

Introduction

to

Christian Counseling

Dr. Kenneth Meadors

INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

COU201

Syllabus

Dr. Kenneth Meadors

1. Introduction to Biblical Counseling
2. The Person of the Counselor
3. Developing the Counseling Relationship
4. Some Basic Counselor Skills
5. More Advanced Counseling Skills and Techniques
6. Principles of the Counseling Process
7. Biblical Counseling of Special Issues
8. Crisis Intervention
9. Legal and Ethical Issues of Counseling in a Church Setting
10. Informed Consent, Confidentiality, Privileged Communications, and Referrals
11. Guidelines for Counseling
12. Review and Final Exam

Your grade will be determined by the following factors:

1. Attendance.
2. Book Report.
3. Study Guides.
4. Exam.

Book can be selected from “Recommended Reading List” or any other approved by Dr. Meadors.

The report should be 3-5 double-spaced typed pages giving the essence of the book. There should be an additional 1-2 pages giving your personal response to the book.

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING

The Christian Mandate for Counseling

1. You do not have to be a psychologist or a clinically trained psychoanalyst to help people.
2. Reacting against Freudian psychology and humanistic concepts, which are clearly in violation of God's Word, some Christians have taken a negative position against psychology and counseling in general when they should have taken a negative position against forms of counseling which violates scriptural principles.
 - a. The problem is not in giving advice or counsel; it is in giving the wrong kind of counsel.
 - b. I have heard people say, "I don't believe in counseling--just preaching and praying!"
 - c. When a person takes such a position and still says, "I think you should" and suggest a course of action regarding a friend's personal needs, he has put himself in the position of a counselor.
3. The anti-counseling mentality also fails to recognize that the healing ministry of Jesus was the purest psychiatry ever applied to the emotional wounds of hurting men and women.
4. "The ministry of reconciliation" means to bring men and women back into harmony with our heavenly Father and with each other as well. (2 Cor 5:18-19).
5. We have a mandate to help people.
 - a. If someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently (Gal. 6:1 NIV).
 - b. Sin could be a wrong decision, a poor choice, a relationship which is bound to end in disharmony and suffering.
 - c. The action required to help save a person from his fate is gentle but firm.
 - d. "The godly man is a good counselor because he is just and fair and knows right from wrong." (PS 37:30-31 LB)
6. When people ask "what to do," it is often because their judgment has become clouded. Their decision-making process is obscured by issues which make it hard for them to see the consequences of their actions. If your thinking is clear, you become an asset of immeasurable value.
7. The Bible stresses that we have a responsibility to help brothers and sisters make good decisions. At least 58 times we find "one another" phrases in the NT, all expressing some kind of obligation or responsibility we have to each other in the body of Christ. Among the many, you will see we are to:
 - a. Love one another.
 - b. Pray for one another.

- c. Bear one another's burdens.
 - d. Encourage one another.
 - e. Exhort one another.
 - f. Admonish one another.
8. In obeying these instructions, you become a counselor.
 9. If caught in quicksand, need someone to help you out.

The Basis for Christian Counseling

1. Helping people through counseling is part of what Paul urged the Galatians to do in bearing each other's burdens and thus fulfilling the great law of love in (Gal 6:1-5).

(Gal 6:1 KJV) Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (Gal 6:2 KJV) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (Gal 6:3 KJV) For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. (Gal 6:4 KJV) But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. (Gal 6:5 KJV) For every man shall bear his own burden.

2. Two important facts.
 - a. You have the Word of God which is a "lamp unto our feet."
 - b. God's Holy Spirit.
3. Counseling in a biblical perspective makes a commitment to go God's way no matter what others may think.
 - a. Can not follow secular models and hold to the teaching of men whose lives are totally out of harmony with Scripture.
 - b. Cannot sprinkle a few Bible verses here and there throughout counseling just to sanctify a pagan system.

How Biblical Counseling Differs from Secular Counseling.

1. Biblical counseling is God-centered.
2. Biblical counseling recognizes the sinfulness of human nature.
3. Biblical counseling recognizes the authority of God's Word.
 - a. "Psychiatry" comes from Greek words *psyche* (soul) and *iatria* (healing).
 - b. The Bible recognizes that man's fundamental problem is estrangement from his Creator, which is labeled as "sin."
 - c. Counseling in a biblical framework recognizes the Bible as a guide for moral conduct.
 - d. Biblical counseling recognizes that the Bible is not only cross-cultural but counter-cultural as well.
 - e. Counseling in a biblical framework recognizes that the Bible deals in precept or

principle with every situation in life.

- i. The kind of person I should marry. (2 Cor 6:14 KJV) Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?
 - ii. My moral life outside of marriage. (1 Th 4:3 KJV) For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:
 - iii. The way I conduct my business. (Rom 12:11 KJV) Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;
 - iv. Why I should keep my marriage together. (1 Pet 3:7 KJV) Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.
4. Biblical counseling recognizes that all genuine healing comes from God.
 - a. Sin separates from God; healing produces restoration and harmony.
 - b. Counseling from a biblical perspective is an extension of the healing ministry of Jesus in the realm of the emotions and the spiritual life.
 5. Counseling in a biblical perspective requires a working knowledge of the Word of God.
 - a. Works with personal problems, family problems, and business problems.
 - b. Need to know what the Word says about some of the fundamental issues of life:
 - i. Roles, relationships, and responsibilities in family living.
 - ii. Sin and guilt.
 - iii. Forgiveness and restitution.
 - iv. Fear and the faith that overcomes it.
 - v. The place of sex in our lives and marriage.
 6. Biblical counseling results in liberation, not in further bondage. To describe a person's problem as a "sickness" which can only be medicated or, at best, suppressed, offers no hope that life can be different.

Presuppositions

All philosophies start with presuppositions. Science itself rests upon presuppositions which cannot be tested empirically. Psychology is a humanistic religion which assumes that man is essentially good and that he contains the power to heal himself, but they cannot prove it. Behavioral psychology presupposes that humans are merely highly developed animal forms whose behavior can be modified by external stimuli, but cannot prove it. Integrationist psychology presupposes the general validity of secular psychological theory and believes that when it is added to biblical concepts, the result is a superior therapy, but cannot prove it. It is therefore not irrational or unfair for biblical counseling to be based on presuppositions about god, man, salvation, and the sufficiency of the Scriptures.

Presuppositions of Biblical Counseling

1. The Existence of God.

The Christian worldview begins by assuming the existence of God. It continues with the belief that God can and has revealed Himself to man through the general revelation of creation, the special revelation of His written Word, revelation of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the personal revelation of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian acceptance of the authority of the Scriptures rests upon the presupposition of biblical inerrancy and infallibility. In contrast to the continually changing findings of psychology, the Word of God claims absolute dependability.

2. God's Character.

It is essential to understand the balance between God's compassion and His absolute holiness. He is loving and just. Merciful and stern. Tender, yet demanding. To describe Him only in terms of compassion and love mistakenly depicts God as a cosmic Santa Claus. On the other hand, to picture God only in terms of righteousness and judgment wrongly portrays him as a vengeful being who furiously casts lightning bolts of wrath upon a helpless creation.

3. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Counseling

The Holy Spirit is described by several names that help us see His role in counseling. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit "the Counselor" in John 14:16 and then tells us that the Holy Spirit is always available (He abides forever), that He will help us remember Christ's teachings, that HE will testify about Christ, that He will convict mankind of sin, and that He will guide us into all truth.

The Holy Spirit is the one who actually applies the truths of God's Word to the believer's life. He makes theology come alive.

4. God's Provision for Counseling.

A necessary presupposition of biblical counseling is that God has indeed provided every essential truth the believer needs for a happy, fulfilling life in Christ Jesus. God has not left us lacking in any sense. "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." (2 Peter 1:3).

This is a goal of biblical counseling--escaping the corruption of the world. We are not told merely to cope or to survive as victims. We are not told just to do the best we can; we are told we can escape the corruption of the world through obedience to the truths of God's Word.

5. Man's Fallen Condition

This is in direct contrast to psychology's inherent goodness of the human heart. Man is seen as a victim, not a sinner, and as long as he perceives himself as an innocent casualty rather than a willful rebel, he will remain in his sins. Man's only hope for change is to acknowledge his fallen condition and helplessness before God and to cry out in faith for God's transforming power to be applied.

6. **Man's Confusion**

One result of the fall of man into sin is confusion. On his own, man is unable to discern how desperate his condition actually is. That's the reason he is often in denial. The alcoholic says, "I don't really have a problem. I can stop drinking anytime I want." The man who is inflamed with lust says, "It isn't wrong to read *Playboy*. Erotic stimulation is perfectly normal and I should not feel guilty."

Jeremiah explains why humans are so confused: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9). Not only are we unable to fully understand our own hearts without the light of God's Word, but other humans are also unable to analyze our inner motivations. Even the psychological experts are at a loss to accurately explain why a person does what he does. That is why psychiatrists fail so miserably in predicting whether a felon will repeat his crime upon release from prison.

7. **Man's Hopelessness**

Another assumption of biblical counseling is that, left to himself and without God's help, man is hopeless and powerless to change his true inner nature and his ultimate destiny.

A primary goal of biblical counseling is sharing the "blessed hope" Jesus Christ. What a contrast this is to integrated counseling systems that try to provide hope for clients through innovative techniques of psychotherapies. While psychology points abuse victims to their past, biblical counseling points them to present and future victory in Christ. In contrast to "inner child" theories, biblical counseling seeks to move counselees toward maturity in Christ.

8. **The Sufficiency of God's Word.**

The Church: A Biblical Place for Counseling

1. God's Center for Biblical Counseling.
2. Personal Care for Fellow Members.
3. Knowledge of the Counselee by Pastor and Elders.
4. Accountability. The biblical church has a built-in system of accountability which the Lord has authorized: "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. They keep watch over you as men who must

give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (Heb. 13:17). No psychologist or counselor in an independent clinic can claim this spiritual authority.

5. Discipline.
6. Encouragement.

Three Areas of Counseling

1. **Remedial counseling** involves helping people deal with the existing problems of life.
2. **Preventive counseling** seeks to stop problems from getting worse or prevent their occurrence at all.
3. **Educative counseling** involves the counselor in teaching principles of mental health to larger groups.

LESSON 2

THE PERSON OF THE COUNSELOR

1. ***A good counselor is a man who has wisdom and common sense.***
 1. A man of wisdom is in pursuit of God.
 1. A wise man is one who hungers to know Christ more.
 2. “God is looking throughout the whole earth today for men in pursuit of Him.
 2. A man of wisdom is one who knows God’s Word in a living way.
 1. The Word of God instructs us, corrects us, and reproves us; nourishes us.
 2. God’s Word provides us with spiritual nourishment as well as spiritual protection in this age of spiritual and mental confusion.
 3. What matters is not what others believe, but what God’s Word says!
 3. A man of wisdom is one who knows the importance of prayer.
 1. Through prayer we gain insight, and through prayer the insights we share with others are made significant to them.
 2. Danger in Christian counseling is reliance upon methods rather than God’s power made possible through prayer.
 4. A wise man who hopes to counsel others knows the importance of fellowship with godly men.
 1. “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise...” (Pr 13:20).
 2. Prov 27:17. “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”
 3. From others, we gain didactic knowledge, practical experience, techniques; exposure to others exposes us to the measure of the grace of Christ in their lives.
 5. A wise man is one who sows the Word of God. Testifies of Christ to others by actions and words.
2. ***Qualities of a Christian Counselor (may be learned, but more importantly, gifts from God).***
 1. Have an attitude of acceptance.
 2. Be a good listener.
 1. Listens with interest, and without fidgeting or hurrying.
 2. Listens without interruptions and shows warmth through the expression of his eyes.
 3. A good listener allows the person to finish sharing what he perceives his problem to be before helping him gain insight.
 4. He uses properly inserted questions which initially are used to obtain information and clarify issues; later can be used to provoke thinking and

- 5. help the counselee reach his own conclusions.
 - 5. “Behold, I waited for your words, I listened to your reasonings, While you pondered what to say. I even paid close attention to you...” (Job 32:11-12 NAS).
 - 6. Many are willing to speak, but few are willing to listen.
- 3. Be suggestive and confronting.
 - 1. There is a time for suggestive statements, and often these will be received when a statement would be rejected.
 - 2. Also, a good counselor knows when to be direct and confronting.
 - 3. The good counselor can discern between suggestion and confrontation.
- 4. Interject scripture.
 - 1. A godly counselor knows how and when to interject Scripture.
 - 2. Proper timing and readiness are important.
 - 3. Once the counselee knows the counselor really cares, Scripture can usually be shared without any offense.
 - 4. The Scripture must meet the specific need of the individual, and a few verses are preferable to many.
 - 5. At the appropriate time, prayer with a counselee is also of great benefit.
- 5. Use proper attitude.
 - 1. It is helpful that a counselor employs a particular attitude to help various personalities.
 - (1) Matter-of-factness. Used with a brother living in sin.
 - (2) Firm kindness. Used with depressed person.
 - (3) Active friendliness. For those who really want and need encouragement.
 - (4) Passive friendliness. With those who have paranoid trends.
 - 2. Each person is different, and by being sensitive to his spirit, the counselor can employ an attitude to which the counselee can best respond.
- 3. ***Have an unwavering purpose for Christ.***
 - 1. There are thousands who are looking for someone with a purpose for living; someone who knows where he is heading--someone who is living for Christ.
 - 2. Therefore, the Helper can be a positive example and role model for the Seeker.
- 4. ***Be personal.***
 - 1. Counselees need counselors who are warm, open, honest, genuine, and very personal.
 - 2. To be open and honest themselves, they must sense the same from the counselor.
 - 3. They want to sense that the counselor is personally interested in them and their problems.
 - 4. A warm, personal counselor can be at least one person who can give love and self-worth.
 - 5. Be unshockable.
 - 1. Should not be shocked at any thing told by counselee; this only frightens the counselee and prevents him from sharing the guilt he may so need to

- share, and prevents him from learning how to deal with it effectively.
 - 2. When Jesus was helping the woman of Sychar (John 4), he did not seem shocked at her past. He dealt with it straight-forwardly and effectively.
- 6. Be confident.
 - 1. A good counselor offers the counselee realistic hope.
 - 2. He is confident in Christ, in his ability as a counselor through Christ, and in what Christ can accomplish in the counselee.
 - 3. If you think you can help, let him know it.
 - 4. Offer what is realistic hope. For example, you wouldn't tell a person with an IQ of 80 that you feel he could go to college. However, you would help him make realistic plans.
- 7. Have a sense of humor.
 - 1. A counselor deals with many serious problems daily and without a sense of humor, the load can be too much.
 - 2. He needs at times to be able to help his counselee have this same sense of humor.
 - 3. For example, obsessive-compulsive people often begin to improve when they can start to laugh at their perfectionism.

