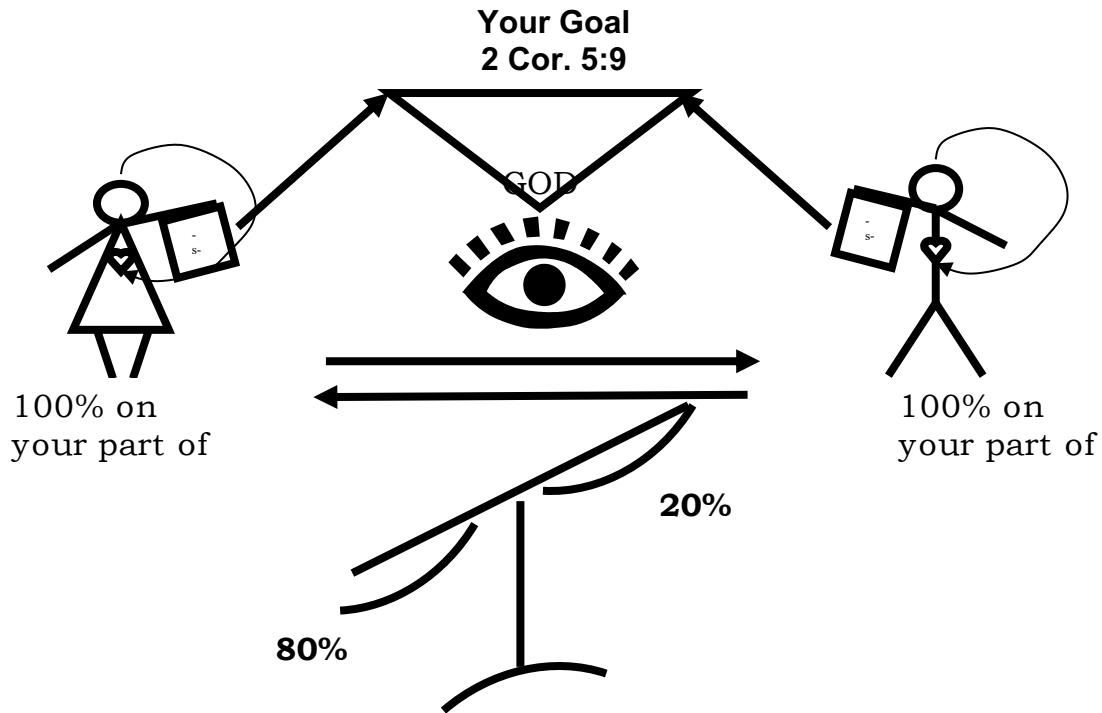


Basic Marriage Counseling ‘Game Plan’

Session 1

- **So glad you want help!** And so glad you’re both willing to work on this together... Just reading your paperwork I got excited and hopeful about what God can do!
- **Walk Through PDIs** – ask questions... Prov. 18:13 “He who answers a matter before he hears it, it’s folly and shame to him”
- **Right Goal** – 2 Cor. 5:9



