communicating with God Himself!

‘Hinder’ = to impede or thwart; it’s placing something in the path of your prayer.

FOUNDATIONS

The Role of the Wife

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney

I. The Wife's Purpose: To be a "helper suitable" for her husband– Gen. 1:26–31; 2:18–25

A. What does this term mean?

⇒ *Helper Suitable* (NAS) = Lit. One who helps – but the term also communicate the idea of completing, complementing, corresponding to, fitted perfectly to, custom-made to meet needs

This term is used several times to describe God being my "help" or "helper"

Psalm 22:19 "But You, O LORD, be not far off; O You my help, hasten to my assistance."

Psalm 54:4 "Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul."

Psalm 94:17 "If the LORD had not been my help, My soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence."

Point: The term is a positive term, not a negative one – no one should view the purpose of a wife as being demeaning or making the wife inferior to her husband!

B. God designed the wife's role for a unique purpose

1. She has a Unique Role of companionship– Gen 1:26–28; 2:18, 20, 24

Genesis 2:18 "Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.'"

Genesis 2:20 "... but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him."

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2. She has a Unique Role in the sexual relationship – Gen. 1:28; 2:25

Genesis 1:28 “God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...’”

Genesis 2:25 “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

3. She has a Unique Role in responsibilities – Gen. 1:28

God told Adam to *subdue* the earth – this was one of the first responsibilities God assigned to Adam, and it was Eve’s role to help him in this process!

C. Practical Ways to Be Your Husband’s Helper

1. Pray faithfully

When I pray for my husband, the Holy Spirit softens my heart and his, and I learn to trust God with my marriage.

2. Grow personally

Time with Jesus and the Bible, studying and repenting are essential to honoring our husbands.

3. Encourage regularly

4. Pursue Intimately or at least Respond Enthusiastically

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5. Play frequently

When a marriage is all work and no play, it feels like a business partnership instead of a loving partnership, so plan fun.

6. Laugh loudly

7. Listen attentively

Women love to talk, but it is important to learn to listen in order to get to know your husband better.

8. Speak respectfully

Make sure your tone isn't out of bitterness or unrighteous anger. His ability to lead will suffer if you are disrespectful.

Michael Pearl "No man has ever crawled out from under his wife's criticism to be a better man - no matter how justified her condemnation." *Created to Be His Helpmeet*, p. 30, Debi Pearl

9. Correct privately

When you see sin or error, do not try to belittle him publicly, but instead prayerfully approach him with your concerns in private.

II. The Wife's Position: To be "submissive" to her husband – Eph. 5:22-24

Many people (both men and women) don't like the term *submission* due to a misunderstanding of the term! So we need to...

- A. Develop a biblical view of submission – start with the truth, the real thing, an accurate picture!

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1. Submission is present in the Godhead – Gen. 1 (cf. John 1:1-3)

- The Father is the functional authority and the Son and the Spirit are submissive to the will of the Father – Example: Jesus said, *“I came to do the will of Him Who sent me”* (John 6:38)
- Point: The Trinity models submission! Therefore...

2. Submission is good because its foundation is in the nature and character of God

Submission existed before the curse of sin.

3. Submission is God’s divine plan for function and order.

- We see it in His DESIGN for...

The CHURCH – Elders/Deacons (I Tim. 3)

The COMMUNITY – Civil authorities (Rom. 13)

So... it shouldn’t surprise us that we see it in His design for

The HOME – Husbands (Eph. 5 and I Peter 3)

4. Submission is a way of life for every believer, not just the wife

Ephesians 5:21 “And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

- Women are not the only ones that struggle with submission, ALL of us struggle with it... and all of us have AREAS in life where we’re CALLED to submit.

B. Recognize that submission is often Misunderstood and therefore Misrepresented

FOUNDATIONS

Submission Wrongly Described	Submission Biblically Clarified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wife is <u>inferior</u> to her husband. 	<p>The wife is a <i>fellow heir of the grace of life</i> (1 Pet. 3:7)</p> <p>Marriage is a '<i>one flesh</i>' relationship (Gen. 2:24)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The husband is <u>never wrong (perfect)</u>. 	<p>God is the only <i>perfect</i> authority (1 Pet. 2:13-23)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wife cannot <u>think</u> and should never speak. 	<p>She is commanded to '<i>speak the truth</i>' (Eph. 4:15)</p> <p>Part of her role as a fitting helper (Gen. 2:18) applies to biblical <i>communication</i></p>

Submission is never synonymous with abuse

- Contact the civil authorities immediately whenever abuse is involved
- Remove yourself (and children) from the home and get to a safe place
- Reach out to your church leaders for a safety plan as well as help in holding your husband accountable for real change

C. Focus on the perfect picture of submission: The Life of Christ - 1 Peter 2:21- 3:2

1 Peter 2:21 – 3:2 ²¹ “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² ‘Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth’; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. ^{3:1} Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they,

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without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,² when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

- The context of v. 13-20 is being *submissive*, even to imperfect authority
- So, each wife has an opportunity be like Christ who modeled submission and obeyed His Father

III. The Wife’s Perspective: To show “respect” for her husband – Eph 5:33

Ephesians 5:33 “... and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”

A. What are some practical ways to show respect?

1. Develop a godly attitude toward your husband – Prov. 23:7

The way you think about him will affect your behavior toward him

Proverbs 23:7 “For as he thinks within himself, so he is.” [respect begins in the heart (inner man)]

Luke 6:45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

2. Practice godly communication – Col. 4:6

Colossians 4:6 “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

- a. Use words and tones that edify him (build him up when he fails and commend him when he succeeds)

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

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Proverbs 12:18 "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

"Do you *criticize* or negatively compare him to other men? He might act like it doesn't bother him, but being respected is one of the things a man values most, especially from his wife. Criticism comes from the sin of pridefulness. You are the most important person in your husband's life, and when you speak disrespectfully to him, your words cut and worm their way into his heart. They bury themselves there, slowly eroding his ability to cherish you as you really want. Even when you're joking, it's risky business." *The God Empowered Wife*, Karen Haught, p. 104

- b. Ask questions instead of making accusations or bottom-line statements

A question pricks the conscience; an accusation hardens the heart!

- c. Express gratitude frequently (even in difficult circumstances) – 1 Thes. 5:18

1 Thes. 5:18 "In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

- d. Avoid gossiping or being critical of your husband in public or privately to others who are not part of the problem or the solution!

Proverbs 20:19 "He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip."

- 3. Choose to believe the best about him – 1 Cor. 13:7 '*...believes all things*'

Learn to love your husband the way God loves you

- 4. Don't try to change him (you don't have the ability or the authority) – Matt. 7:1-5

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IV. The Wife's Potential: to be a godly "influence" on her husband – 1 Peter 3:1-6

The wife cannot change her husband, but she can be tool in God's hand to help model that change

A. Focus on being a Good Example! – 1 Peter 3:1-6

1 Peter 3:1-4 " ³ Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ² when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. ³ Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel— ⁴ rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God."

Even if your husband is an unbeliever, or living in rebellion to God, he 'may be won' (not absolutely guaranteed; but if it's going to happen, it's going to happen this way) by the example of the wife!

B. Focus on being a Proverbs 31 kind of woman (they are hard to find!)

Proverbs 31:10 "An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels."

Proverbs 31:28-29 "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.'"