Creative Listening

- 1. Holding your tongue.
- 2. Checking with your client about your impression of what is being said.
- 3. The impact of creative listening.
 - a. The attitude of listening itself shows love, concern, and respect.
 - b. Avoidance of interrupting and criticism prevents the sending of negative messages such as:
 - i. "I don't care how you feel or what you think."
 - ii. "You're not worth listening to."
- 4. By listening:
 - a. You discover how things actually look from your client's point of view.
 - b. You lose your status as chief expert on what your client really thinks, wants, fears, and feels.
 - c. You set an example for your client to follow in listening to your own feelings.

Rules for quick listening.

- 1. Try to recognize the issue behind the issue.
 - a. Honor the other by giving you the opportunity to clarify what you're saying first.
 - b. Let's you know I'm genuinely concerned and interested in what you're

- saying and I'm making an effort to understand you.
 - c. Also gives another opportunity to hear what you are saying.
- 2. Restate what the other person has said in your own words.
 - a. "Now let me repeat what you've said to make sure I understand."
 - i. If I have it right, they'll say, "Yes, that's it."
 - ii. If not, they can say, "No." Then I can restate what they've said.
- 3. Lovingly confine what you say.
 - a. Using too many words during an important conversation can actually break down intimate conversation.
 - i. When talk in long, rambling paragraphs, increase chances the listener has for reacting to what we say without understanding it.
 - ii. Other person can become frustrated or bored and tune us out altogether.

LESSON 3

Developing the Counseling Relationship

Rapport of the Participants

1. Rapport in counseling is the development of a warm working relationship between the participants.
2. The responsibility of building a working relationship between counseling participants lies more with the counselor than with the counselee.
3. The counselor can do so by recognizing that the counselee has unsatisfied needs and an ineffective defense pattern, and that by relating to the client in a meaningful way he can give him an opportunity to invest emotionally not only in a counselor but in another human being.
4. Such an experience can only help him to build a frame of reference which he can use to mitigate the effects of the poor interactive experiences which preceded counseling. And the new experience will be conducive to more successful interactions in the future.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNSELOR:

1. Empathic.
2. Warmth.
3. Respect
4. Genuineness.

Empathy

1. What is empathy? To be able to get “inside” a person; to think and feel like the other person; to know completely where they are coming from.
2. Why be empathic?
 1. Tests your understanding.
 2. Helps prevent seeker misunderstanding and helper misunderstanding.
 3. Helps seeker feel understood.
 4. Helps seeker to understand himself.
 5. Encourages seeker to continue and go deeper.
3. How to be empathic.
 1. Listen carefully to feeling and thought Seeker is expressing. (Identify feeling; identify thought).
 2. Paraphrase feeling and thought (not parrot; use different words).
 3. (People are more than the sum of their verbal and nonverbal messages. Listening

in its deepest sense means listening to the person of Seekers as influenced by the contexts in which they “live, move, and have their being.”)

4. Basic empathic listening and understanding.
 1. Empathy as a form of human communication involves both listening and understanding and the communication of that understanding to the Seeker. Empathy that remains locked up in the Helper contributes little to the helping process.
 2. A Helper cannot communicate an understanding of a Seeker’s world without getting in touch with that world. Therefore, a great deal of the discussion on empathy centers around the kind of attending, observing, and listening--the kind of “being with” the other--needed in order to develop an understanding of the Seeker and his or her world. In other words, empathy is primarily a mode of human contact.
 3. Mayeroff sees this mode of contact as essential to caring.
 1. To care for another person, I must be able to understand him and his world as if I were inside it. I must be able to see, as it were, with his eyes what his world is like to him and how he sees himself. Instead of merely looking at him in a detached way from outside, as if he were a specimen, I must be able to be with him in his world, “going” into his world in order to sense from the “inside” what life is like for him, what he is striving to be and what he requires to grow.)
 4. Empathy is an attempt to penetrate the aloneness of the other. Empathy in its most fundamental sense involves understanding the experiences, behaviors, and feelings of others as they experience them. It means entering into the experience of Seekers in order to develop a feeling for their inner world and how they view both this inner world and the world of people and things around them.

Warmth

1. It is important to have and to communicate. Seeker must be able to feel the warmth coming from you.
2. Since the communicating of caring love seems to be consistent with both natural and special revelation, doesn’t it seem pretty safe to assume it’s a skill God wants us to develop?
3. Why be warm?
 1. Helps Seeker feel comfortable, at ease.
 2. Lets Seeker know you really do care.
4. How to be warm.
 1. Furniture, space.
 1. Facing, but not in a competitive posture.
 2. Distance--approximately an arm’s length.
 3. No furniture blocks between you and seeker.
 2. Posture.

1. Arms and legs open.
2. No part of body blocking Seeker from you.
3. Relaxed but attentive; leaning slightly toward Seeker.
3. Energy level.
 1. Natural.
 2. Not too fast or slow.
4. Eye contact.
 1. Natural and interested.
 2. Frequent, but not catatonic .
5. Voice volume, tone, rate.
 1. Clearly audible, but not a portable P.A. system.
 2. Not commanding nor mothering.
 3. Average speed--not too fast or too slow.
6. Mirroring. Transparency.

Ways to “Be With” Seekers

1. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them tell their stories, especially when those stories are difficult to tell.
2. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them find starting points in complex problem situations, by helping them find signs of hope, and by helping them clarify problem situations from their own point of view.
3. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them identify and overcome blind spots, by helping them reconceptualize problems and opportunities, and by helping them develop the kinds of new perspectives that serve action.
4. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them see and develop hopeful alternatives to their problem situations.
5. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them distinguish between what is possible and what is not; I can “be with” them by helping them stretch themselves realistically.
6. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them make choices and by helping them find the incentives that enable them to commit themselves to those choices.
7. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them brainstorm options for action; I can help them stimulate their imaginations in the search for strategies that lead to the accomplishment of goals.
8. I can “be with” Seekers by helping them turn viable strategies into meaningful plans.
9. I can “be with” Seekers by providing both support and challenge for them as they act to accomplish goals

Helpers will not “be with” all Seekers in each of these ways, because they tailor their active, involving, caring presence to the needs of their Seekers. Genuineness and respect will characterize the spirit of their “Being with,” but what they do depends on what their Seekers need.

Respect

1. Questions.
 1. What does respect mean to you?
 2. How does it feel to BE respected?
2. The deepest need is that for respect.
 1. Respect can be considered an attitude or a moral quality, a way of looking at and prizing people.
 2. Respect is such a fundamental notion that, like most fundamental notions, it eludes definition. The word comes from a Latin root that includes the concept of “seeing” or “viewing.”
 3. Respect is a particular way of viewing other people.
 4. Respect means prizing others simply because they are human beings.
 5. Respect is an attitude expressed behaviorally. In helping situations, respect is not often communicated directly in word. Actions literally speak louder than words.
 6. Respect is communicated principally by the ways in which Helpers orient themselves toward and work with clients.
3. Communicating high regard.
 1. It is important to have and important to communicate high regard.
 2. The Seeker must be able to feel the high regard coming from you.
4. Man is due high regard because he is:
 1. Created by God.
 2. Created in God’s image.
 3. Blessed by God.
 4. Given the responsibility for the stewardship of creation.
 5. Is the crowning summit of creation.
5. Why be respectful?
 1. Helps Seeker feel trusted and responsible.
 2. Lets Seeker know you value them as an individual.
6. How to be respectful.
 - a. Develop a genuine interest in individuals.
 - b. Suspend all judgments and conclusions about Seeker.
 - c. Take Seeker’s remarks seriously.
 - d. No pat answers; avoid manipulating.
 - e. Be honest about your own time limitations.
 - f. Maintain confidentiality.
7. Respect is communicated principally by the ways in which Helpers orient themselves toward and work with clients.
 - a. Orientation toward. “Orientation toward” refers to the attitudes that, once translated into concrete behaviors, comprise respect. Some of these attitudes are the following:
 - b. Being “for” the Seeker. The Helper is a caring person in a down-to-earth, nonsentimental sense. As a sign of this, respect ultimately involves placing demands on Seekers or helping them place demands on themselves. This “being

- for,” then, refers to Seekers’ basic humanity and to their potential to be more than they are right now. Respect is both gracious and tough-minded.
- c. Being willing and able. Respectful Helpers can say “working with this Seer is worth my time and energy.” They are ready to commit themselves to their seekers and available to them in reasonable ways.
 - d. Regard for the Seeker as unique. Respect means prizing the individuality of Seekers. Effective Helpers are not committed to making Seekers over in their own image or likeness.
 - e. Regard for the Seeker’s self-determination. The Helper’s basic attitude is that Seekers do have the resources to manage their lives more effectively.
 - f. Assuming the seeker’s good will. Respectful Helpers proceed on the assumption that Seekers want to work at living more effectively. They continue with this assumption until it is demonstrated false.
8. Maintaining confidentiality. Seekers have the right to assume that what happens between them and their Helpers is not discussed with others unless they give permission to do so.
- a. Working with the Seeker.
 1. Attentive physical presence. This says behaviorally, “I am with you. I am committed to your interests. I am available to help you live more effectively.”
 2. Suspending critical judgment. This kind of respect is “unconditional positive regard,” meaning that “the Helper communicates to their Seeker a deep and genuine caring for him as a person with potentialities, uncontaminated by evaluations of their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors.”
 3. Communicating understanding. One of the best ways of showing respect is by working to understand Seekers: their experiences, their behaviors, their feelings. People generally believe that people respect them if they spend time and effort in trying to understand them.
 4. Helping seekers cultivate their own resources. Helping Seekers cultivate their own resources follows from the Helper’s esteem for the uniqueness, the individuality, of the Seeker. Effective helpers do not act for the client unless it is absolutely necessary, and then only as a step toward helping the Seeker act on his or her own.
 5. Expressing reasonable warmth. Warmth is the physical expression of understanding and caring, which is ordinarily communicated through nonverbal media such as gestures, posture, tone of voice, touch, and facial expression.
 6. Being genuine in the helping relationship. Being genuine in one’s relationship with another is a way of showing the other respect. Therefore, the behaviors listed under “genuineness” in the next section also constitute ways of showing respect.

Genuineness

1. Genuineness, like respect, refers to a value expressed in a set of Helper behaviors. Genuine people are at home with themselves and therefore can comfortably be themselves in all interactions. This means that they do not have to change when they are with different people; that is, they do not constantly have to adopt new roles in order to be acceptable to others or acceptable to themselves when they are with others.
2. Genuine Helpers do not take refuge in the role of Helper. Relating deeply to others and helping are part of their lifestyle, not roles they put on or take off at will. Helpers should learn to do the following:
 1. Express directly to another whatever they are presently experiencing.
 2. Communicate without distorting their own messages.
 3. Listen to others without distorting their messages.
 4. Reveal their true motivation in the process of communicating their messages.
 5. Be spontaneous and free in their communications with others rather than use habitual and planned strategies.
 6. Respond immediately to another's need or state instead of waiting for the "right" time or giving themselves enough time to come up with the "right" response.
 7. Manifest their vulnerabilities and, in general, the "stuff" of their inner lives.
 8. Live in and communicate about the here-and-now.
 9. Strive for interdependence rather dependence or counter dependence in their relationships with Seekers.
 10. Learn how to enjoy psychological closeness.
 11. Be concrete in their communications.
 12. Be willing to commit themselves to others.
3. Being spontaneous. Genuine people are spontaneous. Many of the behaviors suggested are ways of being spontaneous. Effective Helpers, while being tactful (as part of their respect for others), do not constantly weigh what they say to Seekers. They do not place filters between their inner lives and what they express to others.
4. Being genuine does not mean verbalizing every thought to the client. For instance, he suggests that Helpers express negative feelings to Seekers only if such feelings persist or if they are interfering with their ability to move with the Seeker through the helping process.
5. Being assertive. Genuine Helpers are assertive in the helping process without being aggressive.
6. Avoiding defensiveness. Genuine Helpers are nondefensive. They know their own strengths and deficits and are presumably trying to live mature, meaningful lives.
7. Being consistent. Genuine Helpers are not constantly running afoul of significant discrepancies in their interactions with seekers. They do not think or feel one thing and say another--or at least they are able to identify the discrepancies, especially those affecting their ability to help others, and are willing to deal with them.

LESSON 4

Some Basic Counselor Skills

Basic Communication Skills

1. Attending.
2. Listening.
3. Empathy
4. Probing.

Attending

1. This refers to the ways in which Helpers can effectively orient themselves toward and be with their Seekers, both physically and psychologically.
2. Orienting yourself to the seeker.
 1. Perhaps the averted face is too often a sign of the averted heart. At any rate, most of us are sensitive to others' attention or inattention to us. Given that fact, it is paradoxical how insensitive we can be at times about attending to others.
 2. Before Helpers can respond to Seekers and their concerns, they must first pay attention to them and listen carefully to what they have to say. Effective Helpers are, above all, perceptive Helpers. Good Helpers attend carefully to both the verbal and nonverbal messages of Seekers.
 3. Attending and listening seem to be concepts so simple to grasp and so easy to do that you may wonder why they are being given such explicit treatment here. But simple as they seem, it is amazing how often people fail to attend to and listen to one another.
 4. How many times have you heard the statement directed toward someone who was not attending well, "You're not even listening to what I'm saying!" Invariably, the reply is, "I am too, I can repeat everything you've said."
 5. What people look for in attending and listening is not someone's ability to repeat their words; a tape recorder could do that perfectly. People want more than physical presence in human communication; they want the other person to be fully there, meaning psychological or social-emotional presence.
 6. Helping and other deep interpersonal transactions demands a certain intensity of presence. That presence, "being with" the Seeker, is what is meant by attending.
 7. Your nonverbal behavior and the many messages you communicate through it influence Seekers for better or worse. It can invite them to trust you, open up, and explore the significant dimensions of their problems, or it can promote their distrust and lead to a reluctance to reveal themselves to you. Furthermore, the quality of your attending, both physically and psychologically, influences the

quality of your perceptiveness. If you attend poorly to Seekers, you will most likely miss data relevant to clarifying the problem situation.