- **Give Hope!** 1 Cor. 10:13

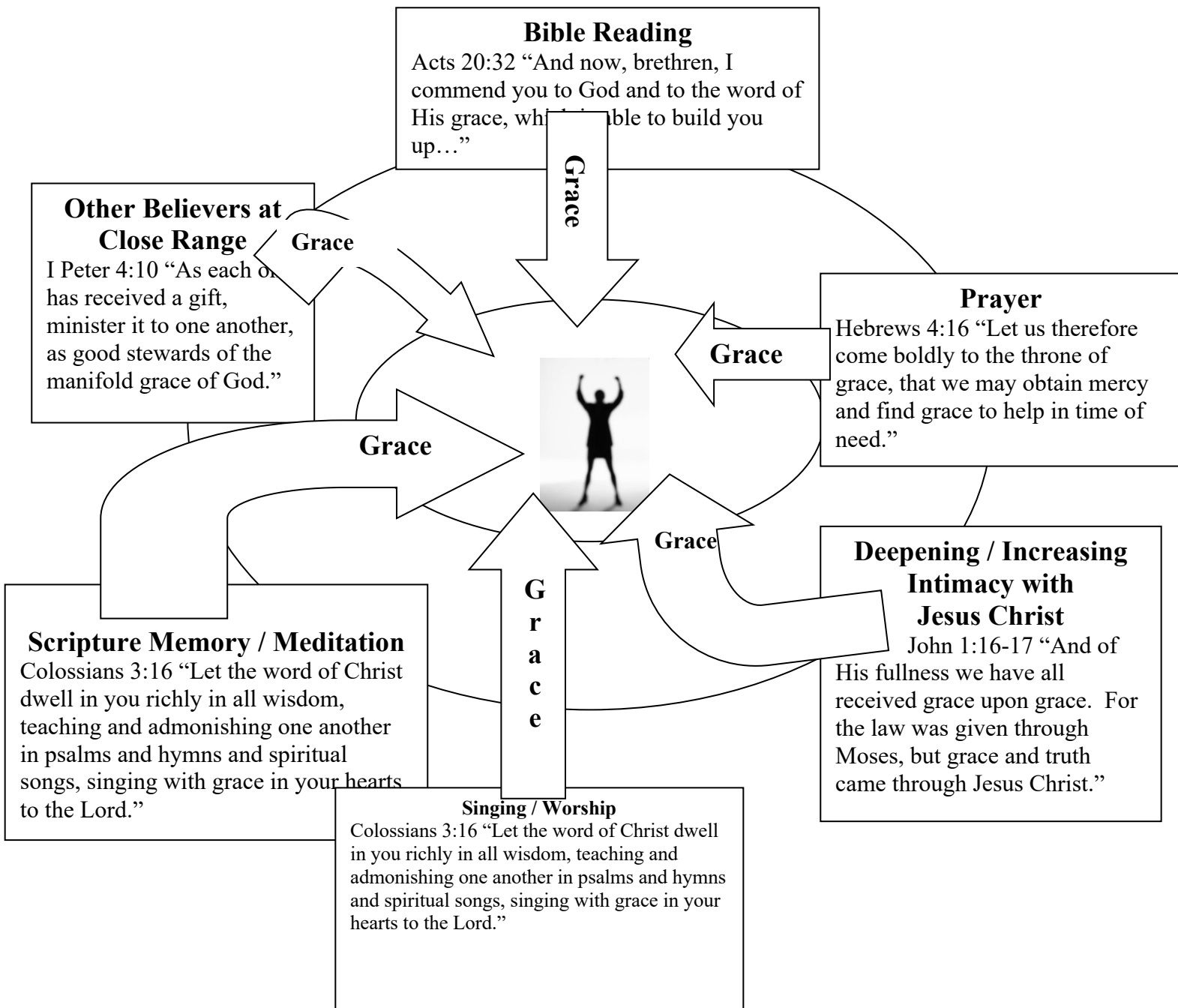
This verse gives you **four promises** that combat the **four most common lies** that Satan tells us when we’re struggling in a trial:

- | | | |
|---|------------|---|
| 1. Your trial is not unique – ‘common to man’ | VS. | No one else has ever gone through anything like this before! |
| 2. Your God is faithful - ‘but God is faithful’ | VS. | God’s not there for you; He’s left you on your own for this one |
| 3. It’s not more than you can handle | VS. | This is too much; no one can endure this |
| ‘...not leave you to be tempted beyond what you are able... that you may be able to endure’ | | |
| 4. There is a way out of this | VS. | There’s no way out; you’re stuck |

- **If we're going to work together... Four things I'm going to need from you...**

- 1.** I need a **learner spirit** from you – You're giving me permission to speak truth into your life, if I see any area that is not in line with biblical truth
- 2.** I need you to do some **homework** every time – this is not the 'Magic Hour'
- 3.** I need some **time** – you didn't get in this situation overnight; we won't get out of it overnight. Typically I'll meet with someone between 12-14 weeks – sometimes a little more; sometimes a little less, depending on how hard they work.
- 4.** I need you to be **broken & desperate enough** to actually be willing to **change** instead of just going through the motions and talking about how hard it is