FOUNDATIONS

FORGIVENESS

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

I. Why Should We Even Discuss Forgiveness?

- A. Man's greatest **need** is forgiveness. Without forgiveness he is doomed to eternal punishment. (Rom 6:23; Rev. 20:11-15)

- B. Forgiveness is necessary for **salvation**. (Col 2:13)

- C. We are **commanded** to forgive others in the same way God has forgiven us. (Col 3:13; Eph 4:32)

Matt. 6:14-15 "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors... For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

- D. Seeking and **receiving** forgiveness is a prerequisite to mutual love, the strongest argument for the Christian faith. (Jn. 13:35)

- E. Unreconciled relationships between Christians hinders evangelism and rob churches of a positive community witness

"All of us get hurt from time to time, and most of us are hurt very badly at some point in our lives. But Christians have the incredible resource - and the responsibility to forgive. Not out of our own strength, but out of the strength God provides through our experience of His forgiveness... We can pray that God will help us love that person. Does this sound difficult? It's not difficult. It's impossible, unless you and I have feasted on the cross of Christ." *A Call to Die*, David Nasser, p. 216

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“One of the most significant problems in our marriage relationships is that there is no economy of grace. With all our obvious difficulties, what is most shocking is the profound gracelessness of our marriages. There’s no willingness to look within and confess deep-seated sins, so we never find sweet forgiveness. There’s no vertical hope to carry us in dark and discouraging times. There’s no rest that comes from entrusting each other to the God of grace. There’s no faith that God will give us all we need to respond to each other in godly ways. As a result, the relationship is reduced to human demands, human performance, human failure, human judgment, and human punishment. There is no hope or power for change. And because we’re not daily soaking in the fountain of God’s grace, we do not extend it to one another.”

Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands, Paul David Tripp, p. 32 & 33

II. Make Sure You Know What Forgiveness is Not

A. Forgiveness is not a **feeling** (Lk. 17:3-10)

“Unforgiveness is like ringing a bell. As long as you pull the rope, the bell in the tower rings. Then you make a decision not to ring it anymore. You let go of the rope, and you are free of the unforgiveness. That’s fine, but the bell keeps ringing for a while. Your hand is no longer on the rope. You no longer will it to ring, but the momentum of your emotions does not instantly stop because a decision of the will has been made.”

Streams of Mercy, Mark Rutland, p. 158-159

1. Forgiveness is to be **granted** when a sinner repents. (v. 3)

ACBC’s position (see Jay Adams’ book *From Forgiven to Forgiving*) is that you do not ‘announce’ or ‘proclaim’ forgiveness to someone who is not asking for it (is not repenting) but you should maintain a spirit of forgiveness or a readiness to forgive. I don’t agree. Instead, I actually encourage people to forgive whether or not the person ever comes to you and asks for forgiveness or not.

2. Forgiveness is to be granted **repeatedly** on the same day if a sinner repeatedly professes repentance (v. 4), something no one would feel like doing.

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3. Christ declared that the disciples had the faith necessary to forgive and they did not need to wait until they felt **stronger** spiritually. (vv.5-6)
4. Forgiveness is a matter of **obedience**, not feelings. (vv. 7-10)

B. Forgiveness is not **forgetting**

"No, the reality is that you will never forget until you forgive. Forgiveness is both the crisis and the process of putting a person's sin behind you. It is setting it aside and saying, "I won't think about that anymore. I won't focus on that anymore." It's a choice that begins the process of forgetting. Unforgiveness binds the offense to your heart and ensures that you will never forget. Forgiveness is the first link in the chain of forgetting, not the reverse." *Seven Words to Change Your Family*, James MacDonald, p. 46

1. There is no **command** in the Bible telling us to forget before we forgive.
2. And while there is no guarantee you will ever completely forget what happened, forgetting is a frequent **by-product** of granting forgiveness biblically

Forgiveness is not you trying to forget what that other person did to you. Forgiveness is your choice to remember what Christ *already* did for you on the cross and to act on THAT by extending that same forgiveness out to others regardless of how you feel!

Matthew 18:27 "Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt... v. 32-33 You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?"

If you don't understand the depth of YOUR **OWN** sin against God... and HOW **MUCH** He's forgiven you, then you'll never have what it takes to forgive other people around you.

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3. References to God “forgetting” our sins (e.g. Is 43:25; Jer. 31:34) are really statements of God promising not to “remember” our sins against us. God can’t forget, but He can **choose** to not hold our sins against us.
- C. Forgiveness is not **excusing** sin. Excusing is a form of minimizing sin, of not taking sin **seriously**.
- D. Biblical forgiveness does not include forgiving **yourself** .
 - Booklet “Forgiveness ~ I Just Can’t Forgive Myself!, Robert Jones

Psalm 86:5 "For you, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You."

God is more ready to forgive than we are to ask. It's really pride and arrogance that keeps people clinging to their guilt - refusing to come to God - and saying they just can't forgive themselves when God stands ready to forgive.

III. What Forgiveness Is

- A. Forgiveness is the **Crisis** or **Decision** to no longer focus on the hurt that other person caused you

Forgiveness is not you trying to **forget** what that other person did **to** you. Forgiveness is your choice to **remember** what Christ *already* did **for** you on the cross and to act on THAT by extending that same forgiveness out to others regardless of how you feel!

QUESTION I hear a lot: “I forgave someone of a sin against me, but now I find myself angry again. Does that mean that I never really truly forgave in the first place? Was my previous forgiveness just a sham?”

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- It might mean your forgiveness was not genuine.
- But more than likely consider this: Some sins committed against you are multi-faceted in their execution (the way they were carried out) and in their consequence, thus requiring multiple moments or forgiveness. **Like a DISCO BALL**
- Sin has many implications/consequences – so when you first chose to forgive you were forgiving to the degree that you were aware...but things will continue to surface and come up that are consequences and you'll have to KEEP choosing to forgive.
- Adultery is the ultimate multi-faceted sin. The one who was sinned against will have to forgive thousands of times. There are so many facets and layers of sin to adultery. When it first comes out and you choose to forgive you don't understand 97% of it...but forgive to the 3% that you do see at the time...and through the months and years ahead the other 97% will gradually surface and you'll have to forgive again and again.

In **Matthew 18** when Jesus tells us to forgive 490 times, He is not simply telling us that we need to forgive 490 separate individual sins one time each. *He is also saying that sometimes you will find you needing to forgive one sin 490 times.* A sin with 490 facets will eventually require 490 moments of forgiveness.

B. Forgiveness is a **promise** that begins the **process** of relating to that other person differently

It's a promise to:

1. Not **dwel**l on the incident mentally,
2. Not bring up the incident again and use it **against** the other person,
3. Not **talk** to others about the incident, and
4. Not allow the incident to stand **between** you and the other person or hinder your personal relationship with them.

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See Milton Vincent – 4 messages on Forgiveness
[At bradbigney.com / Sermons / Milton Vincent – Forgiveness]

NOTE: Forgiveness is not the same thing as TRUST. Forgiveness means that you give the offender the opportunity to re-earn your trust (which requires making yourself vulnerable).

C. Forgiveness is a choice to **absorb** the cost of their sin against you.

“Everyone who forgives goes through a death... and experiences nails, blood, sweat, and tears... Forgiveness is costly suffering... forgiveness... at first, always feels far worse than bitterness... Forgiveness means refusing to make them pay for what they did. However, to refrain from lashing out at someone when you want to do so with all your being is agony. It is a form of suffering. You not only suffer the original loss of happiness, reputation, and opportunity, but now you forgo the consolation of inflicting the same on them. You are absorbing the debt, taking the cost of it completely on yourself instead of taking it out on the other person. It hurts terribly. Many people would say it feels like a kind of death.” **Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God***

IV. So Why Forgive?

A. God **commands** us to forgive others. (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13)

Ephesians 4:32 “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, *even as* God in Christ forgave you.”

Colossians 3:13 “... if anyone has a complaint against another; *even as* Christ forgave you, so you also must do.”

Matthew 18:33 “Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow servant, *just as* I had mercy on you?”