3. ***Effective attending, then, does two things:***

- a. It lets the Seeker know you are with him and therefore helps establish good rapport.
- b. it puts you in a position to be an effective listener

4. Attending can be considered from three different perspectives or successively deeper levels.

1. Level 1. The skills involved in attending (the most superficial level of attending, but serves as a starting point.). The skills can be summarized in the acronym **SOLAR**.

1. Face the Seeker Squarely. Adopt a posture that indicates involvement. This says that you are available to work with them. In North American culture facing another person “squarely” is often considered a basic posture of involvement. It usually says, “I’m available for you; I choose to be with you.” Turning your body away from another person while you talk to him or her can lessen your degree of contact with that person. Even when people are seated in a circle, they usually try in some way to turn toward the individuals to whom they are speaking. What is important is that the bodily orientation you adopt conveys the message that you are involved with the client.
2. Adopt an Open Posture. This says you are open to your Seeker and are nondefensive. Crossed arms and legs can be signs of lessened involvement with or availability to others, while an open posture can be a sign that you’re open to the Seeker and to what he or she has to say. In North American culture an open posture is generally seen as nondefensive. It can say, “I’m open to you right now.” It is important to ask yourself, “To what degree does my present posture communicate openness and availability to the Seeker?”
3. Remember that it is possible at times to Lean toward the other. This underscores your attentiveness and lets the Seeker know that you are with him.
 - (1) Watch two people in a restaurant booth who are intimately engaged in conversation. Very often they are both leaning forward over the table as a natural result of their involvement. Remember that the upper part of your body is on a “hinge;” it can move toward a person and also back away.
 - (1) In North American culture a slight inclination toward a person is often interpreted as saying, “I’m with you; I’m interested in you and in what you have to say.” Leaning back (the severest form of which is a slouch) can be a way of saying, “I’m not entirely with

you,” or “I’m bored.” Leaning too far forward or doing so too soon may frighten a Seeker. It can be perceived as a demand on the other for some kind of closeness or intimacy. Effective Helpers are not rigid, but can move back and forth naturally according to what is happening in the dialogue.

4. Maintain good APPROPRIATE EYE contact. This tells the Seeker of your interest in him. In North American culture fairly steady eye contact is not unnatural for people deep in conversation. It is not the same as staring. Again, watch two people talking seriously in a restaurant. You will be amazed at the amount of direct eye contact. If you catch yourself looking away frequently, it may be a clue to your reluctance to be with and to get involved with the person. Alternatively, it may tell you something about your discomfort with closeness in general.
 - (1) Try to be relatively RELAXED while engaging in these behaviors. This indicates your confidence in what you are doing and also helps Seekers relax. This means two things.
 - (2) First, it means not fidgeting nervously or engaging in distracting facial expressions. This can cause the Seeker to wonder what’s making you nervous.
 - (3) Second, it means becoming comfortable with using your body as a vehicle of contact and expression.
 5. These “rules” should be followed cautiously. People differ both individually and culturally in the ways in which they show attentiveness. The main point is that an internal “being with” a Seeker might well lose its impact if the Seeker does not see that attitude reflected in the Helper’s nonverbal communication.
2. Level 2. The Body as A Vehicle of Communication.
 1. Much more important than a mechanical application of the SOLAR guidelines is an awareness of your body as a source of communication. Through your body you are always communicating cues or messages to Seekers. Effective Helpers are, first of all, mindful of what cues and messages they are sending as they interact with Seekers; that is, they are in touch with and capable of “reading” their own nonverbal behavior during the interview.
 2. For instance, if you feel your muscles tensing as a Seeker talks, you can say to yourself, “I’m getting anxious here. What’s causing my anxiety? And what cues am I sending the Seeker?” Once the messages are read, you can use your body to communicate appropriate messages, or even to censor messages you feel are inappropriate. For instance, if the Seeker says something that triggers instinctive anger in you, you can control the external expression of anger (for instance, a grimace or frown) to give yourself time to reflect. It may be that you heard the Seeker wrong, or that expressing your anger toward the seeker would not be helpful at this point.

3. Learn to use your body instinctively as a means of communication.
3. Level 3: The Quality of Your Presence to Your Seeker.
 1. What is most important is the quality of your presence to your seeker. You are present through what you SAY and what you DO. If you care about your Seeker and feel deeply committed to his welfare, it is unfair to yourself to let your nonverbal behavior convey a contradictory message. On the other hand, if you feel indifferent to them and your nonverbal behavior suggests commitment, you are not being genuine.

Listening

Listening to and Understanding Nonverbal Behavior.

1. We are only beginning to realize the importance of nonverbal behavior. The face and body are extremely communicative. We know from experience that even when people are together in silence, the atmosphere can be filled with messages. Nonverbal behavior is defined as “all human communication events which transcend spoken or written words.” Sometimes the facial expressions, bodily motions, voice quality, and autonomic physiological responses of a Seeker communicate more than words.
2. Research in the area of nonverbal behavior and inconsistent messages involved the way one person expresses liking for another. One interesting question now arises: Is there a systematic and coherent approach to resolving the general meaning or impact of an inconsistent message? Indeed there is. Our experimental results show:
 1. Total liking equals 7% verbal liking plus 38% vocal liking plus 55% facial liking.
 2. Thus the impact of facial expression is greatest, then the impact of the tone of voice or vocal expression, and finally that of the words. If the facial expression is inconsistent with the words, the degree of liking conveyed by the facial expression will dominate and determine the impact of the total message.
 3. If you say to the Seeker, “It’s hard talking about yourself, isn’t it?” and she says, “No, I don’t mind at all,” but speaks hesitantly while looking away and grimacing a bit, the real answer is probably in her nonverbal behavior.
 4. In Mehrabian’s research the exact percentages are not important, but the role of nonverbal behavior in the total communication process is.
3. Effective Helpers learn how to listen to and “read” the following:
 1. Bodily behavior such as posture, body movements, gestures.
 2. Facial expressions such as smiles, frowns, raised eyebrows, twisted lips, and the like.
 3. Voice-related behavior such as tone of voice, pitch, voice level, intensity, inflection, spacing of words, emphases, pauses, silences, fluency.
 4. Observable autonomic physiological responses such as quickened breathing, the development of a temporary rash, blushing, paleness, pupil dilation.
 5. Physical characteristics such as physique, height, weight, complexion, and the like.

6. General appearance such as grooming, dress, and so forth.
4. If you notice that a Seeker has developed a temporary or reddening of the neck while talking to you, it probably means that he or she feels some kind of pressure. Taking account of such cues is most important. A person's nonverbal behavior has a way of "leaking" messages to others.
5. Nonverbal behaviors are generally more spontaneous than verbal behaviors. "Words can be selected and monitored before being emitted...nonverbal behaviors, on the other hand, are not as easily subject to control." Seekers' nonverbal expressions can constitute a kind of royal route into their inner life.
6. There is no simple program available for learning how to read and interpret nonverbal behavior. You must learn through practice and experience to be sensitive to it and to read its meaning in any given situation.
7. Nonverbal behaviors can often mean a number of things--how, then, do you know which? The key is CONTEXT. Effective Helpers listen to the entire context of the helping interview and do not become overly fixated on details of behavior. Effective Helpers are aware of and use the nonverbal communication system, but they are not seduced or overwhelmed by it.

LESSON 5

Counseling Skills and Techniques

Communication Skills:

1. Attending.
2. Listening.
3. Empathy.
4. Probing.

Listening (Continued from last lesson)

Listening to and understanding verbal messages: A practical framework.

1. (What follows is a simple framework for listening to, organizing, and understanding Seekers' verbal messages. Seekers talk about their:
 1. Experiences. That is, what they do or fail to do. (If a Seeker tells you she was fired from her job, she is talking about her problem situation in terms of an experience).
 2. Behaviors. That is, what they do (or fail to do). If a Seeker tells you they had engaged in inappropriate sex, they are re telling about their problem situation in terms of behavior.
 3. Affect. That is, the feelings and emotions that arise from or are associated with either experiences or behavior. If a Seeker tells you how depressed he gets after drinking bouts, he is talking about the affect associated with his problem situation.
2. The listening framework is concerned with helping Seekers clarify their problem situations and their unused opportunities. A problem situation is clear if it is seen and understood in terms of specific experiences, specific behaviors, and specific feelings and emotions. As you listen to Seekers, you can first communicate understanding to them in terms of their experiences, behaviors, and feelings, and then, if these are sketchy or vague, you can help them explore and clarify in terms of further or clearer experiences, behaviors, and feelings.
3. Example.
 1. A Seeker says to a Helper in the personnel department of a large company. "I had one of the lousiest days of my life yesterday." The Helper knows that something went wrong and the Seeker feels bad about it, but she knows relatively little about the specific experiences, behaviors, and feelings that made the day a horror for the Seeker.
 2. However, let us say the Seeker continues, "Toward the end of the day my boss yelled at me for not getting my work done (an experience). I lost my temper (emotion) and yelled right back at him (behavior). And now I feel awful

- (emotion) and am trying to find out if he had the authority to do that (behavior).”
3. Now the problem situation is much clearer because it is spelled out in terms of specific experiences, behaviors, and feelings related to specific situations.

Listening to the Seeker’s Experiences.

1. Most Seekers spend a fair amount of time talking about what happens to them.
 1. “I get headaches a lot.”
 2. “My ulcers act up when family members argue.”
 3. “My wife doesn’t understand me.”
2. They often talk about what other people do or fail to do, especially when it affects them adversely.
 1. “She doesn’t do anything all day. The house is always a mess when I come home from work.”
3. Seekers often see themselves, whether rightly or wrongly, as victims of forces beyond their control. If those forces are described as outside them, they can be called external or overt experiences.
 1. “He treats me like dirt.”
 2. “Company policy discriminates against women.”
 3. “The way the economy is right now, I just can’t get a job.”
 4. “I’ve been feeling sorry for myself ever since he left me!”
4. An experience: Something Seekers describe as happening to them:
 1. Overt: “He yelled at me.”
 2. Covert: “Thoughts about death come out of nowhere and flood my mind.”
5. A behavior: Something Seekers do or fail to do.
 1. Overt: “I spend about three hours every night in some night club.”
 2. Covert: “Before she comes over I plan everything I am going to say.”
6. A feeling or emotion: The affect associated with experiences or behaviors.
 1. Overt: (expressed): “I got very angry and shouted at her.”
 2. Covert: (Felt, but not expressed): “I was delighted that he failed, but I didn’t let on.”
7. You can learn a great deal about Seekers by listening to their manner of speaking, that is, the mix of experiences, behaviors, and feelings they discuss and how specific or vague they are.
8. We start with emotions.
 1. Exercise 1: Listening to your own feelings and emotions.
 1. If you listen to the feelings and emotions of Seekers, you should first be familiar with your own emotional states. A number of emotional states are listed below. You are asked to describe what you feel when you feel these emotions. Describe what you feel as concretely as possible: How does your body react? What happens inside you? What do you feel like doing? Consider the following examples.1.
 - (1) Example 1. When I feel accepted.

- (1) I feel warm inside.
 - (2) I feel safe.
 - (3) I feel free to be myself.
 - (4) I feel like sitting back and relaxing.
 - (5) I feel I can let my guard down.
 - (6) I feel like sharing myself.
 - (7) I feel some of my fears easing away.
 - (8) I feel at home.
 - (9) I feel at peace.
 - (10) I feel my loneliness drifting away.
- (2) Example 2. When I feel scared.
- (1) My mouth dries up.
 - (2) My bowels become loose.
 - (3) There are butterflies in my stomach.
 - (4) I feel like running away.
 - (5) I feel very uncomfortable.
 - (6) I feel the need to talk with someone.
 - (7) I turn in on myself.
 - (8) I feel useless.
 - (9) I'm unable to concentrate.
 - (10) I feel very vulnerable.
 - (11) I feel like whining or crying.

2. Although the feelings and emotions of Seekers are extremely important, sometimes Helpers concentrate too much, or rather too exclusively, on them. As we shall see later, feelings and emotions need to be understood, both by Helpers and by Seekers, in the context of the experiences and behaviors that give rise to them. On the other hand, some Seekers hide their feelings, both from themselves and from others. In cases like these, Helpers need to be sensitive to the cues that can point to hidden emotions on the part of the Seeker.

2. Exercise 2: Listening to the feelings of Seekers.

1. Now that you have considered feelings and emotions in your own life, you can review your ability to identify emotions that are expressed by others or implied in what they say. Read the following statements; then write down a number of adjectives or phrases describing how the speaker feels.

Consider the following example:

- (1) A twenty-seven year old man is talking to a minister about a visit with his mother the previous day. "I just don't know what got into me! She kept nagging me the way she always does, asking me why I don't visit her more often. As she went on, I got more and more angry. (He looks away from the Helper and looks toward the floor). I finally began screaming at her. I told her to get off my case. (He puts his hands over his face). I can't believe what I did!

- I called her a b . (Shaking his head). I called her a b about ten times and then I left and slammed the door in her face.”
- (2) How does this person feel? (Embarrassed, guilty, ashamed, distraught, amazed, extremely disappointed with himself, remorseful.
 2. Note carefully: This man is talking about his anger, but at the moment he is feeling and expressing the emotions listed above.
 3. Exercise 3: Listening to experiences and behaviors.
 1. In this exercise you are asked to identify not only feelings and emotions but also the key or relevant experiences and behaviors that give rise to them. What experiences and what behaviors contribute to the way the Seeker is feeling? In some cases the Seekers experience might be the key, in some cases his or her behavior, and in some cases both.