- **Explain the relationship of Homework and God's Grace!**



Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Listen:

"Greatest Risk" (Built to Last –series) OR

"What Happened to My Dream?" (Avoiding Deadly Sins – series) OR

"Laying the Foundation – Marriage Starter Kit" (Marriage & Mercy – series)

Read:

"Building a Marriage to Last – *Five Essential Habits for Couples*" Booklet – Brad Hambrick + 'Five Essential Habits' worksheet

OR... "Marriage – *Whose Dream?*" Booklet – Paul Tripp

"Where Are You Spiritually?" Keller article – Read and rate yourself

Worksheet: Complete the 'Personal Assessment' worksheet for Hambrick's 5 Healthy Habits

Memorize: 2 Cor. 5:9

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 2

Teach: The 'Bigger Context' of Ephesians 5 & 6 (All that surrounds / informs the marriage passage)

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Listen: "Why Can't I Have It My Way? (Selfishness)" (Avoiding Deadly Sins – series)

Read: *How to Wage War on Self-Pity* Piper Article | Complete Worksheet questions

Memorize: Phil. 2:3-5

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 3

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Read: "Can We Talk?" booklet – Rob Green (This booklet also shows the implications / impact of our idols on our communication)

OR... "Communication and Conflict" booklet (first half), Stuart Scott

Listen: "Speaking to the Heart of your Mate," Part 1 and Part 2 (Built to Last – series)

Memorize: Eph. 4:29 or Col. 4:6 (speech seasoned with salt)

Session 4

Teach: 4 Rules of Communication and get them in our session to acknowledge which one(s) they are most guilty of violating, and need to work on:

1. Be honest
2. Stay Current
3. Attack the problem not the person
4. Act don't react

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Use 'Floor Tile' exercise (Pick one issue to discuss)

Listen: "Solving Problems" (Marriage & Mercy – series)

Read: "Conflict – *A Redemptive Opportunity*" booklet, Tim Lane

Memorize: James 4:1-3

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning 'Marriage Conflict – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 5

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Do a 'Log List' steps #1-10 only (See detailed explanation sheet for how to do a 'Log List')

Read:

"Freedom from Resentment" booklet – Robert Jones (Uses Matt. 18 parable) OR

"Forgiving Others" booklet – Tim Lane

Listen:

"Choosing Forgiveness" (Marriage & Mercy – series) OR in really tough cases

"Forgiveness" **4-sermon series by Milton Vincent**, 2014 CDT (A 360 around the cross)

Memorize: Matt. 7:3-5 ('Get the log out of your own eye...')

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 6

Homework to Assign:

Teach 4 Promises of Forgiveness (What does it mean to forgive?)

1. I will not bring it up to you again to use in a hurtful way
2. I will not talk about it to others who are not a part of the solution
3. I will not dwell on it myself
4. I will not allow this hurt to keep me from rebuilding closeness with you

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Listen: 'Why Does it Hurt So Bad?' (Deadly Sins – series)

Read: 'Bitterness' booklet – Lou Priolo

'Log List' – Do steps #11-12 (Spouse chooses top 5 and you discuss together)

Memorize: Eph. 4:31-32 ('Put away all bitterness and forgive...')

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 7

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Listen: 'Why Can't I Always be Right (Pride)?' (Deadly Sins – series)

Read: 'Pride to Humility' booklet – Stuart Scott

'Log List' – Do steps #13-14 (Create repentance plan for your top 5 sins)

Memorize: James 4:6 (God resists the proud, gives grace to humble)

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 8

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Use 'Catch Yourself' card to record 3 examples this week

Use 'Floor Tile' as needed

Listen: "How Does My Heart Direct My Life?" **Feelings** (Gospel Treason – series #6)

Read:

"Changing Thought Patterns" booklet – George Sanchez

OR... "Gospel Treason" book, ch. 9 (teaches: stimuli – thinking – emotions – actions – TEA – character) OR

"Managing Your Emotions" booklet – Amy Baker

Memorize: 2 Cor. 10:5 (taking every thought captive...)