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This whole thing hinges on an 'even as' or 'just as.' **Forgiven** people **forgive** sin!

B. The cross of Christ provides everything we need to forgive.

Selected Resources

Jones, Robert D. "I Just Can't Forgive Myself": A Biblical Alternative to Self-Forgiveness." *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, volume 14, number 2, 1996, 22-25.

MacArthur, John F., Jr. *The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998.

Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997.

Vincent, Milton. "Evangelizing Those Who Hurt You" 4 messages – bradbigney.com / Sermons / Milton Vincent – Forgiveness

FOUNDATIONS

Biblical Sexuality

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney

Why a session devoted to this subject?

1. Because so many Christians are **untaught** in this area
2. Because so many Christians have unbiblical **thinking** and behavior in this area that is hurting their testimony, social relationships and/or marriage
3. Because we need to teach our **children** and grandchildren not only what is wrong sexually, but also what is right
4. So that we can **evaluate** other popular teaching in light of the Scriptures.

What Are the Key Biblical Principles?

- I. **Sex Was Created by God and Is Pure**
(Gen. 1:27, 31; 2:18, 21-23; Heb. 13:4)

I Timothy 4:4 "For everything God created is good and nothing is to be rejected, but all is to be received with a prayer of thanks."

Three Things We Learn about Sex from I Timothy 4:4...

1. It's good
2. It should not be rejected
3. You can thank God for it!

A. God Designed both the Male and Female Anatomy

B. God's First Command to Adam and Eve Was Impossible to Fulfill Without Sex! (Gen 1:28)

C. Sex in Marriage is God's Idea and is Good!

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Genesis 2:22–25 (Living Bible) "Then God made a woman and brought her to man. 'This is it!' Adam exclaimed. The man and his wife were both naked but neither was embarrassed or ashamed."

1. God created sex before there was sin

Genesis 1:31 "Then God saw everything that He had made, including our sexuality and indeed it was very good..."

2. And even after sin and the fall of man in Gen. ch. 3 God still calls sex good and honorable

Hebrews 13:4 "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."

II. Marriage is Intended to Depict the Sexual Relationship as an Expression of Intense Companionship and Intimacy

A. Marriage is meant to "typify" the believer's relationship with Christ

Ephesians 5:31–32 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church."

"This marriage between man and woman... is about something much bigger than the relationship itself. It points beyond them to somebody else – to God. The point of marriage isn't marriage. It's a picture. A display. A window that you look through to something else. A marriage has a mission. Too often the problem is that each person in that marriage has a mission... and it has nothing to do with God's mission. Our world isn't... one. It's broken, shattered, fractured, with pieces lying over the floor... A marriage is designed to counter all of this. Not to add to the brokenness of the world but to add to the 'oneness' of the world. This man and this woman who have given themselves to each other are supposed to give the world a glimpse of hope, a display of what God is like, a bit of [oneness] on earth." **Sex God, Rob Bell, p. 152–153**

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- B. The marriage bond and the believer's **union** with Christ interact in ways that influence or enrich our understanding of both

My experience of marital oneness helps me understand a bit of the mystery of spiritual union. (Gal. 2:20)

- C. Sexual expression is to be at the **end** of the intimacy chain, the product or manifestation of real marital oneness. (1 Cor. 7:3-4)

Consider C.J. Mahaney's excellent little book, *Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God* – where he uses a phrase that men especially need to be reminded of... 'before you touch her body touch her heart.'

III. Sex Without Marital **Intimacy** Can Take Many Forms:

- A. Lust
- B. Masturbation
- C. Homosexuality
- D. Adultery
- E. Fornication

IV. God Encourages the **Pleasure** of Sex in Marriage

Proverbs 5:18-19 NASB " . . . rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love."

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"I know some muddle-headed Christians have talked as if Christianity thought that sex, or the body, or pleasure, were bad in themselves. But they were wrong. Christianity is almost the only one of the great religions which thoroughly approves of the body – which believes that matter is good, that God Himself once took on a human body and that some kind of body is going to be given to us even in Heaven and is going to be an essential part of our happiness, our beauty and our energy. Christianity has glorified marriage more than any other religion and nearly all the greatest love poetry in the world has been produced by Christians. If anyone says that sex, in itself, is bad, Christianity contradicts him at once." C.S. Lewis, *Readings for Meditation and Reflection*, p. 84–85

- A. **"Satisfy"** (v.19) means to have desire met, thirst quenched, to have no further desire.

This Hebrew word pictures a thirsty, dry person being quenched with a cool drink of water.

- B. **"Exhilarated"** (v. 19) means to be intoxicated, ravished, overwhelmed with pleasure.

The word 'ravished' is one of the strongest words in the Hebrew language.

V. **Sex in Marriage is to be a Major Factor in Preventing Immorality**

- A. "But if they have not self-control, restraint of their passions, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion and tortured continually with ungratified desire." (1 Cor. 7: 9, Amplified Bible)
- B. The husband and wife are to so satisfy each other that there is no desire for anyone else (1 Cor. 7:20)

VI. **Each Husband and Wife Has a God-Given Duty to Satisfy His or Her Mate**

- A. The key phrase is translated "fulfill his duty" (NAS); "render due benevolence" (KJV); "fulfill his marital duty" (NIV); "must always give his wife what is due her" (Williams); "do for his wife what he owes her" (Beck); "should give to his wife her conjugal rights" (Amplified). 1 Cor. 7:3

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B. God's commands assume God's enablement; therefore you can satisfy your spouse's sexual desires! (Phil. 4:13)

C. Common causes of failure in this area:

- 1) Selfishness
- 2) Unresolved guilt
- 3) Unresolved problems
- 4) Ignorance or misinformation about mate's anatomy
- 5) Ignorance or misinformation regarding how their mate is sexually aroused

VII. Each Spouse is to View His Body as For His Mate's Sexual Enjoyment

I Corinthians 7:3-4 "A man should fulfill his duty as a husband and a woman should fulfill her duty as a wife. And each should satisfy the other's needs. The wife's body does not belong to her alone, but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body doesn't belong to him alone, but also to his wife."

A. The **goal** of sexual activity is not pleasure or climax for personal joy, but to use one's body to bring gratification and satisfaction to the spouse.

Lou Priolo's book, **Complete Husband**, has a great chapter (10) on sex

B. The exact statement is made about both husband and wife, indicating that each has an equal **responsibility** to initiate physical pleasure toward their mate.

C. What Paul is teaching specifically about the sexual relationship is simply an **application** of many general biblical principles. (e.g. Phil. 2:3,4; Eph. 5:21; Mt. 22:36-40)

VIII. Sexual Relationships are to be Regular and Reciprocal

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I Corinthians 7:5 “Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

- A. **“Deprive”** (NAS, NIV); “Defraud” (KJV) means to rob, to keep back from someone through deceitful methods what is rightfully theirs.