Immediacy: encouraging Direct, Mutual Talk

Self-involving statements refer to the Helper’s personal reactions to the Seeker during the session. This is **IMMEDIACY**.

The following episode is an example of immediacy:

Counselor: I recall a client with whom I began to realize I felt bored every time he came in. I had a hard time staying awake during the hour, and that was not like me at all. Because it was a persisting feeling, I realized I would have to share it with him. I had to confront him with my feeling and that really caused a conflict in his role as client. So, with a good deal of difficulty and some embarrassment, I said to him, “I don’t understand it myself, but when you start talking on and on about your problems in what seems to me a flat tone of voice, I find myself getting very bored.” This was quite a jolt to him and he looked very unhappy. Then he began to talk about the way he talked, and gradually he came to understand one of the reasons for the way he presented himself verbally. He said, “You know, I think the reason I talk in such an uninteresting way is because I don’t think I have ever expected anyone to really hear me.” We got along much better after that because I could remind him that I heard the same flatness in his voice I used to hear.

This counselor talking about what was happening between himself and his client facilitated the helping process. Such cases can be challenging for both client and helper.

It has been suggested that many if not most Seekers who seek help have trouble with interpersonal relationships. This is either their central concern or part of a wider problem situation. Some of the difficulties Seekers have in their day-to-day relationships are also reflected in their relationships with their Helpers.

For example, if they are compliant outside, they are often compliant in the helping process. If

they become aggressive and angry with authority figures outside, they often do the same with Helpers.

Therefore, the Seeker's interpersonal style can be examined, at least in part, by examining his or her relationship with the Helper.

Immediacy is one's ability to explore with another what is happening in their relationship. *There are two types: relationship immediacy and here-and-now immediacy.*

1. **Relationship Immediacy.** Relationship immediacy refers to your ability to discuss with a Seeker where you stand in your overall relationship to him or her. The focus is not on present interaction, but on the way the relationship has developed.
2. **Here-and-now immediacy.** Here-and-now immediacy refers to the Helper's ability to discuss with seekers what is happening between them in the here and now of any given transaction. The entire relationship is not being considered, only this specific interaction.

Immediacy is a difficult, demanding skill. One reason people do not engage more readily and more opportunely in direct, mutual talk is that they have never learned to do so. Like other human-relations skills, immediacy or you-me talk has three components: Awareness, communication ability, and assertiveness.

The Communication Component

Immediacy is a communication skill formed by a combination of three other skills:

1. Empathy.
2. Self-disclosure.
3. Challenge.

Empathy.

You must not only perceive what is happening between you and the seeker, but you must be able to put your perceptions and understandings into words. What is happening in the relationship is often not expressed openly and directly.

Self-disclosure.

1. Being immediate involves revealing how you think and feel about what is happening in your relationship with the Seeker. You put yourself on the line.
2. Immediacy is not a way of "dealing with" the Seeker. Rather, it is an exercise in mutuality, an expression of the give and take of the helping relationship. The self-disclosure element of immediacy conveys the message, "I want to be open in my

relationship to you.”

Challenge.

Immediacy often involves pointing out discrepancies, challenging games, exploring distortions, and the like. Immediacy, however, requires that Helpers confront not only the discrepancies they find in their Seekers but also those they find in themselves. They invite their Seekers and themselves to discuss whatever might be interfering with a working relationship.

Confrontation

1. Confrontation is a skill in which you invite Seekers to examine discrepancies that they are perhaps overlooking and which keep them locked into problem situations. Confrontations are meant to be instrumental, that is, they are useful to the degree that they help Seekers develop the kind of new perspectives that serve to define and clarify problem situations. Furthermore, confrontations are meant to be descriptions rather than accusations. If they sound like accusations rather than invitations, they tend to elicit defensive reactions in Seekers.
2. Confronting one's own strengths.
 1. One of the best forms of confrontation is to invite Seekers to examine strengths and resources they are not using but which could be used to manage some problem situation more effectively.
 2. The discrepancy is that the strength is there but is not being used or used as fully as it might.

LESSON 6

Principles of the Counseling Process

The Counseling Process

GOALS:	1) Identify the problem	2) Analyze the available options.	3) Discover and choose God's will.
PHASES:	EXPLORATION	ENCOUNTER	RECONSTRUCTION
COUNSELOR'S ACTION	Listens Evaluates Questions Ponders	Establishes responsibility through questions	Guides through repentance and reconstruction

Three goals of counseling:

1. **Identify** the problem.
2. **Analyze** the available options and the consequences of accepting or rejecting each one.
3. **Help** person discover and choose the will of God for his life.

Three phases of counseling:

1. **Exploration.** Listen, evaluate, question, ponder.
2. **Encounter.**
 1. Once the problem is clearly identified in your mind, you want to help the person see the options and the consequences of accepting or rejecting each one.
 2. This is the phase where the both of you really come to grips with the issue.
3. **Reconstruction.**
 1. The person you are helping makes a choice.
 2. From the options, he accepts the fact that God does have direction for him or her and that this is the path that needs to be taken regardless of how easy or difficult it may be.
 3. Your big task is to provide loving support and help individual follow through with the decision which has been made.

A CLOSER LOOK AT GOALS OF COUNSELING

Identify the problem.

1. May be obscure to counselee.
 1. “All the ways of a man are pure (upright, just) in his own eyes.”
 2. Often we tend to magnify the faults of others and minimize our own; when a problem occurs we tend to see ourselves in a different light than others do.
2. Bring person to see himself.
 1. How he sees himself.
 2. How the other person sees him.
 3. How God sees him.
3. How is this accomplished?
 1. Through penetrating questions.
 2. The Bible stresses individual, personal responsibility.
 1. Mankind seeks to blame someone else, or circumstances over which he had no control, for his failures.
 2. God says you are responsible for what you do!
 3. Establish responsibility by asking questions.
 4. You can tell someone how wrong they are or what a stupid thing they have done and generate a considerable amount of guilt (or anger), but what you want to do is help the person accept the full responsibility of his actions.
 3. Identifying the problem leads to accepting the responsibility.
 1. Affairs usually the result of lack of intimacy, not sex.
 2. When needs are not met, our sexual lives are first to be negatively affected, and when a reluctant or insecure partner does not meet the sexual needs of mate, a vacuum is created that another person may satisfy.
 3. Glasser says that there is no such thing as mental illness. He contends that mental illnesses are but masks or symptoms of irresponsibility.
 4. “You are responsible, and you can change.”

Analyze the available options and the consequences of accepting or rejecting each one.

1. Explore the available courses of action.
2. Confront person with the consequences of his or her action.
3. Failure to recognize the consequences of our actions will result in default.
4. When we refuse to recognize the consequences, right or wrong, we live with the results of poor choices.
5. “Where do we go from here? What plan do you have?”
6. “What options do you see?”
7. What are consequences of these options?
8. Recognition of wrong opens door for forgiveness and healing.

Help the counselee to discover and choose the will of God for his life.

1. Acknowledging sin opens up the path of restoration, which is the third phase of the

- counseling process.
2. Breaking habits that have become comfortable and perhaps enjoyable.
 3. What is necessary to bring healing to a broken relationship?
 1. Confession.
 2. Asking for forgiveness.
 3. Receiving forgiveness.
 4. Repentance must be met with reconciliation, or restoration.
 5. Rebuilding trust is a long and painful process, but it must be undertaken.
 6. Maintaining a “holier than thou” attitude destroys the restoration process, and often results in further infidelity.
 7. To say, “O.K., I’ll forgive you this time but if you ever do it again, we’re through!” isn’t forgiveness--it is merely probation, and probation is not the same as restoration.

Guiding a person into the will of God means “deprogramming” a lot of ideas which have permeated our society, such as:

1. My fulfillment is the most important thing in the world.
2. My happiness is imperative.
3. Enough money would solve any problem.
4. Someone else could probably better meet my needs.
5. Sex may not be everything in life, but it’s way ahead of whatever is in second place.
6. If I were only more beautiful, I would be loved.
7. If you really loved me, you would know what I think.

Communication skills are important.

1. You can not be listening at the same time your mind is going ahead of what the person is saying.
2. You can not listen well if you are thinking about the responsibilities you carry and how you really ought to be doing something other than listening to the person who hurts.

LESSON 7

Biblical Counseling of Special Issues

The Issue of Relationships.

1. A framework for biblical counseling.
 - a. God is a good God; therefore, what He tells us in His word is His plan for living.
 - b. Healing broken relationships instead of dissolving them is working in harmony with God's plan.
2. Some conflicts are not the result of personal failure but are the result of living in a broken world.
 - a. The way to deal with the myth: "If what happens to me is good, it's obvious that God is blessing me; and if it's bad, it's the judgment of God or the devil who did it."
 - b. "Why was my baby born with five holes in her heart? Is God punishing her for what I did?"
3. An imperfect world means that we are confronted with brokenness for which, at times, we bear no direct responsibility.
 - a. "Why did God fail me?" and you answer, "God did not fail you--your husband failed you."
 - b. Learning to cope with situations we cannot alter is part of the healing process, and some situations--the result of living in a broken world--cannot be resolved.

The Issue of Forgiveness

1. God's forgiveness.
 - a. (1 John 1:9 KJV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 - b. (Psa 103:12 KJV) As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
 - c. (Isa 43:25 KJV) I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
 - d. (Micah 7:19 KJV) He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.
2. Forgiving each other.
 - a. Confrontation can have a positive or negative effect upon a fragile relationship.
 - i. Choose the time, place, and manner of confrontation.
 - ii. Deal with the issue; don't attack the person with whom there is a broken relationship.
 - iii. Express feelings in a nonthreatening way.
 - iv. Learn to negotiate.

3. Forgiving yourself.

The Issue of Emotional Problems.

Four major problems.

1. Anger.
2. Fear.
3. Worry.
4. Depression.

Uncontrollable anger.

1. Determine the cause (if possible) of anger and see if anything can be done to remove its source. May require changes in lifestyle or even environment so that people who cause the anger are no longer encountered.
 - a. If the source of the anger can't be removed, encourage person to evaluate whether it[s cause is worth the emotional energy he is spending on it. "Any bulldog can whip a skunk, but sometimes it just ain't worth it!"
 - b. Help person find appropriate ways of communicating feelings of anger without saying or doing things that would harm others.
 - c. Suggest ways to relieve the stress which leads to angry outbursts. Physical recreation, hobbies, or leisure activities can serve as safety valves to vent emotional pressure.
 - d. Help person realize that the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit can tame that temper. Prayer is a means of accomplishing this as the angry person asks God to take control.

Irrational fears.

1. Telling someone how foolish it is to be afraid only intimidates a person and makes the problem worse.
2. Ridicule or criticism won't work; instead encourage.
3. Reassurance of God's Word.

Pervasive worry.

1. What is the actual cause of concern or worry?
2. What has been done to determine whether or not the issue is valid?
3. Has the worry been made an issue for prayer?
4. "God, you take the night shift; no need for both of us to be awake. I'm going to sleep!"

Emotional depression.

1. First task to help evaluate the cause of depression.
 - a. Suppressed anger.
 - b. The feeling of a hopeless situation.
 - c. Secret habits or problems which result in depression.
 - d. Physical problems requiring the care of a doctor.
2. Is depression the result of a specific cause?
3. Symptoms of depression.
 - a. Lethargy, indifference to responsibilities, neglected appearance, and emotional flatness.
 - b. Chronic fatigue.
4. Telling a person to snap out of it because God doesn't want the person to be depressed only drives him deeper into the depression.
5. The whole person.
 - a. The physical body and depression.
 - b. Depression and your spiritual life.
 - c. Depression and your emotional life.

Addictive behavior

1. Addictive behavior is a pattern of activity which has been established by a person who is emotionally or physically dependent on something or someone.
 - a. It may be a physical dependency as in substance abuse (alcohol and drugs).
 - b. Can be an emotional dependency or attachment.
2. Defining your limitations.
 - a. "Can I help?"
 - b. Will the individual respond to confrontation?
 - i. Confrontation necessary to get help.
 - ii. Issues of wrongdoing and poor choices must be confronted.
 - c. Is the person willing to face the consequences of his actions?
 - i. As long as the person refuses to acknowledge he has a problem, he hasn't faced the consequences of his actions.
 - d. Does the person have the desire to change?
 - e. Will the person be completely honest with me?
 - f. Is the individual willing to be accountable?
 - g. Is the person willing to work with me?
 - h. What if friend doesn't take my advice?

Alcohol abuse.

1. Must first admit have problem.
2. Motivation in overcoming any dependency has to be stronger than the force of the problem.

3. The Holy Spirit is the agent of behavioral change; the individual is responsible and can change.
4. As you pray, expect change.

Drug abuse.

1. Become addicted when a person feels physical discomfort because of its absence.
2. If person has become addicted and is physically affected, you need to refer him to a doctor or drug rehabilitation program where there is supervised help.
3. Dependence upon drugs is a matter of choice. Became addicted because of choice. Freedom from addiction can come through the decision to resist and live a drug-free life.
4. Complete and absolute dependence upon the Lord is necessary for deliverance.
5. Help person develop independence from his peer group. May be one of most important functions.
6. Help restructure the environment by offering the support necessary to change the peer group.

Sexual addiction.

1. Obsessive sexual relations.
 - a. Constant exposure to sex does one of two things:
 - i. It creates a blasé indifference, or
 - ii. An obsession to the degree that one's perspective becomes totally distorted.
 - b. A woman may be suffering from sexual obsession because she was never held and loved by her father (or her husband) and thus confuses sexual expression with loving relationships.
 - c. Could be male who did not have proper male role-models and finds a perverse satisfaction in pornography which doesn't talk back or challenge his masculine ego. Having become addicted to pornography, he gradually turns to unsatisfying, unfulfilling sexual encounters.
 - d. How to help person.
 - i. Begin by finding out what's being fed into the mind of the person with problem.
 - ii. Ask the person to tell you the names and ratings of the last five movies he has seen.
 - iii. Ask how long pornography has played a prominent part in his or her sexual life.
 - iv. Help the person to see that sexual expression is no substitute for meaningful relationships.
 - v. To help person see himself as God sees him, you will have to label this problem sin and deal with it on that basis.