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 9

Teach: 'Thinking' Chart

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Use 'Catch Yourself' card to record 3 examples this week

Use 'Floor Tile' as needed

Read:

"Motives – Why Do I Do the Things I Do?" Welch – booklet OR

Bigney "Gospel Treason" book, ch. 7-8 (How to Identify Idols)

Listen: "How Do I Look for Idols?" (Gospel Treason – series, message #4)

Memorize: Prov. 4:23 'Guard your heart with all diligence...'

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning ‘**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 10

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur ‘Daily Bible’ or J.D. Greear’s ‘See Jesus’ Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you’re not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Use ‘Catch Yourself’ card to record 3 examples this week

Use ‘Floor Tile’ as needed

Read: “Gospel Treason” book, ch. 4-5

OR... “Conflict” booklet, Tim Lane (If didn’t use already)

Listen: “Why Is There Such Conflict Between Us?” (Deadly Sins – series, message #7)

Memorize: James 4:1-3

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning ‘**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 11

Teach 4 Types of People that enter into conflict:

Winner	Yielder (people pleaser)
Resolver Biblical Resolve it God’s way	Ignorer (afraid of conflict) This is crazy We’re arguing Forget this

Teach 3 Types of Conflicts: Each solution is different

Differences – (not sin) – Forbear/Prefer (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2-3-4)
He wants white paint. She wants blue paint. Ballet vs. tractor pull

Sinfulness/Selfishness – Change/Repent

Righteousness Issues – Study: what does Bible say?

ex. Debate over what is right or wrong

ex. parenting – spank or not spank? Tithe or not tithe? Let teen date or not date? Etc.

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Use 'Catch Yourself' card to record 3 examples this week

Use 'Floor Tile' as needed

Read: "Communication & Conflict" – booklet, second half, Stuart Scott

Listen: "How Do Idols Wreck My Relationships?" (Gospel Treason – series, message #5)

Memorize: James 4:1-3 (where do wars and fights come from? Your desires...)

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) Ask them to do the daily assignments personally and then meet together once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 12

Homework to Assign:

Bible Reading: MacArthur 'Daily Bible' or J.D. Greear's 'See Jesus' Reading Plan (Gospels)

Pray: 3 things:

- Ask God to show you everything you're not seeing about you (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Ask God to give me wisdom to know how to help
- Ask God to encourage your spouse and help them to see you changing

Listen: "How to Really Love Your Wife" / "How to Really Love Your Husband" (Built to Last – series)

Use 'Catch Yourself' card to record 3 examples this week

Use 'Floor Tile' as needed

Read: "Renewing Marital Intimacy" booklet – Powlison (And have them sit down for 60-90 minutes to discuss the questions on p. 16-19)

If they need regular / consistent help with communication: Consider assigning '**Marriage Conflict** – *Talking as Teammates* (31-Day Devotional for Life) You can do the daily assignments personally and then meet once/week to discuss top highlights

If they need more Gospel: Consider assigning '**Gospel Primer**' You can ask them to read Section 1, one day at a time, as there are 31 readings. Assign them to read the number that matches the day of the month

Session 13

Homework to Assign:

Complete the written 'Assessment Before Ending Counseling' (to clarify what they've learned and what their plan is to continue working after we stop counseling)

Scripture memory: Luke 6:46-49 (House on Rock vs. House on Sand)

Session 14

Talk through their written 'Assessment Before Ending Counseling' (to clarify what they've learned and what their plan is to continue working after we stop counseling)

Consider assigning one of the '**31-Day Devotional for Life**' booklets for ongoing growth and continued homework / thinking in an area that each of them struggles (i.e. Anger, Fear of Man, Perfectionism, Doubting God, etc.)

Encourage them to continue Bible reading, connected in community group, Sunday worship, etc.