- B. This pattern is to be altered only when there is:
 - 1) Mutual agreement
 - 2) A specific time limitation
 - 3) A spiritual purpose
 - 4) A time of planned resumption

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Data-Gathering Questions for Sexual Problems

1. Do you recall any specific event that may have affected your sex life?
2. Word-association test ~ what do you think of when you hear the word 'sex'?
3. What was your parents' attitude about sex? (mother, father)
4. What did you learn from your parents about sex? Did your parents enjoy sex?
5. Was affection shown freely by your parents to one another? To you and your brothers and sisters?
6. What was your first sexual experience? What was your reaction to it?
7. Were you ever sexually molested or violated? Briefly describe circumstances.
8. What excited you sexually in the past? What excites you sexually now?
9. What stirs up sexual guilt or shame in you now?
10. What does the Bible say about sex? Describe as fully as you can. What are God's purposes for sex?
11. What is proper and improper in sexual relations? What would be wrong?
12. Did you participate in petting on dates? On most dates? With certain individuals? How far did you go? To the point of manipulating the genital area of your partner? Vice versa? Ever to intercourse? How did you react to these experiences? Guilt? Shame? Were you ever suspected or caught? Punished?
13. Were you ever engaged to be married or seriously involved in other courtships before meeting your present husband or wife? Why terminated?
14. What attracted you most to your husband/ wife?
15. Are these qualities (reasons / attractions) still present today

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16. What were your expectations regarding sex, love-making and intercourse before marriage? Were these expectations fulfilled at some point within the first year of marriage? If not, describe.
17. Describe your honeymoon. Sexual difficulties? If so, what?
18. How frequently did you have sex during the first month of marriage? Enjoy frequency?
19. Usual frequency now?
20. Who usually initiates relations? Who chooses time?
21. Do you have a preference for a time of day and situation for lovemaking? Describe.
22. Do you tell your spouse what pleases you and displeases you about sexual intercourse?
23. Do you have fun together frequently? Doing what?
24. Do you confide in one another? On a scale of 0-10 where are you?
25. What trait, behavior pattern, or habit does your mate have that tends to diminish your sexual desires toward your mate?
26. Do you still find your mate attractive?
27. What do you want most in the way of attitude, behavior, etc., that your mate doesn't provide you now?
28. Do you think you are attractive? Were you a pretty child? Were you attractive during courtship? Would you like to change anything about yourself?
29. Are you attractive to your mate?
30. What are your greatest attributes as a person? To your mate?
31. How do your sexual problems affect your mate (generally and then sexually)?
32. What do you think causes you to malfunction sexually?

33. Have you ever functioned satisfactorily?
34. What is your concept of effective sexually functioning?
35. To what extent were you and your mate involved sexually before marriage? Did you have sexual intercourse? If so, have you ever repented of this as sin to one another and to God?
36. Have you or your mate had extra-marital sexual activity since marriage? Describe.
37. Do you enjoy touching and being touched? Do you and your mate use body contact frequently?
38. Would you like your mate to touch you more or less? Give reasons.
39. Do certain words or sounds bring special pleasure to you? Bring displeasure to you?
40. What could you do to more fully please your mate sexually?

Recommended Books

Biblical Principles of Sex, Dr. Robert Smith, Timeless Texts, 2004

Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God: What Every Christian Husband Needs to Know, C.J. Mahaney, Crossway, 2018

Intended for Pleasure, Dr. Ed Wheat, Revell, 2010

Intimate Issues: 21 Questions Christian Women Ask about Sex, Waterbrook, 2009

The Complete Husband, Lou Priolo, P&R Pub., 2017

FOUNDATIONS

Guilt and Repentance

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

When we talk about guilt and repentance we're getting to the very heart of what biblical counseling is all about because this is what's at the very heart of what it means to change. And it's at the very heart of the Gospel!

I. Foundational Concepts

A. The Secular Counselor is Faced with a Dilemma

1. "Guilt/Shame" is associated with some aspect of not measuring up to a particular standard.
2. Who decides the particular standard and deviations from it?
3. The perceived guilt of an individual that's based upon a particular standard is dealt with by:
 - a. Confronting it—"Stop doing that"
Gospel Treason- *Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols*. Explains the importance of changing on a heart level.
 - b. Minimizing it—"You're just human"
 - c. Shifting responsibility for it—"Your upbringing made you this way"
 - d. Desensitizing you to it—"Just keep doing it until you feel no shame" (Freud's approach)
 - e. Masking it—"Take these pills to help you feel better"
 - f. Excusing it—"You're genetically prone to this"
 - g. Justifying it—"That's not wrong. Who told you that was wrong?"
4. But there is an absolute standard that results in true guilt, so all of the world's attempts to erase guilt and shame are vain like the daily sacrifices of the temple priests (Heb. 10:11).

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B. The Theological Reality

1. The presence of **guilt** separates humanity from being in the presence of the Holy God (Gen. 3:24, Ezra 9:15; Is. 59:2).
2. Definition: Judicial **liability** or **culpability** for failure to meet the standards of God's righteousness (Num. 5:6-7).

The verb (Hebrew verb - a-sham) fundamentally refers to the guilt, responsibility, or culpability that a person must bear for some offense." (Willem VanGemeren, *Vol. 1: New international dictionary of Old Testament theology & exegesis*, 554).

- a. The offense is first and foremost against the Creator God.
 - b. Note that guilt is not primarily a bad **feeling**
 - c. **Shame** may or may not follow.
3. Adam and Eve changed from their state of innocence to a state of guilt when they disobeyed and were expelled from the presence of God (Gen. 3:24).
 - a. Adam and Eve experienced shame associated with their guilty state.
 - b. Adam and Eve tried to cover their guilty state in an attempt to deal with the shame (Gen. 3:7).
 - c. God held Adam and Eve accountable (Gen. 3:16-24).
 4. As the offspring of Adam we're all guilty by nature and by our own actions for falling short of the glory of God (Jer. 3:25; Rom. 3:23; 5:12).
 - a. People turn to a variety of inadequate coverings for shame and guilt (Isa. 59:6).
 - b. God still holds us accountable (Rom. 2:16; 3:19; 6:23).
 5. God has instilled us with a sense of guilt (Rom. 2:15).

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II. The place of the Conscience

God created us with a moral compass called the conscience.

A. The Biblically Functioning Conscience (Compass) Works in Tandem with God's Word (Bible) and God's Spirit

B. Why Do Some Not Feel Shame?

1. You can have an untrained conscience (Rom. 7:7-12; 1 Tim. 4:7-8; Heb. 5:14)

2. You may have a seared conscience (1 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:15; Eph. 4:19)

C. Why Do Some Feel Shame Even Though They've Not Violated Scripture?

- The Weak Conscience (Rom. 14:1-5, 23; 1 Cor. 8)

Your conscience can be triggered or stimulated by something other than the Word of God.

III. The Solution for Guilt

A. God's Provision — the Gospel

1. God alone can justify us and remove the guilt and shame (Psalm 32:1-2, 85:2; Is. 61:10; 2 Cor. 5:21).

2. God's justice requires the life blood of the guilty (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22).

3. Christ is the superior guilt offering (Is. 53; Heb. 9:11-14, 10:11-12).

4. The Holy Spirit is the agent for humanity's conviction (John 16:7-11).

5. The Word of God is the tool the Holy Spirit uses for humanity's conviction (Heb. 4:12).

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6. Based on the believer's standing in the Gospel, the believer can rest confidently against Satan's accusations of condemnation (Rom. 8:1; Zech. 3:1-5).

B. Man's Appropriation of God's Provision— Repentance

1. Be aware of Counterfeits

a) **The Salvation Army Guy with the Bell Response**

We make a few easy superficial changes in our life to get the bell to stop, but we don't repent. We drop a little something into the bucket of conviction just to get the bell to stop – just enough to ease your conscience.

b) **Aw, Shucks Response – the Humor Response**

Not changing a thing, but just laughing about it.

c) **The Oprah Winfrey Response**

Confess everything... change nothing. Repentance is more than emotional vomiting, and it's more than an avalanche of words; it involves change.

Jim Elliff – *The Unrepentant Repenter* – gives 12 different counterfeits. (free from his website www.ccwtoday.org)

2. Definition—Change of mind/heart based upon God's Word

- a. Old Testament concept (from the Hebrew word "shoov") "To turn," most often used in Jeremiah in exhortation to turn back to God after having turned away. (Jer. 3:11-4:2).

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b. NT concept – “Metanoia” – “To change one’s mind/be converted/repent” (Mark 1:15; Acts 26:20; 2 Cor. 12:21).