- vi. Replace negative sexual input with the powerful cleansing of the word. Quoting and memorizing scriptures reprograms many of the sensual and lustful images which have affected a person's mind and thinking.
- vii. Isist on accountability. This includes honesty, openness, and a willingness to change.

Promiscuity.

1. Casual sex is sex without commitment, and apart from marriage there is no lasting commitment.
 - a. Confusion between sexual satisfaction and commitment.
 - b. (Rom 12:1 KJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Rom 12:2 KJV) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
 - c. (1 Th 4:3 KJV) For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: (1 Th 4:4 KJV) That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; (1 Th 4:5 KJV) Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: (1 Tim 5:11 KJV) But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;
 - d. (1 Tim 5:12 KJV) Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. (1 Tim 5:13 KJV) And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. (1 Tim 5:14 KJV) I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (1 Tim 5:15 KJV) For some are already turned aside after Satan. (1 Tim 5:16 KJV) If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.
2. The sexually promiscuous person, going from partner to partner, is an insecure individual desperately seeking love and acceptance among partners whose commitment lasts only for a night. Such an individual has emotional needs which can be met only in the context of marriage.
3. Infidelity in marriage.
 - a. Unfaithfulness in marriage usually ends in divorce, but it doesn't have to; unfaithfulness can be forgiven. Restoration and healing should be the goal of the counselor.
 - b. When Christian marriage is affected by an affair, both husband and wife feel guilty.

- c. In dealing with the issue:
 - i. Try to determine if the offended party contributed to the failure of a mate by not meeting the needs of the one who strayed. Does not remove responsibility from the offender.
 - ii. A one-time offender more likely to repent.

Homosexuality.

1. Scriptures.
 - a. (Lev 18:22 KJV) Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.
 - b. (Lev 20:13 KJV) If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.
 - c. (Rom 1:26 KJV) For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: (Rom 1:27 KJV) And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.
 - d. (1 Cor 6:10 KJV) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor 6:11 KJV) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.
2. Counseling.
 - a. Individual who has practiced homosexuality must realize sexual preference is a choice which we make as an act of the will, not a genetic predilection which a person cannot control. No scientific evidence or support for the gay position that an individual has been “trapped” by his genetic code which would relieve him or her of his responsibility in the sight of God.
 - b. With God’s forgiveness comes His enabling power to change.
 - c. Be cautious in labeling individuals.
 - d. Two categories:
 - i. Thos who want acceptance in this lifestyle.
 - ii. Those who realize their lives are displeasing to God and want to change.
 - e. God loves the individual. It is the sin which God condemns. Strive to let person know that you love and accept him or her as a human being.

Compulsive eating disorders.

1. Bulimia is an eating disorder involving gorging on food, followed by self-induced vomiting or purging.
2. *Anorexia* is self-induced starvation.

3. Counseling.
 - a. Friendship, warmth, compassion.
 - b. Referral.

LESSON 8

Crisis Intervention

Briefly defined, a crisis is a turning point that cannot be avoided. Crisis situations may be expected or unexpected, real or imagined, actual (like the death of a loved one) or potential (like the prospect that a loved one will die soon).

It has been stated that the Chinese word for “crisis” involves two characters. One means *danger*; the other means *opportunity*.

1. Crises are filled with *danger* because they disrupt life and threaten to overwhelm the people who are affected.
 1. As we grow toward adulthood, each of us develops a repertoire of problem-solving techniques based on our past experiences, training, and personality characteristics.
 2. There are emotional and spiritual ups and downs, and at times we must exert extra effort to deal with emergencies or unexpected problems. Nevertheless, we learn how to cope and are able to meet the insecurities and challenges of life successfully.
 3. At times there may be unusually severe or demanding situations which arise. There might be the loss of someone or something significant, a sudden shift in one's role or status, or the appearance of new and threatening people or events.
 4. Because the new situation is so unique and intense, our customary ways of handling stress and solving problems no longer are effective. Often this leads to confusion and bewilderment, frequently accompanied by inefficiency, anxiety, anger, discouragement, sorrow, or guilt. Usually this intellectual, behavioral, and emotional turmoil is temporary, but sometimes it persists for several weeks or even longer.
2. Crises also present people with the *opportunity* to change, grow, and develop better ways of coping.
 1. Since people in crises often feel confused, they are more open to outside help, including the help that comes from God and from the counselor.
 2. Even with counseling, sometimes an individual will try to ignore and even evade the crisis, withdraw into irrational fantasies, give up in despair, or respond in socially unacceptable ways.
 3. Others react in healthier ways. They reevaluate the situation and look for creative, socially acceptable, reality-based, problem-solving techniques that can help in the present crisis and add to the person's capacity to deal effectively with future difficulties.
3. To live is to experience crises. To experience crises is to face turning points that bring

either growth and maturation or deterioration and continuing immaturity. The Christian counselor is in a vital position to influence which direction the crisis resolution will take.

The Bible and Crisis Types

Much of the Bible deals with crises: Adam, Eve, Cain, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Samson, Jephah, Saul, David, Elijah, Daniel, and a host of other figures. Jesus faced crises, especially at the time of the crucifixion. So did the disciples and Paul, as well as many other believers. Read Hebrews chapter 11.

Contemporary writers have identified three types of crises, each of which has both modern and biblical examples.

1. Accidental or situational crises.

- a. Occurs when there is a sudden threat, intensely disruptive event, or unexpected loss.
- b. The death of a loved one, the discovery of a serious illness, the experience of rape or other violence, a pregnancy out wedlock, social disruptions such as war or economic depression, the loss of one's job or savings, a sudden loss of respect and status are all situational stresses that affect both individuals and their families.
- c. Stressful events originating outside the family.
 - i. Persecution, natural disaster, a serious fire, or racial prejudice often solidify a family so that members pull together to resolve the crisis.
 - ii. When stress is internal, like a suicide attempt, infidelity, child abuse, or alcoholism, the crisis is more disruptive and inclined to tear the family apart.
- d. More disruptive are the crises that come in sequence, one following quickly on the heels of another.
- e. For some people, the crisis that brings them to counseling is the last straw, the most recent in a series of stressful changes and losses.

2. Developmental crises.

- a. Happen in the course of normal human development.
- b. Starting school, going away to college, adjusting to marriage and then to parenthood, handling criticism, facing retirement or declining health, adapting to the deaths of one's friends can all be crises that demand new approaches to coping and problem solving.

3. Existential crises.

1. Overlaps with the other two. There are times when all of us face disturbing truths, often about ourselves:
 1. I'm a failure.
 2. I'm going to graduate but haven't any idea what I will do next.

3. I'll never be successful in my company.
 4. I didn't get the long-anticipated promotion.
 5. I'm now a widow--single again.
 6. My life has no purpose.
 7. My marriage has ended in divorce.
 8. My illness is incurable.
 9. I'm trapped in this town.
 10. I have nothing to believe in.
 11. My house and possession are all gone in the fire.
 12. I've been rejected because of my skin color.
 13. I'm too old to reach my life goals.
2. These, and similar realizations, take time and effort to assimilate. They are change in self-perception that can be denied temporarily but in time they must be faced realistically if life is to go on and be fulfilling.
 3. When people ask about the reasons for their crises, it is difficult and often impossible to give definitive answers.
 4. We know that crises can be learning experiences that mold character, teach us about God and his resources, and stimulate growth, but the ultimate reasons for specific life crises may never be known while we live on this earth.
 5. In the meantime, we can help counselees cope and grow through their crises.

Crisis Intervention

1. Crisis intervention is a way of providing immediate, temporary, emotional first aid to victims of psychological and physical trauma. The intervener must act skillfully and quickly to deal with behavior that is often disorganized, confused, and potentially harmful

There are several crisis counseling goals:

1. To help the person cope effectively with the crisis situation and return to his or her usual level of functioning.
2. To decrease the anxiety, apprehension, and other insecurities that may persist during the crisis and after it passes.
3. To teach crisis-management techniques so the person is better prepared to anticipate and deal with future crises.
4. To consider biblical teachings about crises so the person learns from the crisis and grows as a result.

Think of the following as a **checklist for giving psychological first aid** in times of mental health emergencies.

1. **Make contact.**
 - a. Listen carefully so you can understand the counselee=s concerns and point of view before making suggestions for action.
 - b. Eye contact can reassure the counselee and so can touching. Even when there are no words, touching and other forms of physical contact can communicate and bring great comfort. However, hugging, holding hands, or even putting your arms around a person in crisis has usually been discouraged in counseling.
 - i. May have sexual overtones.
 - ii. Some counselees feel threatened by physical contact because this was discouraged by their families.
 - iii. May be suspicious that touch may be manipulative.
 - iv. May have fear of intimacy.
 - v. For most people, however, touch can be comforting, therapeutic, and encouraging.
 - vi. As counselor, must realize risk of physical contact, then decide whether your touch could be misinterpreted and whether it might help the counselee.
2. **Reduce anxiety.**
 - a. Listen patiently and attentively as the counselee describes the situation.
 - b. Encourage talk about the insecurities and other feelings that always accompany a crisis.
 - c. Try to provide reassuring fact (AThere are ways to deal with this problem.
 - d. Gently suggest other interpretations if the counselee=s point of view appears to be overly pessimistic or distorted.
 - e. Try to answer questions honestly, but without raising the counselee=s anxiety level unnecessarily.
3. **Focus on the issues.**
 - a. In times of crisis it is easy to be overwhelmed by what appears to be a mass of confusing facts.
 - b. As a somewhat objective outsider, you are in a good position to help the counselee decide what specific issues must be faced first and what immediate problems need to be solved.
 - c. Try to focus on the present situation rather than discussing the past or pondering what might happen in the future.
4. **Evaluate Resources.** Counselees often feel isolated and in need of supportive acceptance from a variety of people. Others' resources can supplement what you are doing and allow your crisis counseling to be more effective.
 - a. **Spiritual resources.**
 - i. Counselor must never lose sight of the indwelling presence and guidance

- of the Holy Spirit, along with the comforting words and promises of Scripture.
 - ii. Don't use Scriptures to hammer or manipulate counselee into doing what the counselor thinks should be done; Scripture should be presented as truth, along with the expectation that the Holy Spirit will use it as he desires, in the life of the counselee.
 - b. Personal resources.
 - i. Counselees can sometimes become overly dependent during times of crisis.
 - ii. It is good to emphasize the counselee's inner strengths early. People have intellectual abilities, skills, past experiences, helpful attitudes, or motives that can help them grow through the crisis.
 - iii. In pointing out resources, try to be realistic.
 - c. Interpersonal resources.
 - d. Often the person in crisis already has a network that needs to be activated. Family members, friends, business associates, church members, could help if they knew of the need.
 - e. If the counselee doesn't want to bother others, try to point out the importance of mutual dependency and the satisfaction that comes to friends when they are able to help.
 - f. When there is too much dependency on others, counselees may develop a do nothing attitude that keeps them from growing. Try to encourage helpers to be supportive but not stifling.
 - g. Additional resources.
 - i. Every community has legal, medical, psychological, financial, educational, and other sources of help that are available in times of crisis.
 - ii. Resources may be found in the local church.
- 5. Plan intervention.
 - a. After evaluating the problem and considering available resources, it is helpful to decide on a course of action that asks *Aspecifically, what will we do now?* Together, the counselor and counselee can look at the available facts and list alternative courses of action.
 - b. Gently, but firmly, the counselor can help the counselee make plans and, if necessary, think of better alternatives when an early plan is unsuccessful.
- 6. Encourage Action.
 - a. Listen and learn about the problem.
 - b. List alternatives for action (mentally or on paper).
 - c. Decide on a course of action.
 - d. Take action.
 - e. Evaluate the results of action taken.
 - f. Based on the evaluation, continue on a chosen course or repeat the above steps.
- 7. Instill hope.
 - a. First, we can share scriptural truths that give reassurance and hope that are based

on the unchanging nature and Word of God. This instills hope by stimulating faith in God.

- b. Second, counselees can be helped to examine their self-defeating logic. Ideas like “I’ll never get better” or “Nothing can be worse than this,” may enter the counselee’s thinking in times of crisis. These ideas should be challenged gently. What is the evidence?
8. Follow-up.
- a. Crisis counseling is usually brief. After one or two sessions the counselee returns to the routines of life and may not come for counseling again.
 - b. May want to follow up with phone call or visit.
 - c. Often it is helpful to make contact on anniversaries. People sometimes experience a flood of old feelings and insecurities on the birthday of a loved one who has died; the first time a divorced person faces Easter alone, or the one-month or one-year anniversary of the start of the crisis.
9. Referral.
- a. Sometimes we help counselees most by referring them to someone else whose training, expertise, and availability can be of special assistance.
 - b. Always recognize your limitations in dealing with counseling situations.
 - c. More will be addressed in the lesson on [Referrals](#).

Lesson 9

LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES OF COUNSELING IN A CHURCH SETTING

1. INTRODUCTION.
 1. Pastors and Christian workers should be as informed as possible.
 2. If faced with potential legal questions, should consult an attorney to be sure you are fully protected under your particular state laws.
 3. The issues presented here are intended to be rather general in nature.

2. THE DAY OF LITIGATION.
 1. ***The Nally Case.***
 1. Parents sued John McArthur and Grace Community Church for the suicide of their son.
 2. Church exonerated, but took nearly 10 years and millions of dollars in legal fees after State Supreme Court reversed decision of lower court.
 2. ***An explosive new area of law.***
 1. 1989, seminar sponsored by the American Bar Association called *Tort and Religion.*
 - (1) Expanding Use of Tort Law against Religions.
 - (2) Tort Law as an Ideological Weapon.
 - (3) Tort Law as Essential Restraint on Religious Abuses.
 - (4) Liability of Clergy as Spiritual Counselors.
 - (5) Tort Liability for Fraud, Emotional Distress and Harm to Reputation Arising from Religiously Motivated Conduct.
 - (6) Tort Liability for Brainwashing.
 - (7) Liability for Sexual Conduct of the Clergy.
 - (8) Institutional Liability for Negligent Hiring/retention.
 - (9) Piercing the Corporate Veil: Liability of Religious Bodies and Affiliated Entities.
 2. Second conference in 1990 in Boston more balanced--included how to defend churches against lawsuits.
 3. ***Clergy malpractice.***
 1. The good news--there is no such thing.
 2. The bad news--Any number of other tort claims exist for which clergy can be held responsible.
 - (1) Alienation of affections.
 - (2) Defamation of character.
 - (3) Intentional infliction of emotional distress.
 - (4) Invasion of privacy.