3. Application

a. Regarding justification or salvation— personal turning towards God’s provision in Christ, the Gospel.

b. Regarding sanctification— the daily application of the Gospel (Rom. 6–8)

1) Daily changing of the mind/turning in regard to all the implications of the Gospel on the believer’s walk as a child of God.

The Gospel Primer by Milton Vincent

Comforts from the Cross by Elyse Fitzpatrick

As long as I am stricken with the guilt of my sins, I will be captive to them, and will often find myself re-committing the very sins about which I feel most guilty. The Devil is well aware of this fact; he knows that if he can keep me tormented by sin’s guilt, he can dominate me with sin’s power. The Gospel, however, stays sin at this root point and thereby nullifies sin’s power over me. The forgiveness of God, made known to me through the gospel, liberates me from sin’s power because it liberates me first from its guilt; and preaching such forgiveness to myself is a practical way of putting the gospel into operation as a nullifier of sin’s power in my life. *The Gospel Primer, Milton Vincent, pg. 19*

2) Repentance is fueled by the indwelling Spirit of God in the believer.

4. Results of True Repentance

a. Look for **confession** – Greek, ‘homologeō’ – to say the same thing, “To agree with God about my sin” (1 John 1:7–9; Prov. 28:13; Dan. 9:3–19)

1) The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart, true repentance will result in agreement with God.

2) Look for precise language that an individual agrees with God about his guilt

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Not: "I didn't mean to say or do that. I'm tired and not myself."
"Forgive me for reacting to your venom. I'm not usually like that."
"I was just reacting to bad circumstances."

Instead: "I was wrong and sinned against you when I _____. Will you please forgive me?"

3) Confession will first be to God (Psalm 51, I John 1:7-9) and then to any appropriate persons (Matt. 5:23-26; James 5:16) in which a relationship has been broken.

b. Look for **godly sorrow** as opposed to worldly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:8-10; James 4:9)

See worksheet on 2 Cor. 7:8-10 – posted on my website,
www.bradbigney.com

c. Look for **growth** and change

1) Rejoicing in the freedom of forgiveness. (Psalm 32:1,2).

2) Using freedom to pursue holiness (Rom. 6-8, Eph. 4:22-24).

d. Look for **Restitution**

1) The Prodigal son and Zaccheus were both rightly willing to make restitution (Luke 15:11-32; 19:8).

2) Restitution is not simply a requirement of law but a manifestation of love (and, thus repentance) toward a neighbor.

3) Sometimes it is impossible to make restitution (e.g. Adultery).

FOUNDATIONS

Recommended Resources

Bigney, Brad. *Gospel Treason – Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols*. N.J.: P & R Pub., 2012

Miller, C. John. *Accepting God's Forgiveness*

Fitzpatrick, Elyse. *Comforts from the Cross*.

Elliff, Jim. *The Unrepenting Repenter* (www.ccwtoday.org)

Vincent, Milton. *The Gospel Primer*. Focus Pub.

Viars, Steve. *Putting the Past in Its Place*. Portland: Harvest House, 2010.

FOUNDATIONS

Worry & Fear

Pastor Brad Bigney, Grace Fellowship Church

Some sins are so common among Christians that they appear to be acceptable behavior. Worry and fear would certainly be near the top of the list. We will consider them together in this study because of the similarities between both problems and their solutions.

WORRY

The motto of many twenty-first century Christians seems to be, “Why trust when you can worry? Some realize it is wrong and try to hide their worry by giving it other titles such as “concerned,” “troubled,” “disturbed,” “interested,” or “bothered.” Regardless of the term used, worry saps your energy, drains your joy, destroys vision, curtails evangelism and aggravates physical ailments. Unfortunately, it’s also contagious—easily caught and fearfully experienced.

1. Worry Defined

- A. The Greek word for worry is *merimnao*, a combination of two words—*merizo* (to divide) and *nous* (mind).
- B. Worry actually means “a divided mind.”
- C. In the Bible, the word is usually translated “worry,” “anxious,” “anxiety” or “care.”
- D. It is not to be confused with diligent care and concern toward your responsibilities (2 Cor 11:28; Phil 2:20; Gal 4:19).
- E. Planning that acknowledges God’s sovereignty is not worry (James 4:13).
- F. Worry is an over-anxious concern regarding the future and things that keeps a person from fulfilling current biblical responsibilities.

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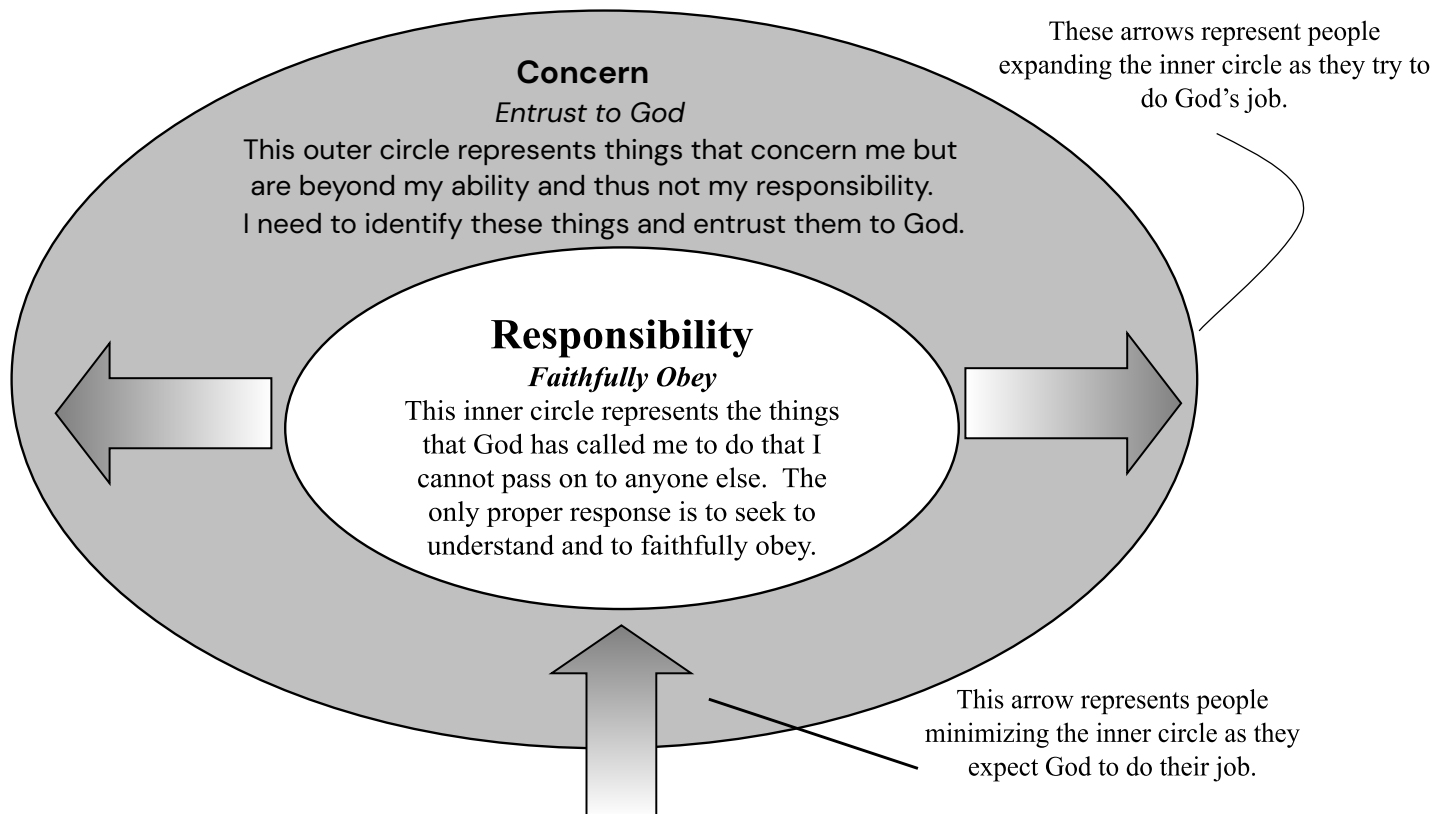
“Central to worry is the illusion that we can control things. ‘If only I could get my retirement right, I could control the future.’ ‘If I could get my diet and medicine right, I wouldn’t get cancer.’ ‘If I could figure out the right child rearing technique, I could guarantee how my kids turn out.’ Worry assumes the possibility of control over the uncontrollable. The illusion of control lurks inside your anxiety. Anxiety and control are two sides of one coin. When we can’t control something we worry about it.” *Worry*, David Powlison, p. 12

Godly concern becomes sinful worry when:

1. Your thoughts are focused on changing the future
2. Your thoughts are unproductive (just caught in the ‘spin cycle’ – going round)
3. It controls you instead of you controlling it
4. It causes you to neglect your God-given responsibilities and relationships
5. It starts to damage your body
6. You start losing hope instead of finding answers
7. You shut down and stop functioning

Clarifying Responsibility

Taken from Instruments in the Redeemers Hands by Paul David Tripp ISBN 9789-0-87552-607-2
used with permission of P&R Publishing Co., P.O.Box 817, Phillipsburg, N.J. 08865 www.prpbooks.com



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2. Sinful Worry

“Sin is what you do when you’re not satisfied in God.” John Piper

“I am the Lord Your God... You shall have no other gods before Me.” (Ex. 20:3)

“The humble are genuinely carefree. I’ve discovered how true that is about myself and my soul. Where there’s worry, where there’s anxiousness, pride is at the root of it. When I am experiencing anxiety, the root issue is that I’m trying to be self-sufficient. I’m acting independent of God. What’s the solution? Humble yourself, God says. How? Acknowledge your need for Me! Cast your cares upon Me, and I will transform you... I have to remember that whenever I feel buried under care, the real issue is pride and my self-sufficiency. I must deliberately and specifically cast my cares upon Him and thereby humble myself. Don’t be mistaken. God hasn’t gone anywhere. He’s just as sovereign, just as good, just as faithful when I’m buried under care as He was... The issue isn’t God. It’s my pride that resists trusting in Him through dependence upon Him.” *Humility~ True Greatness*, C.J. Mahaney, p. 75-76

- A. In Matthew 6:19-34 Jesus Christ addresses worry and He forbids it three times (vv.25, 31, 34)
- B. The Apostle Paul also commands believers, “Be anxious for nothing...” (Phil 4:6).
- C. Christ’s teaching in Matthew 6 exposes the two sinful roots of worry and the cure for each.

3. Worry is Idolatry, and the Solution is Repentance (Matt 6:19-25)

- A. Idolatry means to worship someone or something other than the true and living God.
 - Giving yourself to some person, goal, ideal, concern or object rather than Christ
 - Putting your desires above God’s desires and commands for your life
 - It is allowing your concerns over the future and things to be more important than thinking and acting God’s way.

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“Worry thrives when worship dies.”

“Worry is a trickle of fear running through the mind, ever cutting a deeper gorge into which all thoughts are drained.” Unknown

B. Worry expresses idolatry in the heart. We tend to have an inordinate focus on:

- Things (vv.19–21)
- Goals (vv. 22–23)
- People (v. 24)

An idol = **Anything** or **Anyone** that begins to capture our **Hearts** and **Minds** and **Affections** more than God. It's living on substitutes. It's exchanging the one true living God for a counterfeit.

C. The things you worry about reveal your idols—finding a mate; getting a promotion; health; money; success; children; peoples' opinions, etc.

Heart Diagnostic Questions

1. Am I willing to sin to get it?
2. Am I willing to sin if I think I'm going to lose this?
3. Do I run to it as a refuge instead of God?

D. Jesus declares that you cannot serve God and something or someone else simultaneously (v. 24).

E. A worrier needs to be called to repent of his false master, false gods, and false refuges and renew his faith in Jesus Christ, His Savior and Lord.

4. Worry is Unbelief and the Solution is Faith (Matt 6:25–34)

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” Hebrews 3:12

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- A. Jesus described worriers as people of “little faith” (v. 30).
- B. Worry is the fruit of remaining unbelief and doubt in a Christian. The presence of worry indicates that there is someone or something you are living for other than the Lord.
- C. The worrier should be helped to identify the specific idols and lies that are ruling him and called to confess them as sin.
- D. The fruit of repentance for a worrier will be manifesting faith in God by disciplining his mind to focus on:
- God’s care for mankind; argument from the lesser to the greater (vv.25–30)
 - God’s omniscience; He knows your needs (vv. 31–32)
 - God’s promises (vv.33)
- “If God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us on the cross – how shall He not also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32*
- Pleasing God by caring for today’s responsibilities (v. 34)
- E. The idolatry and unbelief of worry is to be replaced by a worship of and faith in God. This will manifest itself in a lifestyle marked by:
- 1) Right Praying (Phil 4:6, 7)
 - Confess worry as sin; this gives hope.
 - Make general as well as specific requests
 - 2) Right Thinking (Phil 4:8)
 - The mind will need to be disciplined to “dwell on these things.”
 - Plan according to biblical principles and priorities; be solution oriented in dealing with problems.
 - Study and meditate on other passages such as John 14; 1 Peter 5:6–7;

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Psalms 27, 37, 46, 56, 73, 94.

3) Right Acting/Living (Phil 4:9)

- Focus attention and energy into fulfilling today's responsibilities.
- Live your theology!

*Note the Progression:

Right Praying → Right Thinking → Right Acting

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FEAR

Biblical 'Fear' Facts

- Fear, per se, is not wrong.
- In Scripture, Jesus is never said to be afraid.
- God warns us over 450 times in the Bible not to fear.
- Genesis 3:10 is the first occurrence of fear in the Bible
- Fear is a feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of danger, evil, pain, etc.

1. Fears That Are Right

- Fear of God (Ecc 12:13,14; 2 Cor 5:10; Prov 1:7)
- Fear of danger (Job 41:33; Gen 4:14,15; 1 Cor 6:19-20)
- Fear due to guilt (Prov 28:1; Matt 14:1-2; Lev 26:17-18,36)

**Summary: Fear is right and good when it moves us toward God and biblical behavior.*

2. Fears That Are Wrong

- Fear of man, not God. (John 12:42-43; Luke 12:4-5)
- Fear of things temporal, rather than eternal. (Luke 12:4-5; 1 Cor 4:5)
- Fear of things we cannot change. (Prov 3:25; Gen 4:14)

**Summary: Fear is wrong and sinful when it is allowed to motivate thinking and behavior that is unbiblical.*

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3. Keys to Overcoming Sinful Fear

- A. Develop a strong God focus. (Gal 1:10; 2 Cor 5:9,10; Isa 26:3; Ps 46:1-10)
- B. Deal with guilt biblically. (Prov 28:1; 1 John 1:9; Matt 5:23,24)
- C. Develop love as the antidote to fear. (1 John 4:15-21, esp. 17-19; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 Cor 13)
- D. View fearful situations as opportunities to grow for God's glory. (Rom 8:28-29; Matt 5:16; 1 Cor 6:19, 20)
- E. Meditate on and memorize key Scriptures. (2 Tim 1:7; Ps 118:6; 1 Pet 5:7 and others mentioned above)

Recommended Books

Fitzpatrick, Elyse. *Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety*. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2001.