- (5) Interference with contract.
 - (6) In the case of denominations, negligent supervision.
 - 4. ***Most common suits against pastors and Christian counselors.***
 - 1. Acts of seduction.
 - 2. Child abuse.
 - 3. Defamation.
 - 5. ***Action should not be to avoid getting caught for committing tortious actions but to avoid committing such actions at all.***
3. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIAN COUNSELING AND SECULAR COUNSELING.
- 1. ***Christian counseling.***
 - 1. Accepts the Bible as both a moral base and an absolute standard for faith and conduct.
 - 2. Integrates prayer, Scripture, and a reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in an individual's life.
 - 3. Support systems are the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and accountability to other believers.
 - 2. ***Secular counseling.***
 - 1. Believes that people are autonomous and that the standards for faith and conduct are relative and experiential.
 - 2. Advises a person to "do your own thing: without regard to a higher authority."
 - 3. Support systems include psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis, biofeedback, meditation, and medication.
 - 3. ***Legally, Christian counseling falls under the general term "spiritual," or "religious."***
 - 1. Primary difference between Christian and secular counseling is in the area of regulation.
 - 2. Courts are precluded from making value judgments as to the truth or falsehood of Christian beliefs.
 - 4. ***Bill of Rights.***
 - 1. The government cannot prefer one religion over another (known as the Establishment clause).
 - 2. The government cannot prohibit the free exercise of a person's chosen faith (known as the Free exercise clause).
 - 5. ***Based on the Free Exercise clause, there can be no interference with a person's right to "believe" what he or she chooses in terms of religion.***
 - 6. ***There may be, however, restrictions placed upon "action" based on a person's belief.***
 - 1. Polygamy.
 - 2. Human sacrifices.
 - 3. Medical attention for minors.

7. ***Conflict between Christian and secular counselors.***
 1. One study indicated that only 43% of psychiatrists and as little as 5% of the membership of the American Psychological Association profess a belief in God.
 2. Secular counselors tend to blame clients' problems on their Christian faith.
 3. Christian counselors have concern that secular counselors will attempt to pull client away from Christianity.
8. ***Compelling state interest.***
 1. The freedom of Christian counselors to practice is open to scrutiny based on the doctrine of compelling state interest.
 2. For a state regulation to interfere with the free exercise of a person's religious belief, three questions must be asked.
 - (1) Is the activity in question motivated and rooted in a legitimately and sincerely held religious belief?
 - (2) Is the right to free exercise of religion being unduly burdened by the state regulation and, if so, what is the extent of its impact on religious practice?
 - (3) Does the state have a sufficiently compelling interest in the regulation to justify the burden on the free exercise of religion?
 3. Example: A pastor may believe in the literal interpretation of the Word of God and has a sincerely held religious belief that Christians should go to be with the Lord at their earliest opportunity. *"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better* (Philippians 1:21-23). Parishioners come to pastor for counseling, exhibiting signs of depression, failing health, poor relationships, and an inability to cope with life's problems. A number of suicides in congregation. State has sufficiently compelling interest (the basic preservation of life) to regulate the activities of a spiritual counselor.

4. A MATTER OF INTENT.

1. ***Legally, there is one central point that may determine the liability of a counselor: Is the counselor purporting to be something that he or she is not?***
2. ***Should not hold yourself out to be more than you're qualified to be.***
3. ***In the event of legal action, the standard you will be held to in a court of law is that which you hold yourself to in public.***
 1. Whether you do or do not have the appropriate training, if you call yourself a professional counselor, you will be held to the standards of the average professional counselor practicing in your community.
 2. Someone with a masters or doctorate degree in counseling will be held to a higher standard than someone who does not have credentials.
4. ***To determine whether you are accurately representing your qualifications to***

parishioners, clients, and the general public, consider the following:

1. Does your letterhead, business card, or promotional literature identify you as a professional counselor?
 2. Does your literature identify you as having expertise in a particular field (such as marriage or family counseling)?
 3. If you are promoting yourself as a professional, how do your educational credentials stack up with similar practitioners in your area?
 4. If you are a pastor, are your counseling services available only to members of your congregation, or do you counsel nonmembers on a regular basis?
 5. If you are a pastor, is most of your counseling services done on a one-time or occasional basis, or do congregants meet with you for a regularly scheduled weekly appointment?
 6. Do you charge a fee for your counseling services? If so, is it a fixed hourly fee?
 7. Are you doing anything by way of omission that might give your clients the impression that you are professional? For example, if a person calls you “Doctor” and you do not have a doctorate degree, are you careful enough to correct him or her?
 8. Is your counseling religious in nature to the extent that you regularly use the Bible as a resource? If you’re counseling a person with an emotional disturbance and neither referencing Scripture nor coming from a biblical framework, chances are you’re engaging in secular, not Christian, counseling.
5. ***A “Christian counselor” is not a counselor who happens to be a Christian. Rather, it means a Christian who, on the whole, operates from a biblical framework in his or her counseling practice.***

5. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS.

1. ***Confidentiality.***

1. Best defined as an ethical decision not to reveal what is learned in the context of a professional relationship (between counselor and counselee).
2. Confidentiality is traditional in nature; enjoys historical protection--not legal protection.

2. ***Privileged communication.***

1. Same as confidentiality, but codified in law.
2. Under a privileged communication statute, a minister acting in his professional capacity as a spiritual advisor cannot be forced to reveal the content of confidential communications to any outside party, including a court of law.
 - (1) Includes clergy in any established church.
 - (2) Does not include clergy who are self-ordained or members of religious organizations such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, in which all members are considered clergy.

3. Confidentiality privilege protects the person making a confession or being counseled; protection for pastor is secondary.
 4. Communications made to nonpastors (elders, deacons, unordained youth ministers, nuns, unordained professional counselors, and lay counselors) do not enjoy the confidentiality privilege in most states.
 5. The pastor of an independent church, even though not ordained, may be protected based on his pastoral role.
 6. Communication must have been heard in professional role as a pastor or spiritual advisor.
 7. Usually must be penitential confession.
 8. Time and place play a significant role in whether communication is covered by confidentiality privilege, with maximum protection to formal confessional or counseling sessions.
3. ***Exceptions to the confidentiality privilege.***
1. When counselee may pose danger to self or others (duty to warn).
 2. Child abuse, whether confirmed or reasonably suspected.
 3. When disclosure is requested by counselee (should get written authorization).
 4. Clinical supervision.
 5. Professional consultations.
 6. Communications with a third party present are not considered to be protected by the confidentiality privilege.
4. Need to disclose information at the congregational level in case of church discipline.
 5. Informed consent.
 1. Protect counselor.
 2. Could chill the counseling relationship.

6. **COUNSELING MALPRACTICE AND NEGLIGENCE.**

1. ***Elements of a negligence suit.***
 1. Duty of care.
 2. Breach of duty.
 3. Injury.
 4. Proximate cause.
2. ***Danger to self.***
3. ***Danger to specified other.***
4. ***Danger to unspecified other.***
5. ***A caveat (warning or caution) on confidentiality.***
 1. Decision to break confidentiality should be based on sound clinical judgment.
 2. Key question to ask: “What is the chance that the person I’m counseling will actually carry out this threat?”
 3. Decision to communicate potential violence to someone outside

counseling relationship should be discussed with counselee beforehand.

7. DOCUMENTING COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP.

1. ***Maintaining counseling records.***
2. ***Preserving confidentiality.***

8. OTHER ISSUES.

1. ***AIDS.***
 1. Warning possible sexual victims could be breach of confidentiality.
 2. Unspecified victims.
2. ***Child abuse.***
 1. Some states grant privileged communication between pastors and penitents, when pastor is acting in his professional capacity in confidence and for spiritual purposes.
 2. Two conditions protect confidentiality of communication.
 - (1) Minister approached in a pastoral role.
 - (2) The confession is penitential in nature.
 3. No choice when learn of abuse from victim.
 4. Cannot risk the potential of ongoing abuse.

The material in this outline was basically summarized from the book, *Christian Counseling and the Law*, by Steve Levicoff (Moody Press: Chicago, 1991)

Lesson 10

Informed Consent, Confidentiality, Privileged Communications, and Referrals

The Rights of Clients

A part of ethical practice is talking with clients about their rights. This discussion can involve such questions as the circumstances that may affect the client's decision to enter the therapeutic relationship, the responsibilities of the therapist toward the client, the possibility of involuntary hospitalization, the possibility of being forced to submit to certain types of medical and psychological treatment, matters of privacy and confidentiality, and the possible outcomes and limitations of therapy.

The Right to Informed Consent

One of the best ways of protecting the rights of clients is to develop procedures to help them make informed choices. This process of providing clients with information they need to become active participants in the therapeutic relationship begins with the intake interview and continues throughout counseling. Informed consent entails a balance between telling clients too much and telling them too little.

Legally, there are three elements to adequate informed consent:

1. Capacity.
 1. Means that the client has the ability to make rational decisions.
 2. When this capacity is lacking, a parent or guardian is typically responsible for giving consent.
2. Comprehension of information.
 1. Means therapists must give clients information in a clear way and check to see that they understand it.
 2. The information must include the benefits and risks of procedures, the risk of forgoing treatment, and alternate procedures that are available.
3. Voluntariness.
 1. Means the person giving consent is acting freely in the decision-making process.
 2. The person is legally and psychologically able (competent) to give consent.

Questions clients would do well to have answers to at the outset of the counseling relationship are:

4. What are the goals of the therapeutic program?
5. What services will the counselor provide?

6. What behavior is expected of the client?
7. What are the risks and benefits of therapeutic procedures?
8. What are the risks and benefits of alternatives to psychotherapy?
9. What are the qualifications of the provider of the services?
10. What are the financial considerations?
11. What is the estimated duration of the therapy?
12. Is counseling a voluntary arrangement?
13. What are the limitations of confidentiality?
14. In what cases does the counselor have mandatory reporting requirements?

Some Topics about Which Clients Should Be Informed

1. **The Therapeutic Process.**
 1. Clients should be given some ideas as to what to expect.
 2. Counseling might open up levels of awareness that could cause pain and anxiety.
 3. May experience changes that could produce disruptions and turmoil in their lives.
 4. Clients should have a knowledge of the procedures and goals of therapy.
2. **Background of the Therapist.**
 1. Help clients to decide whether they will make use of the practitioner's services.
 2. Therapists should give client description of training and education, any specialized skills, and the types of clients and types of problems that they are best trained to deal with.
3. **Costs involved in therapy.**
4. **The length of therapy.**
5. Alternatives to traditional therapy.
 1. Individual self-help.
 1. Books.
 2. Religious activities.
 2. Programs designed for personal-effectiveness training.
 1. Parent-effectiveness training.
 2. Assertiveness training.
 3. Marriage Encounter.
 3. Peer self-help groups.
 1. Parents without Partners.
 2. Alcoholics Anonymous.
 3. Weight Watchers.
 4. Crisis-intervention systems.
 1. Rape-crisis centers.
 2. Suicide hot lines.
 3. Shelters for battered wives.
 4. Pregnancy and abortion counseling.
 5. Psychological and psychiatric helping systems.
 1. Day-treatment and out-patient hospital programs and partial

hospitalization.

Confidentiality, Privileged Communication, and Privacy

Confidentiality.

1. Confidentiality is the ethical responsibility of mental health professionals to safeguard clients from unauthorized disclosures of information given in the therapeutic relationship.
2. Confidentiality involves professional ethics rather than any legalism and indicates an explicit promise or contract to reveal nothing about an individual except under conditions agreed to by the source or subject.
3. Confidentiality is traditional in nature; enjoys historical protection--not legal protection.

Privileged communication.

1. Same as confidentiality, but codified in law.
 1. Privileged communication may be defined as “the legal right which exists by statute and which protects the client from having his confidences revealed publicly from the witness stand during legal proceedings without his permission.”
 2. Privilege is granted by statute, protects the client from having his/her communications revealed in a judicial setting without explicit permission.
 3. If a client waives this privilege, the professional has no grounds for withholding the information. In other words, the privilege belongs to clients and is meant for their protection, not for the protection of the therapists.
2. Some examples of those who may be granted privileged communication:
 1. Attorneys and clients.
 2. Marital partners.
 3. Physicians and patients.
 4. Psychiatrists and clients.
 5. Priests and penitents.
 6. Accountants and clients.
 7. Nurses and patients.
3. Under a privileged communication statute, a minister acting in his professional capacity as a spiritual advisor cannot be forced to reveal the content of confidential communications to any outside party, including a court of law.
 1. Includes clergy in any established church.
 2. Does not include clergy who are self-ordained or members of religious organizations such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, in which all members are considered clergy.
4. Confidentiality privilege protects the person making a confession or being counseled; protection for pastor is secondary.
 1. Communications made to nonpastors (elders, deacons, unordained youth ministers, nuns, unordained professional counselors, and lay counselors) do not enjoy the confidentiality privilege in most states.

2. The pastor of an independent church, even though not ordained, may be protected based on his pastoral role.
 3. Communication must have been heard in professional role as a pastor or spiritual advisor.
 4. Usually must be penitential confession.
 5. Time and place play a significant role in whether communication is covered by confidentiality privilege, with maximum protection to formal confessional or counseling sessions.
5. When disclosure is requested by counselee, should get written authorization from counselee.

Exceptions to the confidentiality privilege.

1. When counselee may pose danger to self or others (duty to warn).
2. Child abuse, whether confirmed or reasonably suspected.

The Duty to Warn and Protect.