Welch, Edward T. *Running Scared: Fear, Worry, and the God of Rest*. New Growth Press, 2007

Powlison, David. *Worry*. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2004.

Bridges, Jerry. *Trusting God*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988.

Welch, Edward T. *When People are Big and God is Small*. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 1997.

FOUNDATIONS

Homework Suggestions *for fighting Fear and Worry*

1. Make a written list of everything that you are worried about. Then prayerfully seek to determine what things are your responsibility and what things are simply areas of concern. If you need help, ask another godly Christian to talk with you about your list.
2. Read one chapter per week of Elyse Fitzpatrick's book, *Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety*, and write out your answers to the questions at the end of the chapter. Approach another godly Christian and ask if they would meet with you for prayer and to discuss your answers each week (Continue this week by week, working through the book)
3. For every area that is one of your responsibilities make a list of what you can begin to do to solve that problem. Write steps to be taken. Ask someone to hold you accountable for following up on the actions that need to be taken rather than just stewing and worrying about it.
4. Do not pray as you are falling asleep because there is the danger that the praying can turn into worrying about the issue. Instead make a list of verses that you have memorized and choose one each night that you want to spend time meditating on. Select verses that speak of God's sovereign control, His abundant provision, His protection, etc.
5. During the day keep a 3x5 note card in your pocket and whenever your mind drifts to begin to worry about something, write it down on the card sit down at the end of the day or with your Christian friend that week and try to determine whether or not it falls in your circle of responsibility or just an area of concern.
6. Fight each day to focus your thinking and spend the bulk of your energy on solving today's problems that are truly your responsibility, rather than worrying about endless possibilities of 'what if?'
7. Read Jay Adam's pamphlet "What to Do When You Worry all the Time?" or David Powlison's booklet "Worry – Pursuing a Better Path to Peace" and discuss it with another Christian friend.

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8. Memorize Matt. 6:33–34 and write it on a 3x5 card to keep posted somewhere that is visible throughout the day – on your bathroom mirror, computer, kitchen cabinet, etc.
9. Memorize Phil. 4:6–9 and do a word study on each of the words listed as areas to ‘think’ on.
10. Read and work through Paul Tripp’s article about the “Circle of Concern Versus Circle of Responsibility.”

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore **do not worry** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*
Matthew 6:33-34

FOUNDATIONS

BALANCING GRACE & TRUTH: A TEAM CASE STUDY

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

ADELLE

Instructions: Read the following case study about a young lady named Adelle. With a partner, answer the following questions by balancing grace and truth (John 1:14). Think about the importance of both grace and truth.

Adelle, 33 years old, has attended your church sporadically during the past several months. After one Sunday morning worship service, you begin to make small talk and ask where she is from, what she is doing, etc. in a casual conversation. She answers politely and then quietly says she would like to “talk about the mess that I am in.”

You (and your spouse, if you are married) invite her to lunch after church to talk. At this first meeting with her, Adelle says that she has been a Christian since age 8. She is concerned about her life. She is unhappily married with two children. She is now 5 months pregnant. Her husband won’t come to any church with her and they have discussed divorce “more times than I can count,” she admits.

She says: “He plays a lot of video games, vapes ‘who knows what,’ sleeps in late, looks at porn, and works a part-time job in a warehouse that helps pay rent but that’s about it.” About her husband, she says: “I think I love him, but I am not so sure that I respect him right now.”

Adelle takes a deep breath and confides in you that she is “clinically depressed” and on a couple of prescription pills for her depression. She meets with a therapist monthly, mainly to get the prescriptions refilled. Since she found out she is pregnant, she is not sure if the medication she is taking will impact the baby in her womb. “What should I do? Can you help me?” she asks you.¹

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Case Study: Adelle

Please answer the questions below balancing truth and grace. Consider if your answer fits better in the "truth" category or in the "grace" category (it could be both but pick one or the other please!). Cite Scripture references for your answers when possible.

1. List some questions you would ask to get more facts (balancing truth and grace)?

Truth

Grace

2. Based upon what you know so far, what would you say & do next to build the relationship?

Truth

Grace

3. How would you define the problem for her in biblical terms? Also, how would you communicate that to her in a loving way?

Truth

Grace

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4. What could you do to give biblical hope to Adelle?

Truth

Grace

5. What would you advise Adelle to do to begin the change process in her thoughts & behaviors?

Truth

Grace

6. What resources from your church family might you be able to utilize to help Adelle ?

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TRUTH and GRACE INVENTORY (John 1:14)

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Circle a number that best reflects your thoughts and total your score at bottom of each page separately. You should have two scores: 1 for the front and 1 for the back page!

(1 – I strongly disagree, 5 – I strongly agree).

1 2 3 4 5	1. I love to study the Scriptures and to read theology books.
1 2 3 4 5	2. I am sometimes quick to judge.
1 2 3 4 5	3. I am sometimes slow to forgive.
1 2 3 4 5	4. I am often stronger on truth and weaker on grace.
1 2 3 4 5	5. I value order, structure, and planning more than spontaneity.
1 2 3 4 5	6. I cannot believe how many people willingly break the law.
1 2 3 4 5	7. I like to be on time for my appointments and often I arrive early.
1 2 3 4 5	8. I enjoy routine and repetition in my employment.
1 2 3 4 5	9. I am more comfortable with predictability than spontaneity.
1 2 3 4 5	10. I like slow-paced, consistent, and stable environments with little change.
1 2 3 4 5	11. Righting a wrong is often primary in my mind.
1 2 3 4 5	12. I prefer a final decision be made "once and for all."
1 2 3 4 5	13. I like to explore the various options to reach a decision as quickly as possible.
1 2 3 4 5	14. I value justice more than mercy.
1 2 3 4 5	15. I see right and wrong clearly.
	TOTAL for Page 1 (#'s 1-15)

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1 2 3 4 5	16. I love to forgive others, even undeserving persons.
1 2 3 4 5	17. I value freedom and spontaneity more than order, structure, and planning.
1 2 3 4 5	18. I sometimes neglect Bible study.
1 2 3 4 5	19. I see many moral standards as "legalism."
1 2 3 4 5	20. I am often stronger on grace and weaker on truth.
1 2 3 4 5	21. I am often surprised by unforgiving attitudes of others.
1 2 3 4 5	22. I do not mind being late for my appointments and often I arrive late.
1 2 3 4 5	23. I do not enjoy routine and repetition in my employment.
1 2 3 4 5	24. I am more comfortable with spontaneity than predictability.
1 2 3 4 5	25. I like fast-paced, constantly changing environments.
1 2 3 4 5	26. Righting a wrong is something that I recognize but do not always want to act upon.
1 2 3 4 5	27. I prefer that a final decision NOT be "locked down" if new information comes in later that might change my decision.
1 2 3 4 5	28. I like to explore the various options for as long as possible.
1 2 3 4 5	29. I value mercy more than justice.
1 2 3 4 5	30. I do not see right and wrong clearly.
	TOTAL for Page 2 (#'s 16-30)

FOUNDATIONS

UNDERSTANDING TEMPTATION: THE WAR WITHIN YOUR HEART

Dr. Mark E. Shaw, Grace Fellowship Church

1 John 2:15–17 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (NASB)

I. Introduction

A. Teaching for e v e r y counselee's heart (Jer. 17:9)

B. All persons struggle with all t h r e e temptations (James 1:14–15) C.

Tendency toward one temptation as a p r e f e r e n c e D. Addiction can be seen in these temptations as s t a g e s

II. How Our Flesh is Tempted by This World

A. Our H E A R T is the Problem

Mark 7:20–23 And he said, 'What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21 For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.' (ESV)

B. World appeals to our sinful bent toward pleasing self (Gen. 5:3 & 6:5; Ja. 1:14)

1. Must teach them to die to self and live for Christ by abiding in Christ (John 15:6–10; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3)

2. The physical component of addiction does not negate the fact that it is primarily a C H O I C E problem called *sin* (not a DISEASE) acc. to Eph. 5:18; Prov. 23)

C. Choices in three areas: thoughts, words, and actions

1. Must counsel the heart (Matt. 5–7) at the thought level

FOUNDATIONS

2. God must reveal and then transform the desires of our hearts (Heb 4:12)

a. Accomplished through cultivating one's heart (Prov. 4:20–23; Prov. 23:19–21)

b. Provided by God's grace (Rom. 2:4; Acts 11:18)

III. Three Common Temptations

A. Found in Genesis 3:6, Matt. 4:1–11, Luke 4:1–13, and I John 2:15–17

B. The World's System & Satan say your counselee should:

1. Do whatever he wants to do, (usually in the form of **COMFORT**)

2. Have whatever he wants to have (usually in the form of

COVETOUSNESS)

3. Be whatever he wants to be (usually in the form of **CONTROL**)

C. Like Adam and Eve, the bait that Satan uses to lure you to the world will appeal to your flesh in these three ways (Genesis 3:6):

1. To Do (Comfort)

2. To Have (Covetousness)

3. To Be (Control, love of)

IV. Lust of the flesh: To Do (COMFORT)

A. Temptation to do anything you want to do (no limits)

1. Satan asked her in Gen. 3:1b – **Did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?**

2. Desire to satisfy a physical craving in the wrong way

3. Consuming desire to experience pleasure

Genesis 3:6a So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food... (ESV)

FOUNDATIONS

B. Accusation against God's **GOODNESS**

1. God's goodness and love are challenged in this temptation.
2. God is holding back His best for you. His provision is not as good as it could be:
"I feel (i.e. tired, lonely, sad) so I am going to satisfy my physical desire no matter what God says."

C. Satan in Matthew 4:3

Matthew 4:3 And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.'

D. Jesus in Matthew 4:4

Matthew 4:4 It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

E. The only answer is to read and obey the Word of God over and above one's own feelings

1. Can only be accomplished by a Christian in the power of the Holy Spirit; not one's own strength
2. God's **WORD** is the antidote

V. Lust of the eyes: To Have (**COVETOUSNESS**)

A. Temptation to have anything you desire to possess

1. Satan exclaimed to her in **Gen. 3:4** ...**you will not surely die.**
2. Desire to possess something God has not given yet
3. Compelled to Possess what is visible despite consequences
4. Living by what is seen rather than living by faith

FOUNDATIONS

5. Idolatry at the core; living for self

6. **Gen. 3:6b that it was a delight to the eyes...**

B. Accusation against God's **WISDOM**

1. God's wisdom and omniscience is challenged...

2. "I see it, I want it, I've got to have it no matter what..."

C. Satan in Luke 4:5-7

Luke 4:5-7 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment in time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will be yours."

D. Jesus in Luke 4:8

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."

E. The only answer is to serve God and worship Him alone.

1. Must trust in Him and His wisdom rather than in oneself
(Prov. 3:5-8)

2. **W O R S H I P** of God is the antidote

VI. Pride of Life: To Be (**LOVE OF CONTROL**)

A. Temptation to be anything you want to be

1. Satan encouraged Eve in Genesis 3:5 to be like God

Genesis 3:5- For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

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2. Desire to receive praise and attention of others
3. Desire to be in control
4. Competitiveness to Achieve; Trusting self's power
5. Genesis 3:6c that the tree was to be desired to make one wise

B. Accusation against God's **SOVEREIGNTY**

1. God's sovereignty or omnipotence (power) is challenged...
2. ...by presuming upon God for personal recognition
3. "I can do this myself," or "My will be done," or "God will rescue me and fix it if it does not work out."

C. Satan in Luke 4:9-11

Luke 4:9-11 And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" (ESV)

D. Jesus in Luke 4:12

Luke 4:12 And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" *

1. Doing the WILL of GOD rather than one's own will
2. Say to yourself what Jesus said to the Father in Luke 22:42 Not My will but Your will be done.

E. The only answer is submission.

1. Humility required
2. Doing the WILL of GOD is the antidote

FOUNDATIONS

VII. "Addiction" Manifestations

A. Gambling (1 Tim. 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:2)

1. Lust of the Flesh – "Going to the casino is fun & exciting!"
2. Lust of the Eyes – "I want the money and I already know how I am going to spend it!"
3. Pride of Life – "I can figure this out on my own and beat the system."
4. Statement combining all three in one: "This is so fun; I can't wait to win all of that money because my friends will see that I am rich and successful!"

B. Drugs and Alcohol

1. Lust of Flesh –

"I love partying with my friends," or anticipation before getting the drug,
"This is going to be so much fun. I can't wait."

2. Lust of Eyes –

"I have got to have a drink just to feel like I see normal people: relaxed."

3. Pride of Life –

"I can control this addiction because I become who I want to be."

4. Statement combining all three in one:

"I love the way this makes me feel because I become relaxed and more like who I want to be."

C. Stages of Addiction

1. At first, the lust of the flesh stage is *fun* when one is simply experimenting with the sin of choice.

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2. Then, the lust of the eyes says at heart, "I've got to have this!"

3. Finally, the pride of life desires the sin of choice because it becomes part of who they are; identity.

VIII. Empowered by Christ

A. All temptations have been defeated by Jesus. (Heb. 4:15)

B. The Holy Spirit inside of a Christian gives the power to will and to do what God requires. (Phil. 2:12-13)

C. Identify the preference to sin in your counselee.

D. Then, emphasize the three specific solutions for that specific temptation:
WORD, WORSHIP, and WILL OF GOD

1. Word: instead of my own comfort; ultimate source of Comfort is the Holy Spirit understanding of the Word of God

2. Worship: instead of desires of my flesh; ultimate satisfaction found in the worship of the One true God not in the temporal things of this life (Col 3:2)

3. Will of God: instead of my will; my hope is not in what I can control; it's in the One who is in control

E. Ultimately, the goal is to become more like Christ for God's glory. I John 2:15-17 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (NASB)

Recommended Resource

Shaw, Mark. *Understanding Temptation: The War Within Your Heart*, Focus Publishing, 2014.

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Understanding Temptation Activity: Identifying Triggers

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.” 1 John 2:15–17, NASB ^{®1}

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose one (of the three) below and check the box beside it. Then, answer the questions below with that ONE motivation in mind. For example, check the box for CONTROL and answer all the questions below with just that one motivation in mind. Be ready to share your answers with others in your group.

COMFORT (lust of the flesh)

COVETOUSNESS (lust of the eyes)

CONTROL (pride of life)

1. Describe some day-to-day, real-life situations that often result in your being tempted to sin in this way.

2. Write down some of the ways you view this particular sin struggle affecting addictive choices.

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3. Think of some of the situations that came to your mind during the teaching which revealed that you struggle with this particular sin preference. Describe them below. If you are willing, share with your group.

4. Explain some heart distinctives that set the people in this group apart from the other two groups.

5. Describe ways that people-pleasing manifests in your life with your chosen heart motivation.

6. (If you chose Comfort...) How could this desire in your heart for pleasure, for comfort, or to experience things be redeemed by God and used to glorify Him?

7. (If you chose Covetousness...) How could this desire in your heart to have, to possess, and/or to appreciate beauty be redeemed by God and used to glorify Him?

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8. (If you chose Control...) How could this desire in your heart for order, for excellence, and authority be redeemed by God and used to glorify Him?

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