1. Tarasoff Case.
2. Guidelines.
 1. A threat to others which could reasonably cause bodily injury made in your presence.
 2. A threat and a known history of violent attacks towards others by client.
 3. The intended action is sufficiently identifiable.
 4. The client has or potentially could have the ability to carry out the threat.

When to Refer

Sometimes we help counselees most by referring them to someone else whose training, expertise, and availability can be of special assistance. Referral does not mean, necessarily, that the original counselor is incompetent or trying to get rid of the counselee. No one person is skilled enough to counsel everyone, and referral is often a way to show your desire to have the counselee get the best help possible.

People should be referred when:

1. They are not showing signs of improvement after several sessions.
2. Need legal advice.
3. Are severely depressed or suicidal.
4. Show bizarre or extremely aggressive behavior.
5. Appear to be severely disturbed emotionally.

6. Stir strong feelings of dislike or sexual arousal in the counselor.
7. Have problems that are beyond the counselor's felt area of expertise.
8. Those who may need medical attention.
 1. People with eating disorders.
 2. Drug dependency.
 3. Physical problems.
 4. Persisting emotional disorders.
 5. Fears about unwanted pregnancy
 6. Worries about possibility of AIDS.
9. When counselees appear to have more complicated sexual problems than the counselor can handle.
 1. When sexual perversions are involved.
 2. When counselees need detailed sexual information that the counselor is unable to provide.
 3. When you suspect physiological disease or malfunctioning.
 4. When the counselor feels a strong and/or persisting sexual attraction to the counselee.

In situations like these the counselor must decide whether to continue counseling, to terminate the relationship, or to make a referral.

Referral can be threatening to many people. These individuals need to be shown that referral is common, is not an indication of rejection by the present counselor, and ultimately is for the greatest benefit of the counselee.

Lesson 11

GUIDELINES FOR COUNSELING

When you are asked, “What do you think I should do?” reserve your comment until you are certain that you have the complete picture.

The greatest single failure of untrained individuals is to jump to conclusions, saying things such as, “Well, it’s obvious to me what your problem is...” or mentally thumbing through your memorized roster of Bible verses, selecting a couple which seem to have enough weight and then, bang!

When you come down hard on someone without understanding the situation, you frustrate and even anger the person who has come to you for help.

1. Simplistic solutions to complex issues offer no real help.
2. Counselee may begin talking about surface problem before real problem addressed. If jump to conclusion too fast, may never get to real problem.

Be principled as you handle the confidence of people.

1. Endangerment to self or others.
2. Child abuse.

Be patient with people.

Be professional.

1. Treat confidence placed in you in a professional manner.
2. Be careful how you handle opposite sex; danger of emotional entanglement.
 - a. Their emotions may be volatile, and the person you embrace may wish desperately that a mate would do the same thing.
 - b. Never counsel the opposite sex when you question your ability to handle a situation.

Recognize your own limitations.

1. Never lose the respect of someone when you say, “You know, I’d like to help you with this, but it is more than I can handle. I’d like to suggest that you see...”
2. Making proper referrals.

Nurture your relationship with the person you are helping.

1. When you counsel with a friend, your relationship is especially important. Prov 27:6: “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.”
 - a. A loyal friend is honest.
 - b. If you tell someone what he or she wants to hear, your value as a counselor is diminished; if you are too harsh you drive the person away.
 - c. It is painful for some people to face reality, especially when it doesn’t live up to their ideals.
 - d. Important that you make the one you are trying to help feel accepted as a person though you may reject his or her behavior.
 - e. Three questions a hurting person may ask:
 - i. Can this person help me?
 - ii. Does he or she care about me?
 - iii. Does this person know what he or she is talking about?
 - f. Don’t sit as an authority figure who sits in condemnation on the person who turns to you.
 - i. Genuine warm concern for people forges lasting relationships.
 - ii. The Pharisees shoved a prostitute before Jesus, “The law says, stone her; what do you say?”
 - (1) “Neither do I condemn you.”
 - (2) “Go and sin no more.”
 - iii. Jesus had rejected the sin but accepted her as a person.
 - (1) Jesus knew where she was coming from yet refrained from asking the questions some would ask:
 - (a) How did you get into this profession?
 - (b) How many men do you see every night?
 - (c) Do you enjoy what you are doing?
 - (2) Jesus didn’t focus on the past, but on the present (“Where are your accusers?”) and the future (“Go and sin no more”).
 - (3) When you counsel, the real issue is: Where do you go from here and how do you get there?
 - g. Rely totally upon the Lord as you counsel with people.
 - i. Pray as you listen.
 - ii. “Lord, help me pick up the silent signals, to read the nonverbal cues, and to hear what is really being said.”
 - iii. The Holy Spirit often gives you intuitive knowledge to ask the right questions, so that the person begins to reveal the real issue.

BIBLICAL COUNSELING

A Justification

Raymond E. Meadors, Ph.D.

When God created man from the "dust of the earth" (formation of the physical BODY), He breathed into man the "breath of life" (thus, the formation of man's SPIRIT), and man became a "living soul" (the formation of man's SOUL). From this miracle of creation, man was created a triune being: SPIRIT, SOUL, and BODY. The SPIRIT fosters God-consciousness (God-awareness), and the SOUL allows one to maintain an awareness of self (or self-awareness; self-consciousness). The soul is the seat of an individual's feelings, emotions, personality, intellect, and will. The BODY gives one an awareness of the surrounding world through the physical senses.

When Adam and Eve transgressed and were evicted from an intimate realm of fellowship and communion with their Creator, there was subsequent corruption, deterioration, and fragmentation in each area of man's triune being. In other words, man was totally bankrupt in spirit, soul, and body. For 4000 years the human race remained in this depraved condition, with no hope of redemption from sin (spirit), sickness (emotional) and disease (body). Through the redemptive power of the cross and through Christ's supreme sacrificial price, the provision was made for the total restoration of man in spirit, soul, and body.

The regeneration of the spirit transpired through the atonement (once again made at-one with God). Conviction in the spirit is followed by belief in the heart and confession of the mouth the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This results in one being "born again" (regeneration of the spirit).

Thus, in the atonement process, provision was made for spiritual reconciliation, but many fail to realize that the judicial price was also paid for restoration of the physical body. The Bible confirms for us that "by His stripes we are [we were] healed." He died not only for the forgiveness of our sins, but for the healing of our bodies as well.

Jesus is characterized in the New Testament as our High Priest, and in His role as priest, the Bible clearly specifies that He is "touched by the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebrews 4:15). In this context, infirmities refer to frustration, anxiety, depression, hurt, feeling of abandonment, isolation, rejection, and loneliness. He's not only AWARE of the infirmity but is touched by the FEELING of the infirmity.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE TRADITIONAL POSITION OF THE CHURCH AND HOW HAS THE CHURCH TYPICALLY RESPONDED TO EMOTIONAL NEEDS IN THE BODY OF CHRIST?

The church has done an adequate job in evangelistic outreach to redeem the masses of humankind and to bring them into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Billions of dollars have been invested in evangelistic crusades and world-wide missions. The effort has not been fruitless, for millions who otherwise would have been destined for endless separation from God, now have their names indelibly inscribed in the "Lamb's Book of Life."

In the present generation, there is a merger of prayer and medicine to attend to the physical needs of man, and the advancement in medical technology has been astonishing. One of the redemptive names ascribed to God is Jehovah Rapha (the Lord who heals us of all our diseases), and the church has been able to integrate prayer and medicine without viewing it as a conflict of interest. The miracle-working, healing power of God is not minimized, but the majority of Christians understand that God is not offended through the assistance of physicians and medicine in the healing process. Healing is the children's bread! He is still the author of healing and the giver of life, and the properties of medicine only have power as they are recognized as gifts of mercy granted by God.

Christians constantly regress spiritually and they fail to measure up to the high standards of Godliness. Spiritual faltering seems to be the order of the day and often Believers get side-tracked and stumble in their walk! Yet, what do they do? They boldly approach the "throne of grace" and accept the reality of the steadfast love of the Lord that never ceases. His mercies are new every morning and great is His faithfulness.

Even though healing was provided for in Jesus' sacrifice of life, people continue getting sick. The Bible says the sick need a physician. If a person is sick in body, they seek out medical assistance for relief of pain. If there is a cancerous tumor in the body, it is surgically removed! If there is a threatening abnormality in the body, corrective surgery is performed!

Yet, there is an area of man's being that produces pain rivaling the pangs of death. At times it is far more acute and exceeds the symptomatic pain of a physical disorder. This is the pain that emanates from emotional stress, wounded spirits, battered emotions, and bruised hearts. For whatever reason, the church has neglected these prevalent needs, and has left the people plagued by these besetting problems hopelessly abandoned.

How can we reconcile our apathy and indifference toward those who are emotionally beleaguered?

How can we disregard the reality of 30M Americans who annually suffer diagnosed cases of depression?

How can we ignore 92% of Christians at a large Bible conference admitting in a survey that they possess a sense of despair at feeling unloved and a fear of being unwanted and unaccepted (the feeling of loneliness)?

Yet, despite millions suffering in this area of their being (Christians included), some question the scriptural validity of addressing the soulical entity of man. God-fearing, God-loving, Bible-believing saints have become victims of humility, isolation, ridicule, and scorn because they are maligned in the arena of feelings and emotions.

Often an individual has deep-seeded wounds and emotional hurts carrying-over from early childhood experiences. Failure to bring closure and resolution to these traumatic events is likely to produce an adult who is having extreme difficulty coping with the stresses of life.

The question is frequently asked, **"IS IT NECESSARY IN COUNSELING TO RESURRECT MEMORIES FROM THE PAST THAT ARE FORGOTTEN AND ARE UNDER THE BLOOD OF JESUS?"**

The memory of the event is not forgotten; it may be relegated to the realm of unconsciousness, but not forgotten! Lurking just below the threshold of consciousness, one may not be aware of its existence. All they know is that they are having tremendous struggles with life in general, and have turned to every source imaginable to find peace. Whether or not one is aware of these contributors (or is aware but chooses to ignore) does not mean they do not exist. They have not disappeared -- they have gone underground and are intent on doing irrevocable emotional damage to the person if possible. The destructiveness of this situation is that these unresolved issues spew emotional venom and contaminate the person's spirit, soul, and body without them being consciously aware of it.

When an individual is converted, the blood of Jesus obliterates the sin account. All of the transgressions that have been entered on to one's spiritual ledger are deleted. The blood of Jesus addresses the sin issue and produces spiritual regeneration. However, it is the progressive work of the CROSS that purifies one's soul through the process of sanctification (the constant working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Believer to purify and cleanse). This only BEGINS at the time a person invites the Lord into their heart. The individual makes the choice to "work out their own salvation" through the washing of the water of the Word.

Paul wrote that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things [are passing] away and all things [are becoming] new." Is it any wonder that the Apostle John indicated we "were saved, are saved, and shall be saved."

There is a tearing-down and a building-up process -- retaining the areas of our life that are Christlike (e.g., fruit of the Spirit), and eliminating those areas that produce the "fruit of the flesh." Paul addresses the Christian in Colossians 3 when he exhorts them to "put to death therefore what is earthly in you..." In the Believer's development to achieve spiritual maturity, there is a gradual reprogramming of the total thought process -- assuming a different "mind set" altogether! "If ye then be risen with Christ SEEK those things which are above and not below" (Col 3). Faulty thinking patterns produce faulty behaviors. They set the stage for making non-

productive and inappropriate choices in life.

Romans 12:2 commands the child of God to "not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

Many individuals have the misfortune of having been abused, victimized, abandoned, isolated, or rejected at different times in their life. At times the traumatization of these events is so painful, they become deeply suppressed and blocked from one's level of consciousness. This is particularly true of painful experiences encountered in early life-experiences. Pushing the events beyond the threshold of consciousness permitted the person to cope with the pain momentarily, but dysfunction later in life demanded these conflicts be successfully resolved -- else, the person lives in emotional torment and experiences a life of broken relationships.

The individual must be brought to a face-to-face encounter with these issues. It's a paradox but these events have to be REMEMBERED in order to be FORGOTTEN. It is virtually impossible for a person to be deeply hurt by a person or situation without entertaining anger, resentment, bitterness, vengeance, grudge, and unforgiveness. When these are embedded in a person's emotional framework, illumination has to be brought to these areas in order for accountability to emerge. It takes the "power of the CROSS" to bring crucifixion of the flesh and to transform the inner-man (that is, to change the inner nature).

Even though the person has been victimized they have to face unresolved anger and unforgiveness as sin in their own life. These events have to be recalled to one's memory so they can sever the stronghold these areas have maintained in their lives. The events are called to remembrance to resolve once and for all -- the person is not allowed to retain possession of the memory of the event to justify their continued life-struggle. The event happened - it's a historical fact - it's doesn't need to be denied, BUT IT CAN'T BE CHANGED. However, the way one views the event and the way they interpret it can be changed. And, this is what the Lord desires to accomplish in the emotional healing.

From the church's perspective, the question remains:

Why is one made to feel so guilty and spiritually anemic if they are struggling with emotions? If for no other reason, the trauma could be the residual of a physical problem, a life-shattering experience, a significant loss in life, or broken relationships.

Spiritual wavering is understood (almost expected) and solicits compassion from others!

Physical sickness elicits multitudes of people emerging to provide a support system!

Yet, gross inconsistency prevails when it comes to relating to a person suffering from emotional trauma. Rather than being viewed by others with eyes of love and a heart of compassion, the response is often one of suspicion and cynicism:

What hidden sin is there in their life?

What hidden corner in the recesses of their being needs to be illuminated?

There must be some foreboding and hideous sin they haven't confessed!

They are not spiritual at all to be experiencing this in their life!
Apparently, they have no FAITH or they wouldn't have these problems!

They are a Christian; they shouldn't have problems like that!

God has placed a diversity of ministry in the Body of Christ for the perfecting of the Saints--all these ministries should be working in concert, harmoniously, and complementing each other. A competitive, striving spirit need not exist, because mutual respect and esteem prevails. God's plan has always progressed upward and onward--it doesn't digress; it doesn't stagnate; it is dynamic and CHANGING.

Church leaders must understand and openly embrace (endorse) a NEW MODEL OF MINISTRY. A new model doesn't ignore the old; it subsumes the old and the lesser becomes a part of the greater. Jesus did not abolish the Law; He fulfilled the Law and then the Law became part of a greater order (the Kingdom of God). The former represents building blocks to enlarge the vision and view the greater picture--to expand the capacity to accommodate what God is doing.

BIBLICAL PSYCHOLOGY IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Does the Church have a ministry in mental health? If so, what role, if any, should psychology have in it? Until now, because of all the other controversies already fomenting among evangelicals, I have been reluctant to discuss these issues publicly.

However, several things have happened to convince me of the need to take up this task. First of all, there is a growing number of Christians entering the field of counseling who have been more thoroughly trained in the behavioral sciences than they have been in the Scriptures. In some cases, their philosophies and methods obviously have not been subjected to a Biblical test. Their faith and their science have never been integrated in their own mind. Believers are likely to leave the offices of such professionals more confused or shocked than helped.

This is of deep personal concern to those of us who have devoted so much of our professional lives to the development of a Biblical role in mental health. After all, there is a big difference between a Christian who practices psychology and the practice of a psychology which is truly Christian or Biblical.

Today the term "Christian psychology" is used much too loosely to be easily understood. Some use this term in referring to a movement within the discipline of psychology that is made up of Christians. Others may use the term to refer to psychology courses taught in the behavioral science department of a Christian college or university.

Because of such confusion and ambiguity surrounding the term "Christian psychology," I prefer to use the term "Biblical psychology." For me, Biblical psychology is a comprehensive study of human behavior pursued under the discipline of Scripture. Its findings can be expressed in terms which are meaningful to both the theological and psychological communities. Preparation for this kind of ministry requires thorough training in the Scriptures and in a theistic approach to the behavioral sciences.

Secondly, I feel some statement is needed to affirm the many committed Christians who are serving the Lord as mental health professionals in both the public and private sectors of our society. Lately, they have been subject to severe and, in many cases, unwarranted attacks. Christian anti-psychologists are flooding the church with their popularized books and periodicals in which they brand all Christian mental health professionals as "Freudians" and "humanists." Nothing could be further from the truth, and I feel this needs to be said. Otherwise, many of the lay reading public are left at the mercy of Christian anti-psychologist authors and their over-generalized conclusions.

These authors deliberately select absurd examples from "fad" psychological theories and therapies and use them as "guilt-by-association" tactics in discrediting all Christian mental health professionals and attacking any use of the behavioral sciences in the ministry of the

church. They fail to acknowledge that many evangelical mental health professionals are just as concerned as the evangelical clergy that the church be protected from the determinism, humanism, mechanistic reductionism (the belief that creation evolved and is without purpose), and self-exaltation which characterizes secular psychology.

When the world uses this kind of "guilt-by-association" logic by choosing isolated examples from fringe groups and practices to discredit all evangelicals, all pentecostals, or all charismatics, we recognize it immediately and abhor it. And when those same tactics are used by skilled communicators in the Body of Christ in such a way as to create unwarranted suspicion and mistrust among Christians, such tactics are even more detestable.

Thirdly, an increasing number of people being seen at EMERGE are being affected by the teachings of popular Christian anti- psychologists. Not only are these people suffering from the pain of overwhelming life circumstances, but they also experience intense guilt for seeking the help of a Christian counselor--even though their pastors have referred them. Should hurting people be made to feel guilty for reaching out for the help they obviously need?

Historical antagonism is waning

Historically, this antagonism between religion and psychiatry has been so intense as to make it impossible for either discipline to gain from the insights of the other. Loud voices from both camps have insisted that religion and psychiatry or psychology are like oil and water--they just don't mix. Many still feel that way. Consequently, much of psychiatry is without a soul and there is certainly no lack of emotionally sick religion.

Today, however, there is evidence that a growing number of reputable people from both camps are looking at their old viewpoints more carefully. They are beginning to see the benefit of helping the minister better understand the emotional issues involved in a person's religious experience, and of helping the psychiatrist or psychologist better understand the spiritual issues involved in a person's emotional life.

Priorities are important!

Since the issues of faith affect us eternally, they are obviously more important to us than the psychological issues of life. Nevertheless, in our sinful and sick society, there are times when many of us need all the help both fields can give us in order to stay spiritually and mentally healthy. Of course, you don't have to be mentally healthy to go to heaven, but it sure does help to make the trip more enjoyable.

No experience has the potential for making a greater contribution to a person's mental health than a personal relationship with Jesus. And, introducing people to Jesus is the primary mission of the church. Even a casual reading of the New Testament reveals this.

We are called to reach the world with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Mark

16:15, Jesus commands, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." The number one task of the church is evangelism.

Knowing that your sins are forgiven brings tremendous relief from guilt and anxiety-- what a contribution to a person's mental health. The place for guilt to be dealt with is at the foot of the cross! So the Church's primary mental health mission is carried out in a healthy ministry of evangelism--and there can be no substitute for this!

However, once we are saved, the pastoral question comes into focus--that is, "How much of the saved person will be saved?" So, the enemy, who was bent on our destruction, then seeks to steal from us as much of our kingdom potential as he can. Therefore, each believer needs the help of pastoral ministries to become all God knows he or she can become in Jesus Christ. The extent to which this pastoral mission is successful also has an important bearing on a person's mental health.

Christ, who as Counselor (Isaiah 9:6) was anointed to heal the broken hearted and set the captive free (Luke 4:18), is the role model for the Biblical psychologist or counselor. Their's is a ministry of "helps" in the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:28). They are members of the church's healing team-- specialists in applied sanctification.

Although Biblical psychologists and counselors will win people to the Lord in the course of their work, most of their efforts will be spent helping the saved become whole in Christ. Of course, the healthier believers are in the practical expression of their faith, the better witnesses they will be.

Much of the Biblical psychologist's and counselor's work involves teaching people practical "how to's" for Biblical "ought to's." It is one thing to tell people how they "ought to feel" about the painful parts of their past, and what they "ought to do" about certain destructive habits in their present; but it is another thing to teach them "how to do" what they "ought to do" about these things.

People know they ought to repent, confess, forgive, lay aside bitterness, be tenderhearted, be transformed by the renewing of their mind, cast all their cares on Christ, put off the old man and put on the new, reverence their husbands, love their wives as Christ also loved the church, obey their parents, not let the sun go down upon their wrath, forget those things that are behind, etc. However, they often don't know "how to do" what they know they "ought to do." An understanding of the behavioral sciences--particularly those areas related to learning, memory, and the developmental process--is of great help in this kind of work.

A theistic approach to the behavioral sciences

Perhaps the greatest problem between religion and secular science is the age-old epistemological conflict over which is the most valuable way of discovering and defining truth.

(Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature, methods, and limits of knowledge.) Secular science has rejected subjective- experiential ways of knowing in favor of objective-observational methods.

The epistemological model illustrated in Diagram No. 1 portrays a comprehensive theistic approach to truth. The subjective-experiential ways of knowing are identified by solid lines: faith, experience, authority, and revelation. The objective-observational paths to knowledge are identified by the broken lines: reason, logic, and the scientific method.

For the Christian, truth is defined by what God has revealed of Himself through His Son, His Word, and His Creation. The revelation of God in His Son and His Word are special revelations that are discovered through faith (Hebrews 11:6). The growth and development of the believer's revelation of God in Christ is carried out under the authority and instruction of Scripture (Matthew 28:19, 20; II Timothy 3:16, 17).

The revelation of God in creation is referred to throughout Scripture (Psalms 8:3,4; 19:1; Romans 1:20,21; Colossians 1:16- 17). Christian members of the scientific community see nature as another book of God's Bible. However, the truth of God in creation can be known only in a relative way. What we know of God's revelation of Himself in nature will never be absolute. However, what we can learn is more likely to be discovered through objective-observational methods than by subjective- experiential ways.

As Christians, we believe there is unity among God's revelations of Himself. That is, truth as it is ultimately discovered in nature through the scientific method will never be in conflict with truth as it is revealed in Christ or the Scriptures.

The believer should seek to use all paths to truth. However, the method of seeking truth one uses should be determined by the nature of truth one seeks. The "who" and "why" questions of life usually require subjective-experiential methods of search. The "what" and "how" questions of life are more likely to be answered through objective-observational paths.

Different kinds of truth require different paths of search

Yuri Gregarin, the first Russian cosmonaut to orbit the earth, foolishly declared that since he did not see God in his brief trip, God must not exist. His folly was in failing to understand that although science could enable him to orbit the earth, it is not the method of choice in determining the existence of God. The authority of the Scriptures has determined that God can be discovered only by those willing to seek Him through the path of faith (Hebrews 11:6).

On the other hand, if you want to know the meaning of a word, you don't fast and pray for God to reveal it to you. You look the meaning up in your dictionary--a trusted authority. In order to discover the meaning of love, you need to experience it. So, you see, before adopting a

particular method of finding truth one needs to determine the nature of the truth being sought. Then, the method of choice for finding that kind of truth should be appropriated.

Integrating theology and psychology

Before the fall, there was unbroken unity of truth. Certainly, in that moment, theology, psychology, and all other areas of knowledge were integrated in the mind of God. And, Paul tells us in I Corinthians 13:12 that when we are with the Lord we will no longer be the victims of the fragmentary knowledge of our fallen minds; but we will share in the unbroken unity of truth. So, in the meantime, believers who seek truth should focus on that potential unity and pursue it.

By creating human beings in His own image, God brought into existence an intelligence capable of reflecting upon the nature of the Creator's relationship with creation (theology) and the nature of human behavior (psychology). Here we are not talking about the psychology of Freud, or Rogers, or Skinner, but the psychology God expressed in human nature when He created man in His own image. This psychology has existed from the beginning long before there was a discipline called psychology.

Biblical psychologists employ the discipline to more clearly understand the psychology expressed in human nature as God created it and as sin and redemption have affected it. Their study of such aspects of human behavior as learning, memory, and the developmental process can be very useful in defining a wise application of Biblical truth for helping Christian's overcome hurts from the past and prevent many unnecessary future mental health problems.

Biblical psychologists subject their developing understanding of human behavior to the discipline of Scripture (See Diagram No. 2). Therefore, maintaining a daily walk with Christ within which their exposure to the Word of God can provide continual affirmation or correction for their Biblical and scientific understanding of human behavior is very important.

The field of Biblical psychology and theology can greatly benefit each other. For example, a healthy theology will protect the Biblical psychologist from heresy; and, a Biblical psychology can protect the theologian from an emotionally sick interpretation of Scripture.

Re-Creative Therapy

Now, I would like to move from this highly philosophical and theological look at the relationship between theology and psychology to a more practical model for explaining how the integration of these two fields can help people deal with problems in living (See Diagram No. 3).

The feelings and thoughts which form the background from which our interpretations of life come have deep roots in our preschool and preverbal years. These feeling, images, and impressions are pooled together in what psychology calls the unconscious and subconscious levels of the mind. Theology refers to this part of us as the darkened, blinded, or deceitful mind

and heart (Mark 7:21-23; Romans 1:21; Ephesians 4:18,22; II Corinthians 4:4; I John 2:11; Hebrews 3:13; Proverbs 12:20; Jeremiah 17:9).

Notice, our feelings and thoughts are on a continuum ranging from undefined to defined. Above the level of consciousness, there is defined fantasy, imagination, and thoughts. This whole sensorium is the battlefield of the mind or spirit. Three realms are vying for expression in our attitudes and behavior: human, divine, and demonic. This war is through our feelings and thoughts with the ultimate prize being control of our choices (Romans 6:12-18; II Corinthians 10:3-6; Ephesians 6:10-17).

The human agency is represented by mental energy to be expressed in choices that range across a natural spectrum from destructive to creative. The demonic dimension is represented by the ever-present power of sin to influence our choices.

I view sin as an invisible force emanating from satan, which impacts on the mind to stimulate the brain to think in terms of life options which detract from and destroy a person's divine potential. The human will is inadequate to always resist temptation in all its forms. Man's fallen nature makes him prone to be influenced by sin in the life choices he makes.

Once a person is born again, there is a divine agency involved in this conflict. Christ brings eternal life ("zoe") into the battle with him when He enters a person's life. Eternal life is an invisible force which is resident in Jesus. It impacts the mind to stimulate the brain to think in terms of life options which enhance and develop our divine potential.

The warfare for our thoughts and choices is often referred to in the New Testament (Romans 6:12-18; I Corinthians 9:26,27; II Corinthians 10:3-6; Ephesians 6:10-18; II Timothy 4:7).

This basic model helps us make the supernatural practical for people who are struggling to: discover new ways of looking at damaged personal histories, overcome destructive habits or character traits, forgive someone who has hurt them, find God's will in some important life decision, or come to terms with other struggles. By making Christians aware of the spiritual dimensions of fantasizing, imagining, and thinking they readily learn how to involve their faith in their counseling and therapy. Knowing where the battle is being waged doesn't guarantee victory, but it certainly helps you fight it more effectively.

Christian counseling fosters healing and growth

Some of the most crippling problems people bring with them into the family of God are the product of a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of Scripture. These problems involve not just the spiritual dimension of life, but the emotional and social dimensions as well. Let me give you just two examples:

2. Horrifying images of God--many New Testament believers emotionally relate to the God of Sinai rather than the God of Calvary. Their God is more angry than loving. They believe He delights more in punishing them than in rewarding them. They secretly fear their God will reveal every humiliating event of their lives to the whole universe at the judgment seat of Christ. They haven't differentiated the judgment seat of Christ from the great white throne judgment. They are haunted by this nightmare.
3. Horribly crippling views of themselves--they don't understand the difference between being considered unworthy by God and being considered worthless by God. They have never discovered the worth Calvary gives to every person for whom Christ died--His children and His enemies.

Secular psychology is not equipped to help people with these kinds of problems. Helping people like this learn how to identify and reject the crippling ideas about God and themselves that sin has foisted upon them, and discover new ways of thinking about a loving God to whom they are valuable, is a unique task for which God has raised up Biblical psychologists and counselors.

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